

My
own
Helvetica

with rounded dots!

ROTESK

schrift.co



Errungenschaft
technological and computational advances

Strukturwandel
rural areas are suffering as the larger cities

Erreichbarkeit
or: How the cellphone changed our lives

Versuchslabor
please do not enter without protection

Rechtskanzlei
free consultation today, no money down

Handelskrieg
in the destabilized regions of the world

Winter—Frost
zu der vorweihnachtlichen Stimmung

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my own Helvetica**
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or: Helvetica? Helveticas!**

ROTESK my own Helvetica

” Helvetica is everywhere



Rotesk is Moritz Zimmer’s take on the World’s most ubiquitous typeface, Helvetica. ■ An ever-green favourite among designers everywhere, Helvetica is anything but dead. Like any piece of living and breathing popular culture, it is always undergoing changes based on current styles and tastes. ■ Ever since North American retailer Target’s gradual change from Neue Helvetica to a proprietary Helvetica with rounded dots, I was fascinated with the idea of evolving the typeface, and wanted to re-draw Helvetica as my own, original design. ■

What changed? Everything. The entire Typeface has been re-drawn based on the studies of countless different Versions of Helvetica, Akzidenz Grotesk and others, to incorporate everything that I find beautiful, functional— while at the same time ditching everything I didn't like. ■ The rounded Dots are based on photographs and brochures of Target' Helvetica. The letters and numbers are redrawn, made softer, rounder, friendlier— but on occasion also even more square. ■ The lowercase a in Helvetica gained the stem present in the lighter weights, but missing in the Bold weight, redrawn in shape to match that of the regular lowercase a style. (Interestingly, it was not until later that I realized Target Helvetica did the same thing in their version.) ■ Finally, I spaced and kerned the entire typeface based on my own experiences and conventions, simplifying and unifying the process. ■

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Typesetting inspired by *Exploration 7* from "Explorations in Typography / Mastering the Fine Art of Typesetting - A Visual Textbook for Intermediate to Advanced Typography" by Caroline de Bartolo with Erik Speikermann.

This typeface is based on my own original drawings, closely inspired and following various printouts of Helvetica, Neue Haas Grotesk, Univers, Akzidenz Grotesk and others. All Data was digitized, drawn and compiled in Glyphs. This font is strictly for informational purposes only. Use of the Helvetica name is for educational purposes only, used under the fair use act. **Rotesk is not for sale!**

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Rotesk

A better Helvetica with rounded Dots

12 pt Regular:

Steam cook the Spinach in a pot for about 5 minutes on medium heat. Set aside. Bring 500 ml of water to a boil. Add rice and cook with lid on for about 14 minutes. On medium heat olive oil, add garlic. Cook for 2 minutes. Add spinach. The carrots are meant to be served as a side dish. Chop Brötchen and place bread in just enough water to soften it. Preheat oven to 215C (425 F) and bring water to boil when ready to

12 pt Medium:

This Greek sauce goes well on breads, such as flatbreads- along with grilled vegetables and meats. Shred cucumber, place in a colander, and let sit for a few minutes. Press excess liquid out. Mince garlic. Mix together yogurt, cucumber, Slice carrots into thin pieces Chop additional onion. Mix with ginger. Add 2 tablespoons water, cook in pot with lid on for 5 minutes. Cook for 5 minutes longer with lid off until carrots are tender. Mix parsley with carrots, serve.

12 pt Bold:

Dissolve yeast in water. Mix flour and salt in bowl. Add yeast and water and yogurt to bowl. Mix together until elastic. Add more flour if mixture is Cook bread on metal skillet on medium high heat. Check frequently for puffing up of dough and flip when dark brown spots start to appear. These are

12 pt ExtraBold:

Rahmsauce is a great sauce for noodles or dumplings such as Knödel. On medium heat, melt butter and then add onions. Add flour, mixing constantly and cook for 1 minute. Gradually add rest of ingredients except parsley. Keep on med.

18 pt Black (style set 1 and 2):

Right, can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling in an area where the language is spoken.

