

A Typeface to **Learn German**.tips

A Typeface for the Web.

GP-base24 is a modern **Grotesk** originally conceptualized and developed as a webfont. Intended to be legible in even the smallest sizes. Development started as sketches of a Sans typeface, based on a beautifully wide version of **Palatino**. We didn't just cut off the serifs, we looked at the shapes and feel of the typeface, and then drew a brand new typeface.

Since GP-base24 is the typeface of the Learn German website, we needed to not only make the typeface very legible: Wide, with lots of room, generous spacing and a larger x-height — we also needed to make sure the individual letter shapes are easily distinguished, and not alike. Even

though they all face in different directions, a b is easily mistaken as a p, b and q. An l cannot look like a 1 or in l, an 8 like a B or an ß, an rn may not run together into an m. To achieve this, each letter has — subtly, but noticeably — their own distinct and unique shape and forms.

GP-base24

cool details
distinguishable shapes
humanist shapes
open numerals
geometric-sourced Caps
just-right x-height
wide Letters

by Moritz Zimmer

In choosing a font for the LearnGerman.tips website, the general direction we wanted to go was clear: We had picked Verdana during her development of the site, and it worked very well for subject. Being a wide and easily legible typeface, it was the ideal choice for a website about learning and comprehending a new language through text.

Designing a typeface was the perfect opportunity to do something I had wanted to do for a long time — and I am certainly no stranger to type design (moritzzimmer.com). After learning about the history of the typeface for the Deutsche Bahn (youtube.com/watch?v=BRBNEbDQf-0 & christianschwartz.com), I found it intriguing to develop a Sans family based on an existing Serif typeface. Since Spiekermann and Schwartz based DB Type on a Garamont (or sorts), I had for a while planned to go the most obvious route and use the arguably most ubiquitous Serif there is: Times New Roman. After doing a few sketches (insert sketch here), I quickly realized that, while the resulting typeface had potential, it didn't meet one of the key

requirements I wanted: To be wide. After searching a bit through the "basics", I came across Palatino, which does run beautifully wide, and is a very pretty and legible Serif.

One of the other factors in choosing to make a Palatino-based Sans was that it differentiates between the shapes of the letters b, p, q, d — something not every modern Serif does, but something that was very important to have in a typeface that should take all the guesswork out of reading.

For the Capital Letters I wanted something a little bit more clean and German — technical, if you will. I based the Capitals on my own "NEUE mogobau" typeface, which itself is inspired

by the Futura model. I made the shapes quite a bit wider and more open, to match the minuscule letters.

The Final Product:

With only about 24 hours of time to conceptualize, draw and digitize the first version of the typeface, the deadline was quite fierce — but sometimes a deadline really helps, and I am quite proud of what was achieved in such a short period of time.

Oh, and GP-base24 also comes in a **Condensed** version. When space is more of an issue than readability.

Thinking
instead
of Giving
(blindly)

In choosing a font for Juliette's Learn German website, the general direction we wanted for the site to go was clear: Juliette had picked Verdana during her development of the site, and it worked very well

for subject. Being a very wide and easily legible typeface, it was the ideal choice for a website about learning and comprehending a new language through text.

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