FDI

Wayfinding Sans Pro

THE ULTIMATE SIGNAGE TYPEFACE

FDI Type Foundry

Font Family	Wayfinding Sans Pro
Designer	Ralf Herrmann, Sebastian Nagel
Released	2012
Styles	20
Script Support	Latin Extended, Cyrillic, Greek

Legibility
redefined.

CONDENSED NORMAL EXTENDED

a a a a a a — REGULAR

a a a a a a — REGULAR NEGATIVE

a a a a a a — BOLD

a a a a a a — BOLD NEGATIVE

Gates A1–A7

Aankomst

Airport Lounge

Check-in Area

STAFF ONLY!

Departures

Emergency Exit

Passkontrolle

Duty-free shops

Stationnement

DESIGNED BY:
RALF HERRMANN, SEBASTIAN NAGEL

STYLES: 20 (2 WEIGHTS, 3 WIDTHS)

LATIN EXTENDED, GREEK, CYRILLIC

CHARACTERS PER STYLE: >800

DESTINATION: SIGNAGE FOR AIRPORTS, ROADS, PARKS, OFFICE BUILDINGS, HOSPITALS, MALLS, LIBRARIES ...

OTF

Amsterdam

Snæfellsjökull

Magdeburg 36 km

Можайск 6

Ηράκλειο

Gare de l'Est

České Budějovice

Sheffield Square

auf engem Raum

Mind the Gap!

Διδυμότειχο

Alexanderplatz

Goetheplatz

LEXINGTON AV.

Железнодорожный

Faubourg Montmartre

Muzeum Śląskie

ORANIENSTRAßE

THE PUBLIC LIBRARY

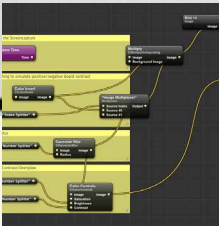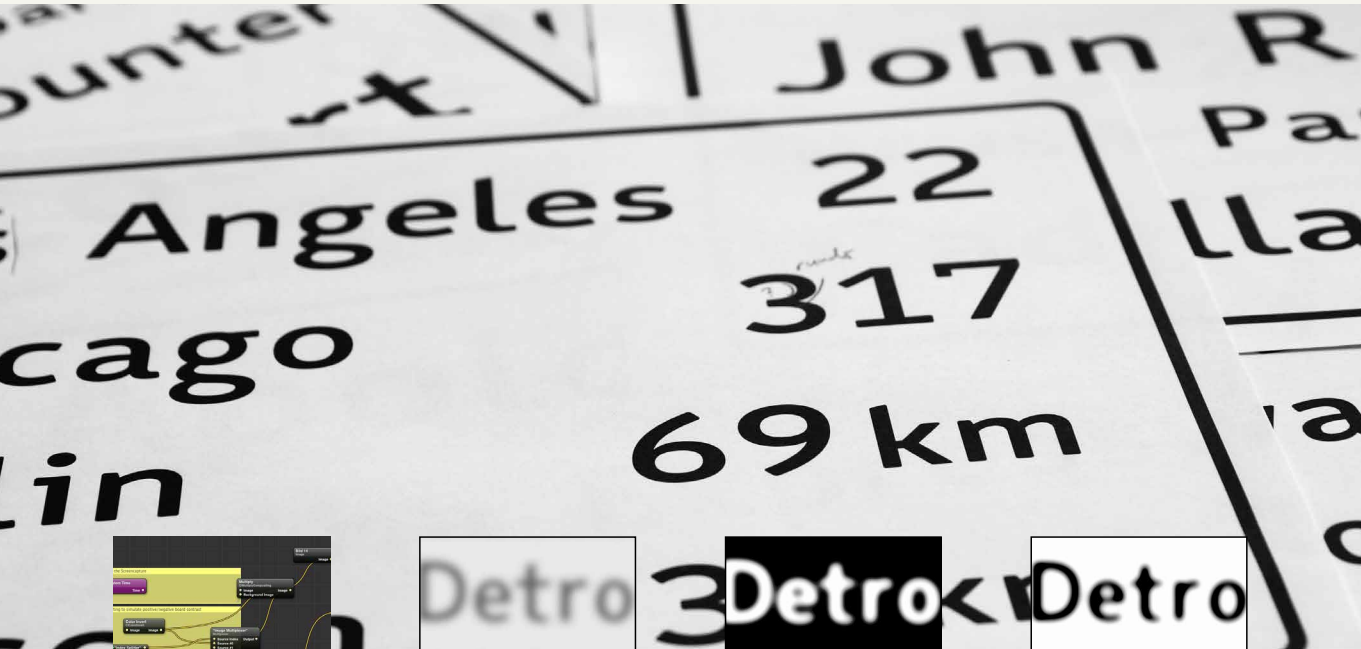↑ **Non Fiction** *Arts, Human Sciences, Business*
Printers & Photocopiers

← **Conference Room A** *"Michelangelo"*
Study Spaces A–C
Journal Archive
Special Collections