9 pt Regular (alternate):

At this point, it is assumed you now have textbooks and workbooks for learning German, along with a German dictionary as well. But just having these tools is not enough! It is important to develop a routine as part of a study plan. Decide how much German will you study each day and make deadlines for each chapter. Give yourself expectations. Don't get discouraged at the beginning either. That first month will be the most brutal when it comes to struggling to understand anything. Below are a few things to keep in mind while learning.

9 pt Regular (looser leading):

Next, is it important to have an idea what to expect while learning German. At this point, it is assumed you now have textbooks and workbooks for learning German, along with a German dictionary as well. But just having these tools is not enough. It is helpful to develop a routine as part of the study plan. Decide how much will you study each day and give yourself deadlines for each chapter. Don't get discouraged at the beginning either. That first month will be the most brutal when it comes to struggling to understand anything.

9 pt Medium:

Do you know a little German already? The different levels of German language proficiency are officially classified as A1, A2, B1, B2, C1, C2 by the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. For each exam one must be able to: listen, read, write, and speak German. To live in Germany, one is expected to be at least A1 Certified. Find out what that means and how to get to that level of proficiency.

9 pt Medium (looser leading):

Intermediate German — Can understand the main points in matters regularly encountered in work, school, leisure, etc. Can deal with most situations likely to arise while traveling in an area where the language is spoken. Can talk about topics which are familiar or of personal interest. Can describe experiences and events, dreams, hopes & ambitions and briefly give reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

14 pt Light:

Learning German with the Deutsch Aktuell book series is by far one of the best approaches for beginners. Each chapter builds upon itself and important grammar subjects are taught gradually along the way.

14 pt Hairline:

At this point, it is assumed you now have textbooks and workbooks for learning German, along with a German dictionary as well. But just having these tools is not enough! It is helpful to develop a routine as part of the study plan. Decide how much will you study each day and give yourself deadlines for each chapter. Don't get discouraged at the beginning either.

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larger x-height

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and not alike.
Even though
they all face in
different
directions, a b
is easily

like a B or an
an r and an n
may not run
together into an
m. To achieve
this, each letter
has — subtly,
but noticeably,
their own

Richtungswahl

uch

A large, stylized, dark blue letter 'G' logo, which is the primary branding element for the Georgia Institute of Technology. The 'G' is thick and has a modern, slightly irregular feel.

Rotesk

ritz Zimmer

Moritz Zimmer

2016

2016
<http://www.moritzzimmer.com>

Helvetica is anything but dead.

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Like any piece of living and breathing popular culture, it is always undergoing changes and current styles and

Wearing popular clothing is always undergoing changes based on current styles and tastes. **What changed?** The entire Ty

What changed?

Everything. The entire Typeface
redrawn based on

Everything. The entire
has been redrawn based on
countless different Versions of
Akzidenz Grotesk

as been redrawn based on
countless different Versions of
Helvetica, Akzidenz Grotesk and
even Univers, to incorporate
that I find beautiful,

Helvetica, Akzidenz
even Univers, to incorporate
everything that I find beautiful,
And at the same time like


everything that I find be
functional. And at the same time
everything I don't like.

And at the end of the day, I don't like. I don't like being based on

stem in the Bold weigw. I
always pothered me greatly.

The rounded Dots are based on photographs and brochures on Target Helvetica. The letters and numbers are redrawn, made softer, rounder, friendlier, on occasion even square. The lowercase letters are missing the

redrew the shape of the lowercase bold a to match that of the regular style. Finally, I spaced and kerned the entire typeface based on my own experiences and conventions, simplifying and unifying the process.



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HISTORICA

on the world's most ubiquitous typeface

” Photo of an Akzidenz Grotesk Specimen from the book “Sans Serif”.



