

garamond.

"Garamond" is the name given to a group of old-style serif typefaces named after the French publisher and punch-cutter Claude Garamond (c. 1480-1561). Garamond started out as an assistant of Geoffroy Tory, and together they were able to introduce the apostrophe, the accent, and the cedilla to the French language. However, Garamond is best known for being a true renaissance man, and went on to become one of the first independent typefounders, as well as one of the leading type designers of his time. Although not the inventor of movable type, Garamond was the first to make type available to printers at an affordable price.

Claude Garamond came to prominence in the 1540's, when he was commissioned by the French King Francis I to create an exclusive Greek typeface to be used in a series of royal books. At that time, it was common for typeface designers to base their fonts off of the handwritings and designs of other people around them, so

for this font family, Garamond based the design of the lowercase letters on the handwritings of Angelo Vergecio, the King's Librarian. His type designs are said to be "among the most finished specimens of typography that exist", and that is probably why his influence spread so rapidly throughout France and Western Europe.

After his death, Garamond's Roman typeface was picked up by a French punch-cutter named Jean Jannon and it became the inspiration for the design of what is now known today as the "Garamond" typefaces. So, ironically, Claude Garamond had nothing to do with the design of the typeface that is named after him. In fact, Jannon created his type specimen with attributes similar to the designs of Garamond in 1621, sixty years after the master's death. After being lost for more than a century, Jannon's typeface designs were rediscovered in 1825 by the National Printing Office of France, and were wrongly attributed to Claude Garamond. It was not until 1927, more than 100 years later, that the true origin of Jannon's "Garamond" typefaces were correctly credited to him, however, by that time the "Garamond" name had been widely accepted.

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Contemporary typefaces which show Jean Jannon's influence include the Roman versions of the "Garamond", "Granjon", "Sabon", "Maiola", and "Fabiol" font families. Known digital versions include: "Adobe Garamond" and "Garamond Premier" (both designed by Robert Slimbach), "Granjon" and "Sabon" (designed by Jan Tschichold), "ITC Garamond" (designed by Tony Stan), "ATF Garamond" ("Garamond #3"), "Apple Garamond" (designed by Bitstream), "Monotype Garamond", "Simoncini Garamond", "Stempel Garamond", and "Garamond Classico".

"Garamond" typefaces offer elegance and readability, making them suitable for a wide range of applications. Garamond's letterforms convey a sense of fluidity and consistency. Some unique characteristics in the letterforms are the small bowl of the 'a' and the small eye of the 'e'. Also, long extenders and top serifs have a downward slope. A direct relationship between Garamond's letterforms and contemporary type can be found in the Roman versions of typefaces such as: Sabon, Granjon, Stempel Garamond, and Adobe Garamond typefaces.