↘ **Wardrobe | Restrooms**
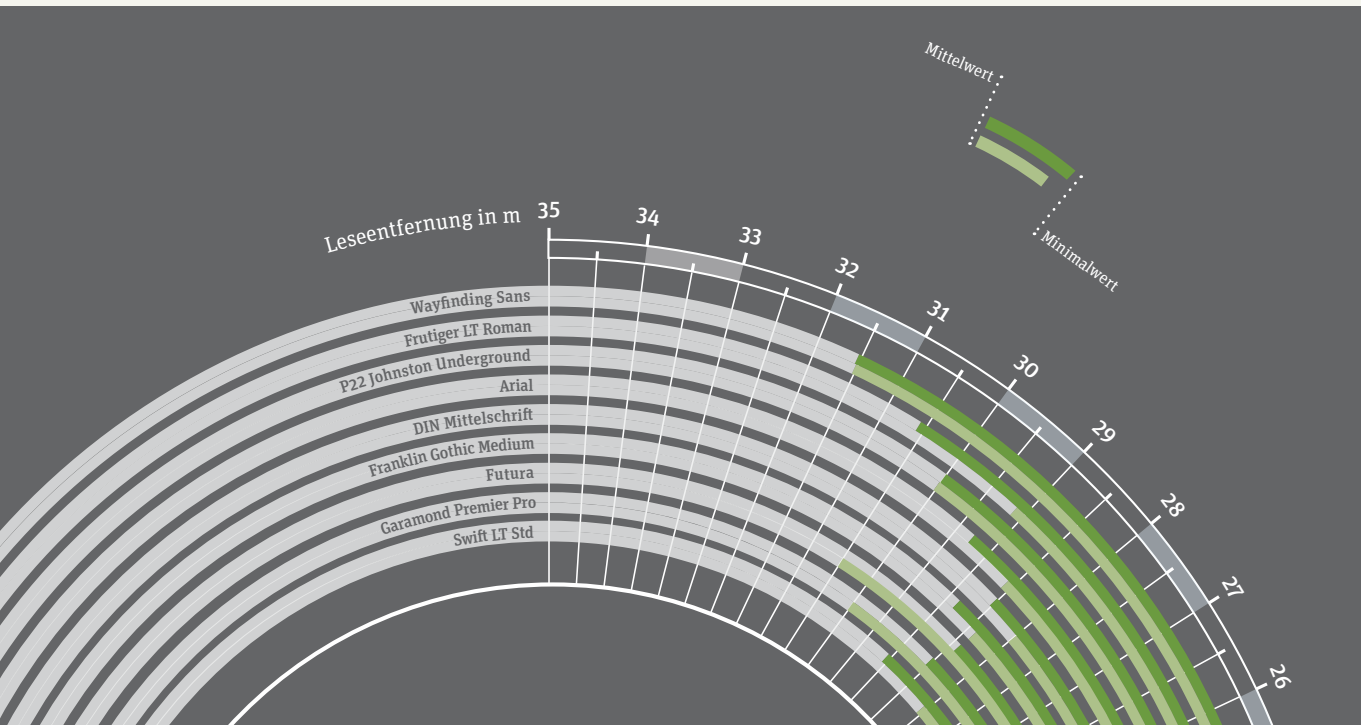**Parking Level −1**

Six Years
of Research and
Development

Ralf Herrmann, the designer of Wayfinding Sans, started this projects with extensive field studies, driving tens of thousands of miles to explore the legibilty of road signage typeface in dozens of countries around the world. After building his own theoretic framework of relevant legibility parameters, the design process used a unique custom real-time simulation software, which could simulate difficult reading conditions (distance, fog, halation, positive/negative contrast) while the letters where actually designed. This process made it possible to optimize even the tiniest details of each letter for maximum legibility. Being made specifically for wayfinding purposes, this type family does not compromise on any aspect of legibility—and yet, the typeface is a beautiful, clean and modern sans serif. With its broad language support and the large number of available styles it is perfectly suitable for any possible signage project anywhere on the world.

Superior legibility.
Empirically proven.

Leseentfernung in m

x-Höhe = < 67 %
Ø x-Höhe besser lesbar

x-Höhe
67–69 %

x-Höhe = > 69 %
gleiche Versalhöhe besser lesbar

35
34
33
32
31
30
29
28
27

Garamond Premiere Pro
Futura
P22 Johnston Underground
Wayfinding Sans
DIN Mittelschrift
Swift LT Std
Arial
Frutiger LT Roman
Franklin Gothic

Leseentfernung bei gleicher Versalhöhe

Leseentfernung bei gleicher x-Höhe

In an independent empirical study at the University of Applied Sciences "htw" in Berlin different typefaces where tested when used on signs and Wayfinding Sans Pro (bold extended) was the winner in all conducted tests, being significantly more legible and therefore superior to all other styles of the tested typefaces—among them typical signage typefaces like Frutiger, DIN1451, Johnston Underground and Futura.

Mittelwert

Minimalwert

Leseentfernung in m   35   34   33   32   31   30   29   28   27   26

Wayfinding Sans
Frutiger LT Roman
P22 Johnston Underground
Arial
DIN Mittelschrift
Franklin Gothic Medium
Futura
Garamond Premier Pro
Swift LT Std

Designed for recognizability

To increase the possible viewing distance, the skeleton of the letters of a signage typeface need to be generic and familiar but also unmistakable. And this is exactly how Wayfinding Sans Pro was designed from the ground up.