A short history: *Akzidenz Grotesk* is often called the grandfather of all so-called “Grotesk” typefaces (German for grotesque—a way to name sans serif typefaces), the category of typefaces Helvetica falls under. *Akzidenz Grotesk* itself was a continuation of many other Typefaces that came before it, most notable Schelter & Giesecke's Grotesk, famous for its Bauhaus use; or the original to the Blockschrift typeface, one of my other typeface designs. ■ The Swiss Haas typefoundry (controlled through German typefoundry Stempel and through it ultimately controlled by Linotype) in the mid 50s refreshed the design. Haas designed a new typeface based somewhat on the spirit and general shapes of *Akzidenz Grotesk*, calling it *Neue Haas Grotesk*. In a series of twists and turns between the differently interwoven foundries, technical specifications and international markets, it eventually ended up with the more marketable *Helvetica*. Drawn from the original Specimen at Haas, you can read more about it in on font bureau. ■ For my own take on *Akzidenz Grotesk*, check out Kambri on schrift.co! ■

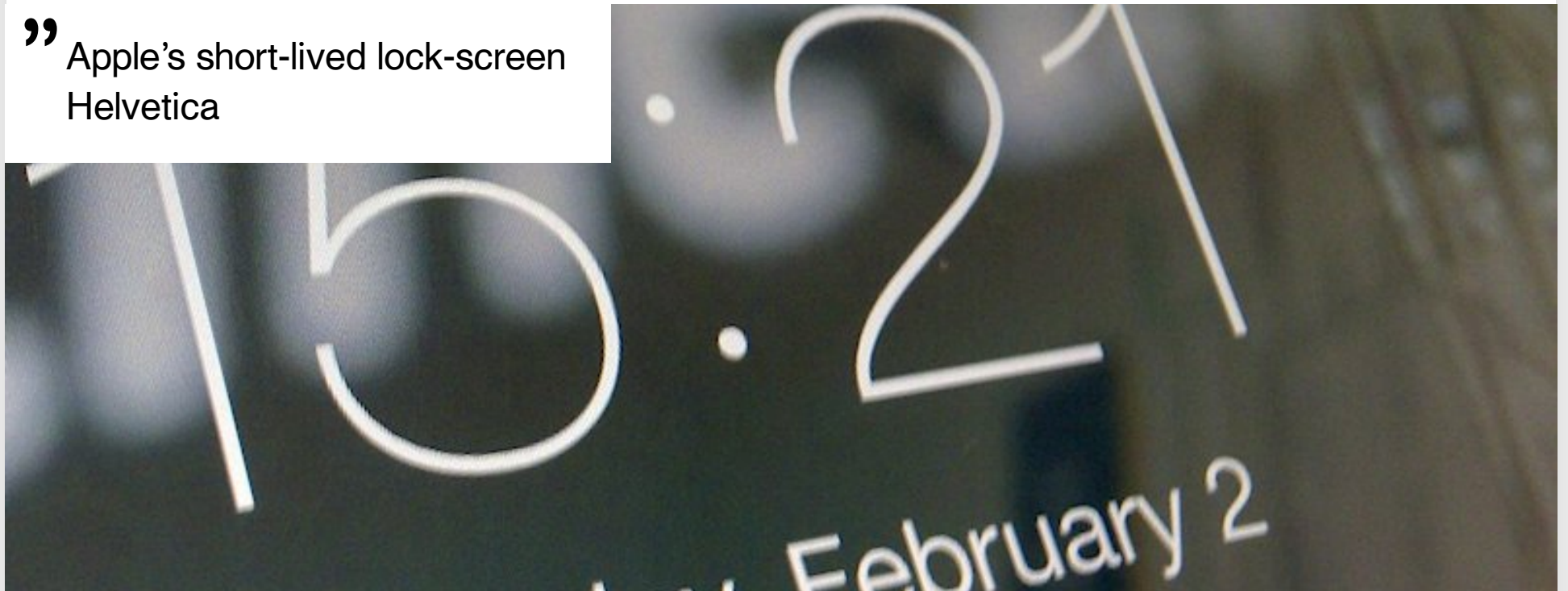
” North American Retailer Target’s proprietary version with round dots and different bold lowercase a.



