# Fonts for the Web

Until font downloading technology is perfected, Web designers must normally restrict themselves to fonts that are available on most users' computer systems.

So which fonts are installed on everyone's computers? Your best bets are the ones that come with the **Internet Explorer** (MSIE) browser and the **Windows** and **Macintosh** operating systems. For the last few years, the MSIE fonts have been installed on every new Windows and Macintosh PC, so they are your best "cross-platform" bet.

| Font | Platform | CSS info |
|---|---|---|
| Andale Mono | MSIE | [Bold, Italic] Originally named *Monotype.com* `font-family: "Andale Mono", "Monotype.com", monospace` |
| Apple Chancery | Mac | Also named *Zapf Chancery* on older Macs (and some Win PCs). `font-family: "Apple Chancery", "Zapf Chancery", cursive` |
| Arial | MSIE | [Bold, Italic] Very similar to Helvetica. `font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif` |
| Arial Black | MSIE | Less common than Arial. Do *not* use it with a bold font-weight; it's bold enough already! `font-family: "Arial Black", sans-serif` |
| CAPITALS | Mac | Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: Capitals, serif` |
| Charcoal | Mac | Mac system font (for menus, dialog boxes, etc.) since 1999. It will be very familiar to Mac users at 12 points, but also works well in headlines (without bold). `font-family: Charcoal, Chicago, sans-serif` |
| Chicago | Mac | [Italic] Former Mac system font, replaced by Charcoal. Still present on every Mac ever made. `font-family: Chicago, Charcoal, sans-serif` |
| Comic Sans MS | MSIE | [Bold, Italic] An informal font designed to be easily legible on screen. Believe it or not, this is the default *cursive* font for Internet Explorer. `font-family: "Comic Sans MS", cursive` |
| Courier / Courier | Mac / Win | [Bold, Italic] Courier is the most common monospace (typewriter-style) font. The Mac version of Courier (top left, shown at 18 points) is scalable; the Windows version (bottom left, 15 points) is not. Therefore the scalable "Courier New" is preferred, as it is usually available on both Mac and Windows. `font-family: "Courier New", Courier, monospace` |
| Courier New | MSIE | [Bold, Italic] See discussion under *Courier* `font-family: "Courier New", Courier, monospace` |
| Fixedsys | Win | A non-scalable Windows system font used for DOS screens and other low-level tasks. Available only at 9 points. `font-family: fixedsys, monospace` |
| Gadget | Mac | A display font; avoid bold and italics. Not on pre-1999 Macs. `font-family: Gadget, fantasy` |
| Geneva | Mac | [Bold, Italic] A Mac system font since 1984. Its appearance resembles Arial and Helvetica; its function is similar to MS Sans Serif (icon names on the Desktop, etc.). `font-family: Geneva, "MS Sans Serif", sans-serif` |
| Georgia | MSIE | [Bold, Italic] Designed by Microsoft for WWW use, Georgia is a traditional looking font with "old-style" numerals. `font-family: Georgia, serif` |
| Helvetica | Mac | [Bold, Italic] A Mac system font since 1984. On the Web, Helvetica is usually paired with the nearly identical (and more common) Arial. `font-family: Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif` |
| Hoefler Text | Mac | [Bold, Italic] Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: "Hoefler Text", serif` |
| Impact | MSIE | Less common than other MSIE fonts such as Arial. A very heavy, black font, good for headlines. Weight and width are sort of like Techno. `font-family: Impact, sans-serif` |
| Monaco | Mac | Monospace font, present on all Macs. Monaco 9-point is associated with programming, debugging, and other low-level tasks, somewhat like Windows Fixedsys, System, and Terminal. `font-family: monaco, sans-serif` |
| MS Gothic | Win | Monospace system font dating back to Windows 95. Best at 12 pixels and under. `font-family: "MS Gothic", monospace` |

| Font | Platform | Description |
|---|---|---|
| MS Sans Serif | Win | Windows system font, used for dialog boxes, etc. Best at 12 pixels and under. `font-family: "MS Sans Serif", Geneva, sans-serif` |
| MS Serif | Win | Windows system font. Best at 12 pixels and under. `font-family: "MS Serif", "New York", serif` |
| New York | Mac | [Bold, Italic] Mac system font: similar in appearance to Times Roman, similar in function to MS Serif. `font-family: "New York", "MS Serif", serif` |
| Palatino | Mac | A nice serif font, present on all Macs and fairly common on PCs (with office software suites). `font-family: Palatino, serif` |
| Sand | Mac | Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: Sand, fantasy` |
| Skia | Mac | Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: Skia, sans-serif` |
| System | Win | Non-scalable (available only at 10 points), present on all Windows PCs, used for menus, etc. `font-family: System, sans-serif` |
| Tahoma | Win | Rarely used on the Web, Tahoma does have the advantage of being present even on very old Windows PCs. `font-family: Tahoma, serifSansSerifMonospace` |
| Techno | Mac | Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: Techno, Impact, sans-serif` |
| Terminal / Terminal / Terminal | Win | A non-scalable, monospace system font used for the DOS or "command-line" interface. Terminal looks very different at different point sizes. Shown here are 9, 12, and 14 points. `font-family: Terminal, monospace` |
| Textile | Mac | Not on pre-1999 Macs `font-family: Textile, cursive` |
| Times | Mac | Because some PCs have non-scalable fonts named *Times*, it is common to lead with the scalable, nearly ubiquitous MSIE font *Times New Roman* instead. Times is noticeably more compact than Times New Roman, so it can be too small to read on screen. `font-family: "Times New Roman", Times, serif` |
| Times New Roman | MSIE | This is by far the most common serif font on the Web. It is the default serif font in most browsers. `font-family: "Times New Roman", serif` |
| Trebuchet MS | | A sans-serif font designed (like Verdana) for legibility on screen. `font-family: "Trebuchet MS", sans-serif` |
| Verdana | | Possibly the most readable of the sans-serif fonts commissioned by Microsoft for on-screen use. However, Verdana shouldn't be used side-by-side with same-sized serif fonts, because Verdana will appear one or two sizes larger. `font-family: Verdana, Arial, Helvetica, sans-serif` |
| VT 100 | Mac | Functionally similar to Windows Terminal and Fixedsys, VT-100 can be scaled up for a "bitmappy" appearance. `font-family: "VT-100", monospace` |

The CSS `font-family` property lets you specify more than one font at a time, in order of preference. If the first choice is unavailable, CSS moves on to the second one, and so on. So if you really like *Franklin Gothic Demi* as a headline font, you can use the following CSS:

```
h1,h2,h3 {
   font-family: "Franklin Gothic Demi", Verdana, Arial, sans-serif;
}
```

(If a font name contains spaces, enclose it in quotes. Conclude a font-family declaration with one of the generic font types: either `sans-serif`, `serif`, `monospace` or the less common `cursive` or `fantasy`.)