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## DESCRIPTION

**Bembo** is a serif typeface that was created by the British branch of the Monotype Corporation in 1928–1929. The most common use for **Bembo** is for body text. It is apart of the "old-style" of serif fonts. However, with its regular or roman style based designs, they were cut around 1495 by Francesco Griffo. Griffo was an Italian punchcutter for the Venetian printer Aldus Manutius; sometimes called the “Aldine roman”. **Bembo** was later revived by the Monotype executive and printing historian Stanley Morison in 1929. The original typeface by Morison contained only four weights with no italics.



## HISTORY

**Bembo** was named after Pietro **Bembo**, he was a very notable Venetian poet, cardinal, and literary theorist of the 16th-century. The typeface originally was to be used in Pietro Bembo's book "De Aetna". This book was about Bembo's visit to Mount Etna.

The design of the **Bembo** typeface looked more similar to the style of the roman typefaces that we are familiar with today. As a matter of fact, the characteristics of many other popular typefaces such as Times Roman and Garamond can be traced back to the **Bembo** typeface. Something notable is that the ascenders of the lowercase lettering are actually taller than the uppercase; also the letter c is slanted forwards and there is a returned curve on the final stem of the m, n, and h as well.

## FRANCESCO **GRIFFO**

**Francesco Griffo** was born in 1450, in Bologna, Province of Bologna, Italy, and died in 1518 from execution the people believe. He was a Venetian goldsmith. He had become a punchcutter and worked for revered printer Aldus Manutius. He designed typefaces, which includes the first italic type. His Roman type shows a degree of abstraction from calligraphy. However, his italic and Greek types are particularly cursive.



His typefaces have been very influential throughout our history. Typefaces based on his work include Monotype Poliphilus roman, Bembo Book roman, Bembo Titling, Morris Fuller Benton's Cloister Old Style italic, Jack Yan's JY Aetna roman, Bitstream Aldine 401 roman, and Franko Luin's Griffio Classico roman and italic; some other similar typefaces include the Romans of Claude Garamond, Giovanni Mardersteig's Dante, Robert Slimbach's Minion and Matthew Carter's Yale Typeface.

Once again, **Francesco Griffio**, was a Venetian goldsmith, a punchcutter and worked for the revered printer Aldus Manutius. Working as a punchcutter meant Griffio spent his time punching out the shapes of typefaces into steel. Punchcutter's had to have been very skilled. Their own interpretation of the typeface they were working on would be what was finally printed; typeface designers had little say in the punchcutter's work. Simply because once their design is sent over, it is not in their hands anymore.

## STANLEY **MORISON**

**Stanley Morison** was born on May 6th, 1889, in Wanstead, England and died on October 11th, 1967. He was a British typographer, printing executive, and a historian of printing. Morison was largely self-educated, he promoted very high standards in printing and an awareness of the best printing and typefaces of the past.

From the 1920s, he became an influential adviser within the British Monotype Corporation and advised typefaces that were commissioned under **Stanley Morison's** implication. These include Times New Roman, Gill Sans and Perpetua; while the older typeface designs included Bembo, Ehrhardt, and Bell.

While the typeface Times New Roman, has become one of the most used typefaces of all time. **Stanley Morison** had also become part of the management and editor of the Times Literary Supplement in 1945, after WWII. Later in life, Morison joined the editorial board for the Encyclopædia Britannica.

# ANATOMY

<b>BEMBO</b>	Bembo MT Regular 20pt
<i>BEMBO</i>	<i>Bembo MT Italic 20pt</i>
<b>BEMBO</b>	Bembo MT Semibold 20pt
<i>BEMBO</i>	<i>Bembo MT Semibold Italic 20pt</i>
<b>BEMBO</b>	Bembo MT Bold 20pt
<i>BEMBO</i>	<i>Bembo MT Bold Italic 20pt</i>
<b>BEMBO</b>	Bembo MT Extrabold 20pt
<i>BEMBO</i>	<i>BEMBO MT Extrabold Italic 20pt</i>

A diagram illustrating typographic terms for the letters N, h, Q, g, and x. The letters are positioned on a four-line grid. The top line is the x-height line, the second line is the cap height line, the third line is the baseline, and the bottom line is the descender line. Labels with leader lines point to specific parts of the letters: 'CAP HEIGHT' points to the top of the uppercase 'N'; 'ASCENDER' points to the top of the lowercase 'h'; 'BASELINE' points to the bottom of the lowercase 'h'; 'X-HEIGHT' points to the top of the lowercase 'x'; and 'DECENDER' points to the bottom of the lowercase 'g'.

CAP HEIGHT

ASCENDER

X-HEIGHT

BASELINE

DECENDER

N h Q g x


a b c d e f  
g h i j k l  
m n o p q r  
s t u v w x  
y z

Bembo MT Regular Lowercase 40pt

A B C D E F  
G H I J K L  
M N O P Q R  
S T U V W X  
Y Z

Bembo MT Regular Uppercase 40pt

thinner angled stroke      elongated serif



The image shows the lowercase letters 'x', 'y', and 'z' in a bright orange color. The 'x' has a thin, angled stroke highlighted with a double-line callout. The 'y' has a long, curved tail. The 'z' has a long, horizontal serif at the bottom right, also highlighted with a double-line callout.

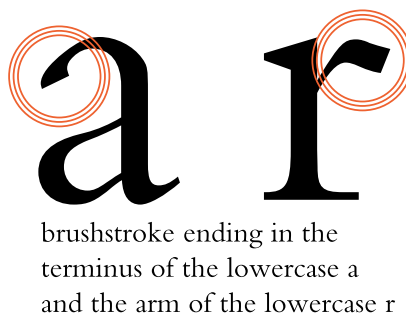
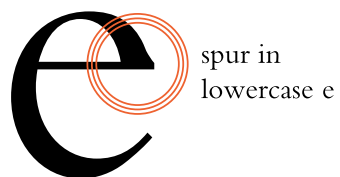
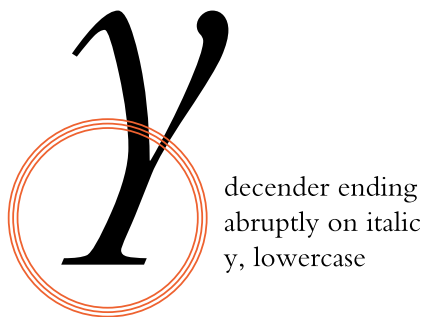
Bembo (Top), Times New Roman (Bottom)



The image shows the lowercase letters 'x', 'y', and 'z' in a dark blue color. The 'y' has a thick, curved tail that ends in a sharp hook, highlighted with a double-line callout.

harsher swash





## BEMBO **TODAY**

**Bembo** represents classic lines and has typographic grace. It is the perfect font choice for anyone because it is very versatile. It can be expressed in a classic way or it could be a more formal look in your typographical design. The elongated and confident lines add a timeless elegance to any design and message. This is why the typeface, **Bembo** has been used in many books, ads, and even for website designs.

Many of us most likely do not realize how often **Bembo** has been used. Although it has mainly been used as body text, there are still ways **Bembo** has been used today and in the past as well. Examples that use the typeface **Bembo** include The National Gallery, Evermans Library, and the Winston Cigarette ads shown throughout the 1970s.

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GALLERY





# THE NATIONAL GALLERY

Bembo used for The National Gallery logo