There's
more Target
at @.com

Looking back: Because of the often—such as in the Helvetica movie—described “neutral” quality of Helvetica, many corporations and entities have adopted Helvetica as they house face. ■ While the typeface was appropriate for many of the more traditional German or American companies like Deutsche Bahn, Deutsche Post or American Airlines, Helvetica is not at all the timeless masterpiece many fans claim it to be: It is very much a product of its time. It is a 60s typeface, grown out of 60s modernism, with all the dealings of 60s taste, design and charm. ■ This is not just an empty claim. Of the three companies mentioned above, **none** use Helvetica anymore. Deutsche Bahn commissioned their own proprietary typeface, Deutsche Post moved to the more open, friendly and humanists Frutiger, and American Airlines also commissioned their own typeface, one closely related to humanist types like Frutiger and Thesis. ■ Others, like North American Retailer Target, have gone a different route. Also traditionally bound with Helvetica, but riding the same fresh Wind of change and renewal, Target adopted their own version of Helvetica with rounded dots and punctuation, as well as more consistent letter-shapes. ■

” Apple’s short-lived lock-screen Helvetica



Looking forward: Some companies, like Commercialtype for Fontbureau have been going back to Helvetica's Neue Haas Grotesk origins and updating its design as well. (Interestingly, Commercialtype is also working on an Neue Haas Grotesk with Rounded Dots). ■ If you are viewing this website in a modern browser, you may notice that it itself is set in a Helvetica with rounded dots and alternate Lettershapes. The typeface of this website is Rotesk, my very own take on Helvetica. ■ Apple, in an effort to make Helvetica more friendly during its controversial (and luckily short-lived) time as Apples UI face, also made subtle changes, like the rounded Dots on the lockscreen on IOS devices. ■ Finally, let's not forget Helvetica's influence on many modern screen fonts, from Monotype's Arial to Apple's San Francisco or Googles Roboto. In many ways, the much-hated, Microsoft-popularized Helvetica “Clone” Arial is very much a re-envisioned version of Helvetica based on Monotype's own Monotype Grotesque in the same way Helvetica was to Akzidenz Grotesk, and the way San Francisco and Roboto are today. ■ Does this mean there is a future for Helvetica? It has become so ubiquitous, so widely adapted, that it cannot be deleted from the collective mind and popular culture. ■ But as time goes on, modernist designers retire, die off, and their teachings get adapted and overridden and re-envisioned, we will see the style of Grotesque Sans faces evolve. Be incrementally or radically, but certainly always youthfully. ■

” Modern, young, helvetica?



Sources:

- Font Bureau. 2011. *Neue Haas Grotesk*. fontbureau.com/nhg, website.
- Gary Hustwit. 2007. *Helvetica (film)* Plexifilm, movie.
- Cees W. De Jong. 2006. *Sans Serif*. Thames & Hudson.
- Caroline de Bartolo with Erik Speikermann. 2011. *Exploration 7* from *Explorations in Typography / Mastering the Fine Art of Typesetting - A Visual Textbook for Intermediate to Advanced Typography*. 101 Editions.

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Features

Räijg,.,;?

Just some of the ways **Rotesk**
changed things up from **Helvetica**

weights & alternate Letter Shapes

aaaaaaa regular style

aaaaaaa style set 1

aaaaaaa style set 2

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Sources:

- Cees W. De Jong. (2006). Sans Serif. Thames & Hudson.
- Font Bureau. (2011). Neue Haas Grotesk. fontbureau.com/nhg, website
- Stephen Coles. (2008). Scheibler Mitte Events. fontsinuse.com, website.
- Gary Hustwit. (2007). Helvetica (film) Plexifilm, movie.

Photography and images taken by Moritz Zimmer.

Parts of this specimen have been adapted from the Rotesk Website, rotesk.schrift.co, created by Moritz Zimmer.

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This typeface was drawn in its entirety, based on my own original drawings, inspired by and following the style and feel of various older and newer typefaces as well as original ideas. All Data was digitized, drawn and compiled in Glyphs. This font is strictly for informational purposes only.

