

→ re/DISCOVER
THE
SHIRE
TYPES
FOR
THE
NEW
DECADE



Footnote 37

January 2021

Big, Bold and Brash

The Shire Types aren't afraid to show themselves. They're happiest used big where they can flaunt their stuff with style. The design brings together the heavy solid feel of the Grotesque and Egyptian lettering that appeared through the Industrial Revolution. Even their individual font names are taken from six shires grouped around the Heart of England, an area known as the Black Country.

Each geographical shire has its own characteristics reflected in the landscape, architecture and people; to some degree traditional lettering can also be identified locally. The Shire Types build on this idea of individual characteristics and take it further as several letterforms

change style from shire to shire and, in the same way that people are not tied to any one place but travel freely, the letters are free to move across the Shire Types and mix together to create many idiosyncratic word patterns.

Beyond the boundaries of the original Shire Types; the Shire Pro fonts include Cyrillic and Greek versions, and there's also Shire Arabic which blends features from across the six Shires to make a unique and striking addition to this script.



Shop fascia



Comic header



Sweet wrapper

Footnote 37

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A A a a a a

Derbyshire
Capital sans serif

Staffordshire
Capital slab serif

Cheshire
Mixed sans serif

Shropshire
Mixed slab serif

Warwickshire
Soft sans serif

Worcestershire
Soft slab serif

The six shires

Structure

There are six shires in three pairs; the strong all capital sans and slab serif pair (Derbyshire and Staffordshire), the relaxed mix of capital and lower case sans and slab serif (Cheshire and Shropshire), and the laid back soft cursive sans and slab (Warwickshire and Worcestershire).

Created to make a dense textural mass, the Shire Types purposefully have no ascenders or descenders, instead these features are compressed. Ascenders are brought down and descenders are raised to fit the line. Punctuation and accented characters are also treated this way resulting in interesting word shapes across different languages.

Cyrillic, Greek and Arabic

The Shire Types was expanded in 2011 to add Cyrillic and Greek. These scripts adapted well to the typeface structure and resulted in some striking and individual letter shapes. Working with Mourad Boutros from [Boutros Fonts](#), Arabic was added in 2012 with a slightly different approach being taken. As there are no capital or lower case forms in Arabic, a mix of straight and curved stems with various stroke endings was used to convey the visual patterning of the Shire Types. This blend of different styles creates an unusual texture across Arabic setting, but one that maintains a high degree of legibility.

Hafg iñq ‘;.

All letters are designed to fit a constant height; even ascenders and descenders are shrunk to conform

The dot over the i guides the design of the accented letters

Punctuation also adheres to the rules

One height rule

БДә 39 أبخ

Cyrillic follows the alignment rules and includes the italic shaped letters in Warwickshire and Worcestershire

Greek adapts well and uses the alternate letter shapes for beta, theta and phi

Arabic was compressed but had to break the rules

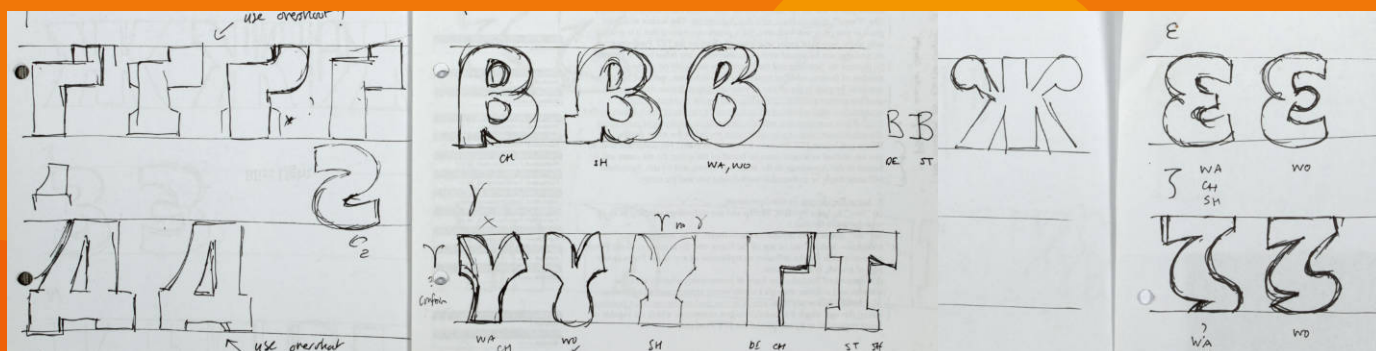
Different scripts have different opportunities and challenges