Designed for distinguishability

Optimized distinguishability is not so much an issue with print typefaces, which are supposed to be read at an ideal reading distance. But when type is read under difficult viewing condition, letter differenciation becomes crucial and can make a big difference. Geometric designs might look clean and simple and therefore promise a good legibility, but actually, the opposite is true: under difficult viewing conditions, the simple geometric designs perform poorly, because they don't provide the structural difference to achieve a good distinguishability.

Polish road signage typeface (top)
Wayfinding Sans (bottom)
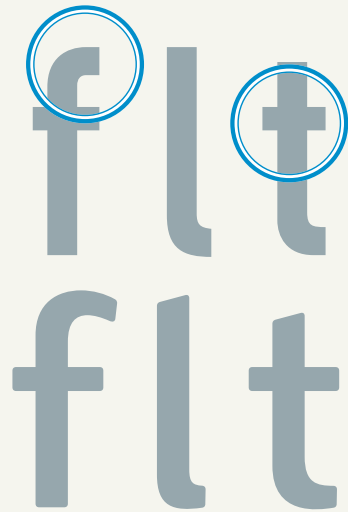
Wayfinding Sans takes special care of letters which are easily misread. By making the differences of these letters more prominent, the legibility can be improved dramatically.

Dutch road signage font (top)
Wayfinding Sans (bottom)

German road signage font (top)
Wayfinding Sans (bottom)

The letters of sans serif print typefaces like Helvetica are supposed to look as uniform as possible and should create an even color on the page. But what might be desirable in print, can decrease the legibility when used for signage.

BR oe 1ll
BR oe 1lt

Helvetica (top)
Wayfinding Sans (bottom)

Figures optimized for signage use

Figures are usually designed in a way, so they can blend in with the regular letters. But the figures of Wayfinding Sans are optimized for the requirements of signage use: maximum distinguishability and lining tabular design. Oldstyle and proportional figures are available as well as OpenType features.

CODE: OX0AT2

Is it a capital letter O or a zero? You can't always tell for sure in some typefaces. The difference is obvious in Wayfinding Sans and if necessary, you can turn on the OpenType feature "Slashed Zero" to increase the differenciation even more.

Weimar	14 km
Berlin	319 km
Hamburg	526 km

Diacritical marks: details that matter

Diacritical marks are an important part of many languages using the Latin script. Again, what might be desirable in print, might not work for signage. On signs the diacritical marks must be unmistakable in their design and prominent in their size, because such separated letter parts will be the first that become illegible or even invisible when viewed from a distance.

British road signage font (top)

Polish road signage font (middle)

Wayfinding Sans (bottom)

Arrows,
the easy way

Entering and positioning arrows along with text in a signage layout can be a time-consuming task. But not so with Wayfinding Sans Pro: The arrows can be easily typed along with the text. Just activate the Stylistic Set and type the appropriate code. These codes follow a simple naming scheme based on the cardinal directions: "hyphen hyphen n" will create an arrow pointing up ("North"). Add an "e" for East and the arrow will point North-East. It's that simple! And if the typical 8 directions are not sufficient for your project: Wayfinding Sans also offers arrows for targets which are located around a corner or can only be reached by turning around.
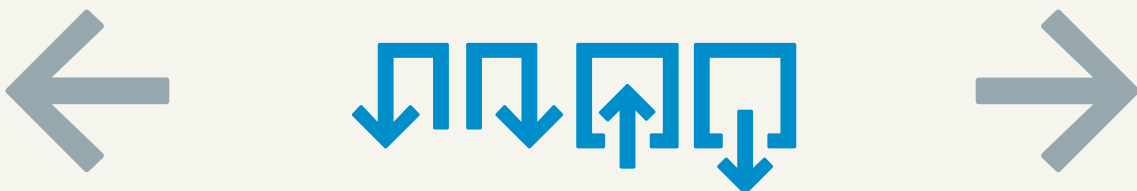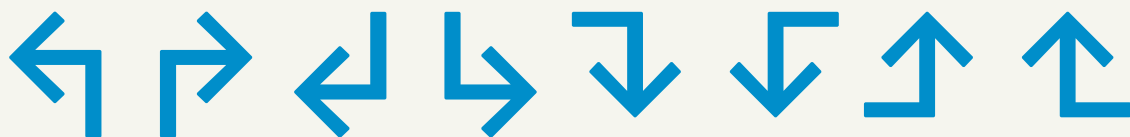
Pointing up?
Or straight ahead?

An arrow pointing upwards can mean "go straight ahead" or "go up the stairs/escalator". But what to do if both directions are required on one sign? Not to worry! Wayfinding Sans contains an optional 3D arrow for "straight ahead".

Victoria Line

Also available:
Wayfinding Sans Symbols

Over 400 symbols in 4 versions. Wayfinding Sans Symbols in the perfect companion for Wayfinding Sans Pro.

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