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Alternates

R R R B B
a a g g

” Lufthansa’s use of *Berthold Helvetica* vs. the old American Airlines Logo set in a different version.



It's all about the Medium. It is important to point out that there is not one — nor has there ever been — Helvetica. In fact, there are so many different Helveticas, it would probably be impossible to list them all. But especially concerning major revisions, what unites them all is the fact that they have always been children of their medium. ■ **Metallica:** Variations started as early as 1959, when the Stempel foundry in Frankfurt began making versions of the typeface for Linotype printing machines. In fact, it was only this — completely redrawn and specially fitted — version of the typeface that initially carried the name *Helvetica*, in an effort to make the typeface more easily internationally marketable. ■ **Photovetica:** When typesetting moved from metal to photosetting, the Typeface again was redrawn and respaced, to fit the new 18-unit spacing grid imposed by the early technology. ■ **Digitalica** When Helvetica moved into the digital medium with the first PostScript printers and software, it again changed. You can probably even tell this from the fact that every modern Macintosh Computer has at least two versions of the typeface installed: The Photosetting sourced Helvetica, and Neue Helvetica (not Helvetica Neue), a redesign of the redesign. ■

” Adrian Frutiger's *Univers*, Helvetica's contemporary and sibling.



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Not really Helvetica... **Geniune Siblings:** Helvetica is certainly a very outstanding design: but it is not quite as unique as especially many fans in the United States may have you believe. Not only is it obviously related to it's ancestral AG, but Helvetica also has a prolific Sister, Adrian Frutiger's *Univers*, which shares much of the same ideas of Helvetica, but resolved them in a different way. ■ (You can see the similar horizontal terminals in both typefaces. Note the looser spacing in *Univers* and the different Lettershapes) ■ **And a Love Child:** Other typefaces followed suit, and in the 1970, Haas typefoundry, the original creators of Helvetica, attempted to even release a typeface that caputured and combined the spirit of all these different faces, in something called *Neue Haas Unica*. Ill-fated due to problonged legal action, it was not until 2015 that a proper release could be made, arguably long fallen out of style and superceded by the onslaught of more modern, humanist sans serif typefaces like Frutiger, FF Meta or Myriad. ■

”Univers’ naming conventions were later adapted by Helvetica.



Not really Helvetica...Part Two Many of the Helveticas from the (post) photosetting time are interestingly not Helvetica at all. Because of the unique situation in US copyright law, in which only the physical or digital “font” (the actual physical or digital manifestation, or data) is copyright protected, but not the design, many foundries in the pre-digital era made their own version of Helvetica, that would work specifically with their equipment. ■ **The Unknown Twin:** Another interesting “Sibling”—more like an incestuous child of Helvetica/Akzidenz Grotesk—is Berthold's *AG Book*. While Berthold claims *AG Book*'s design was based on the original Akzidenz Grotesk, there is a lot that speaks for the fact that *AG Book* was actually “reverse-engineered” from Berthold's Helvetica Variant (known digitally as *Helvetica BQ*). ■ If one compares the lettershapes, the weight and the spacing, it becomes obvious that *AG Book* is really a Berthold Helvetica with differently angled Terminals in

some (not all) letters. The rest of the font, down to the shapes, sizes, and even number of glyphs included matches exactly. ■ Does this diminish the typeface?

I would argue that AG Book is not a bad typeface at all, in fact, by infusing Helvetica with some of the things that made Akzidenz Grotesk so useful, Berthold came up with a very legible and beautiful typeface. ■

” Photo of a website showcasing a specimen created with AG Book.



Sources:

- Cees W. De Jong. 2006. *Sans Serif*. Thames & Hudson.
- Font Bureau. 2011. *Neue Haas Grotesk*. fontbureau.com/nhg, website.
- Stephen Coles. 2008. *Scheibler Mitte Events*. fontsinuse.com, website.
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I redrew the shape of the lowercase bold a to match that of the regular style. Finally, I spaced and kerned the entire typeface based on my own experiences and unifying the simplifying and unifying the process.

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