Footnote 37

January 2021



A collection of early design sketches



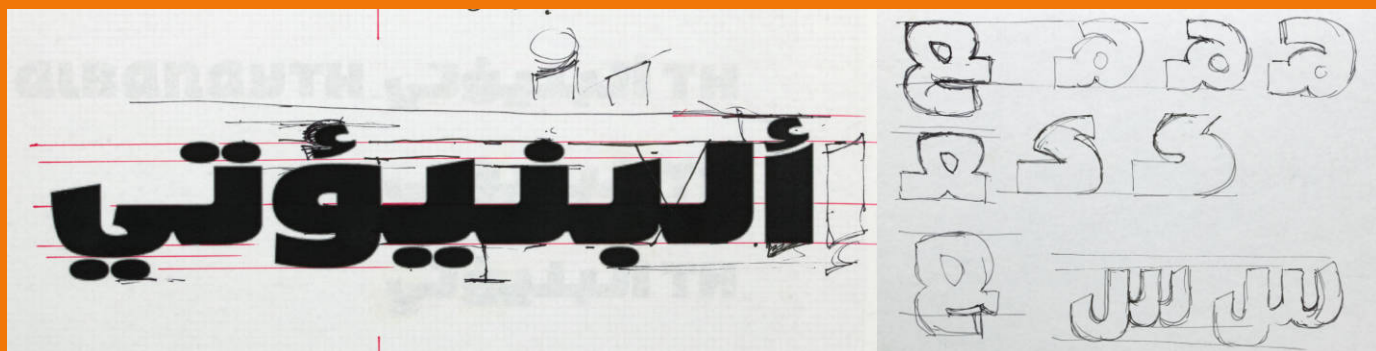
Developing Cyrillic and Greek ideas

Design

English vernacular lettering provided plenty of references that could be incorporated, and early thoughts envisaged a large number of fonts, but as ideas tightened this was reduced from a rambling twenty to a manageable six; and from three different widths to a single width in a single black weight.

Repeated letter designs were used across the fonts helping to tie the idea together and create a coherent typeface. These similarities also allowed the fonts to be more easily mixed together – so like people travelling from one shire to another; the letters can migrate and mix to create new patterns and textures.

There is only one design for O and S used across all the fonts, whereas some letters have a sans and a slab version, such as B, D, H and P. The remaining letters are free to explore different shapes and details specific to themselves and their notional shire. For instance, more cursive letter shapes appear in Warwickshire and Worcestershire. This opened up the opportunity to use the less rigid letter shapes for beta, theta, and phi in Greek and the very different shapes for several letters of Cyrillic italic. The idea of mixing different styles directed the design of Shire Arabic which blends different stem endings and shape ideas together.



Ascenders and descenders had to be used in the design of Shire Types Arabic

Footnote 37

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Studiotype.com

АРАКОН



PROSÍM



Key

1	Derbyshire	4	Shropshire
2	Staffordshire	5	Warwickshire
3	Cheshire	6	Worcestershire

Font Info PDF



The Shire Types Explorer

Explore the Shire Types and discover more

Typography.net and StudioType.com have additional resources and expanded information.

Try the fonts

All the fonts can be viewed and [tested](#) through the website. You can also download each font with our [Demo Licence](#) allowing you to try them locally in your applications.

Specific information

The [Font Info PDF](#) gives an overview of the detailing and features of the fonts as well as their language support.

Design notes

Take a look at [StudioType.com](#) to see some of the inspiration and development sketches for the Shire Types.

Explorer

We've built a dedicated [Explorer](#) page for the Shire Types. Through the Explorer you can glide over the typeface; its shapes and words, then click on any of the [+](#) icons to discover more. Explorer is best experienced through a desktop, laptop or tablet. A link can also be found on the Shire Types page.