

## CHOOSING THE RIGHT FONT FOR YOUR DATA VISUAL

Typography is a fascinating domain. Fonts evoke emotions: there are very sophisticated fonts, playful fonts, attention-grabbing fonts, and elegant handwritten fonts. Using the wrong type of font can have a lot of impact. In data visualization the implications of typography are mainly focused on readability. Labels and annotations can easily become so small they get hard to read. Above all else, we should choose a font which is readable at small sizes.

### What influences readability?

The readability of a font at small sizes is mainly determined by three aspects: the x-height, the counter, and the serifs.



x-height

The [x-height](#) of a font is the height of the lowercase letters compared to the height of the line itself. Fonts with a lower x-height are more difficult to read than fonts with a higher x-height.



counter

The [counter](#) is the enclosed space inside a letter, such as in the letters 'o', 'a' or 'e'. The larger the counter size, the easier it becomes to read a font at small sizes.



serifs

Finally, the [serifs](#). Sans-serif fonts are generally easier to read at small sizes than serif fonts. The different serifs - the small lines and strokes attached to the end of individual letters - [make longer texts easier to read](#), because our brains can more easily distinguish different letters from each other. That's why almost any book is set in a serif font. But for small text, the serifs get in the way and sans-serif fonts are the way to go.

## Where to find the perfect font?

If you're struggling to find the perfect font, a good website like [Google Fonts](#) can help you out. With over 1300 free font families, there's always something for every situation. You can enter your own text and immediately see how it will look in all of these different fonts. You can filter by category or you can look specifically for very bold fonts, wide fonts, etc. Once you've found the perfect font, all you have to do is download it and install it on your computer.

## The best fonts for data visualization

If you still find looking for the perfect font a daunting task, try some of the fonts developed specifically for readability:

[Assistant](#) | [Lato](#) | [Noto Sans](#) | [Roboto](#) | [Source Sans](#)

If you want to know more about visualizing data in the right way, you can check out the other videos in this series. Or I invite you to read my book, [Powerful Charts](#), that will give you actionable insights and practical guidelines to create data visuals that truly engage and inspire your audience.