

Best Practice for Web-Design

It often happens that we work with different designers for different projects. In this case I find myself correcting freelancers and making them redesign their work. In order to simplify our work, I am laying out these guidelines to be used when designing websites.

Note the purpose is not to limit creativity but to avoid “mistakes” that decrease performance of a website. At RUESCH MEDIA we help build websites that perform.

We encourage you to be creative, by understanding

1. Who we are communicating to – target audience,
2. What we are offering,
3. What we are communicating
4. And how we are communicating it, so the target audience responds.

Typography

Typography is a complex subject that includes more than just picking out a font that one likes.

Typography is an art form that has been around for hundreds of years. Words and text are all around us every day in almost everything we do. In every piece of type, you see, somebody has considered how the letters, sentences and paragraphs will look in order for it to be read by us or make us feel a certain way when we look at it. Sometimes it is done well, others not. Often it is graphic designers who are the ones deciding how it will look, in brochures, logos, websites and so on. The better Graphic Designers are at this, the more effective designs will be.

Good typography comes from paying attention to tiny details as this can make the difference between graphic design work that is just acceptable or good. There is more to it than just choosing fonts and making copy look good – it is also about making things legible and readable (some of most basic functions of good typography) as well as making layouts look good in an aesthetic way.

Basic definitions:

Typeface: A complete set of designs for letters. Example: Helvetica, Calibri, Arial.

Font: a specific size and style within a typeface. Example: **Arial Black**, Arial Narrow.

Here are some rules to apply when designing for RUESCH MEDIA around text

- **Font-family / typeface:** - unless there is good reason limit the amount of typeface to 3. In total the page shouldn't have more than a few types of fonts and sizes.

Typical is the corporate identity typeface as used in the logo. One for the text in the body and an additional as it suits the design.

- **Font-size:** the regular size for body text is between 13px-18px
- **Headline font-size:** font-size for the headlines 1 and headlines 2 should be larger.
- **Line-height:** line-height should be at around 1.5 em or 150 % of the text in the body
- **Paragraph width:** keep them narrow so they are easy to read. My formula on setting the width is:

Font-size * line-height * 24,9 = width

- **ALL CAPS SHOULDN'T BE USED.** Only individual WORDS can put in all caps.

Rules for responsiveness

There are many ways to apply responsive rules to websites, but my favorite solution is to set a base html font-size for each optimized screen size and adjusting the size for paragraphs and headlines using percent or ems.

Ref: <https://codeitdown.com/responsive-font-size-css/>

Example in code:

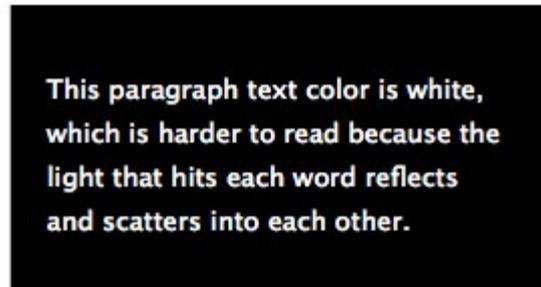
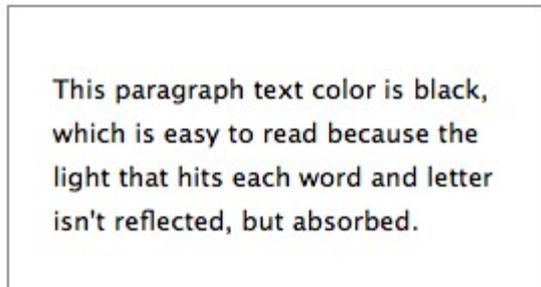
```
html {  
  font-size: 20px;  
}
```

```
.element {
  font-size: 2em;
}
@media(max-width: 1580px) {
  html {
    font-size: 18px;
  }
  .element {
    font-size: 1.9em; /* Fine tune unbehaved elements */
  }
}
@media(max-width: 980px) {
  html {
    font-size: 16px;
  }
}
```

Background

The background sets the tone and atmosphere for the website and plays an important role in the making text readable. **My rules are for the background are:**

Dark on white - 99 % of the text must be dark and on a lighter background. The background must be light enough to make a sharp contrast.



Any exceptions are only allowed for short text. Examples would be:

- Call-to-Actions
- Citations
- Highlighted paragraphs

Images

The basic formula to getting the right reaction from the target audience is

1. Attention -> usually an image
2. Interest - > headline
3. Desire -> Text, benefits
4. Action -> call to action

A person reads from left to right. Based on this, we apply the following rules images and layouts:

Images may be placed

- left of the headline:
- behind the headline (in the case keep the image simple):
- above the headline:

but not

- below the headline
- right of the headline

Note: Images in the body of the text can be aligned to the right or left etc....