

Sassoon® Joiner fonts User Guide

Format: OpenType-PS

Version: 4.002

Date: 28.01.2013

Sassoon Unjoined

Sassoon Linked

Sassoon Linked Line

Sassoon Joined

Sassoon Joined Line

Sassoon Pen

Sassoon Pen Line

Sassoon® Joiner Typefaces

We have designed a joined-up font so it was necessary for us to illustrate all joins to every letter. Then we have provided alternatives and the facility to unjoin any letter or letters wished. Using our joiner' fonts for the teaching of handwriting raises several questions. Above all, is it beneficial to teach children to join every letter all the time? What can be designed to look good in a font may not be at all efficient in handwriting. Take ff or ft for example, where there are many acceptable letterforms and consequently, ways to join.

Some degree of joining is certainly desirable, and with an exit on the basic letters it should be easy for young children to progress to simple joins and develop more complex, perhaps personal ones, as they become more confident.

Modern pens work in a different way, and often require a slightly different penhold to the quills and pointed metal nibs used in continuous cursive a century and more ago. Then it was essential not to lift the pen during a word or the likely result would be a blot. Now the hand rests on the table to control the pen, not just balanced on one finger as it was of old. Pen lifts are needed so that the hand can move easily along the line. The movement from the end of one letter to where the next starts is the same whether the hand is in the air or on the paper, (if the letters are properly formed). Therefore no time or effort is lost by taking a penlift. You will not see efficient adults joining every letter all the time, so why should we expect children to do so.

Today, with computers doing much of the work, writing needs to be fast and efficient for the remaining tasks. I was always reluctant to provide a tool that enabled teachers to impose a fully joined script, which I believe to be counterproductive. I sincerely hope that teachers will use these fonts wisely, and make full use of the alternatives which make our Joiner typefaces so different.

Rosemary Sassoon Ph D.

Sassoon® Joiner OpenType Fonts

Our collaboration over the last 20 years has produced typefaces for the teaching of reading and handwriting to schools, teachers, parents, as easy to use popular font formats. These 'joining' fonts were developed over many years, firstly as fonts controlled by a separate program in various versions and now appear as a 'font-only' solution, opening up a whole range of uses on Whiteboards, Tablets, Smartphones Computers and Internet. The challenges were not only technical, but a desire to make a product that was easy to understand and use, in the same way we make all our products.

Had we set out to make a commercial script, say for advertising, there would be all manner of fancy letterforms, joins, flourishes, ligatures and so on. But these fonts are instructional letterforms, dedicated to showing 'how' to join. Just as Underground rail maps show where lines connect in a schematic way, these fonts use the same principle, employing letterforms that represent how handwriting works - but not a model to be copied slavishly. Starting joined handwriting in this way leaves plenty of scope for teachers to try their choice of joins to demonstrate alternatives and offers pupils flexibility to discover and develop a personal style.

So where there is opportunity to use different letterforms to illustrate joins, they have been included as alternatives in an OpenType term called 'Stylistic Sets'. They are just some of the ways these letters can join; lifting the pen in different places to achieve efficiency yet retain legibility when writing speeds up or otherwise deteriorates. To take the ff and ft example:



offer offer after after

The words above illustrate how, in a joined font, it is difficult if not impossible to show all the crossbar joins. They might distort the following letter. In this example we could show joins from f to e because lowering the cross-bar of f retains legibility of both letters. However a crossbar join from t to e does not work in type but works very efficiently in handwriting. Try it.

Above all, our few but important alternatives should make teachers think about which choices they prefer and which are most suitable for their pupils.

Adrian Williams

Sassoon® Joiner OpenType Features

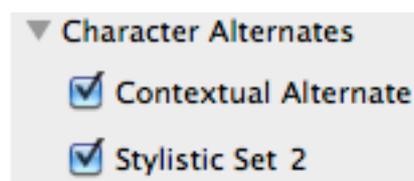
When the feature called 'Contextual Alternate' is tuned ON in the host program such as Microsoft Word, highlighted or entered lower case letters join in a Default way. You may find these letters join in just the way you want. In Default mode, these few important letters join wherever possible from the baseline. So they could be referred to as 'Baseline joins'.

THE I J b k p the

NOTE: t joins from baseline except to x and z.
Capital letters do not join to each other or to the lower case.

Because they influence where the exit stroke joins the next letter, these lower case letters have alternatives that are important for the teaching of handwriting. The different letterforms give teachers a choice. These are called OpenType 'Stylistic Sets'. Choosing a Set turns ON the letterform from that point onwards as letters are typed, until turned OFF. For example, if Font > Advanced checkboxes in your text editing program, such as Microsoft Word, show Contextual Alternate are ON, the words join in a Default way with baseline joins. Also choosing Stylistic Set 2 changes k in the word 'kicking' for example:

kicking



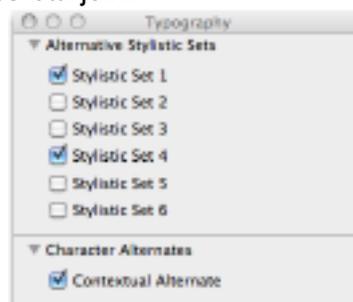
SINGLE STYLISTIC SETS

Some Text Editing Applications, such as Microsoft Word 2010, can use only one Stylistic Set at a time, so we have provided several Stylistic Sets with various combinations of alternative letters.

COMBINE SETS FOR MORE VARIED JOINS

In some professional Page Layout Applications, combinations of Sets can be applied to an entire passage of text. For example, when selecting the Default words and choosing more than one Stylistic Set, those choices are ALL applied. The resulting Set 1 and Set 4 changes the 'b' to the alternate and 't' baseline join becomes a cross-bar join:

big tall big tall



Stylistic Sets 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 can all be ON at the same time if required.

To use Set 5 (a mixture of baseline and cross-bar joining t), Set 4 must be turned OFF.

STYLISTIC SET EXAMPLES

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

No OpenType features selected

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

'Contextual Alternates' OpenType feature provides Default joins.

These joins can then be further modified by selecting a 'Stylistic Set' OpenType feature:

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 1: Alternative b and p, top-joining o to f

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 2: Alternative two-stroke k

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 3: Alternative two-stroke k, Capital I and J with serifs, top-joining o to f

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 4: Cross-bar t join (where practical), top-looped f

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 5: Mixed Baseline and Cross-bar t joins, top-looped f

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 6: Capital I and J serifs

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 7: Alternative two-stroke k, Default b, p, Capital I, J serifs, Unjoined g, j, p, q, y

Unjoined letters can also have a Stylistic Set applied:

the quick brown fox often jumps over to Jane's lazy old dog

Stylistic Set 7 with Contextual Alternates OFF:

Alternative two-stroke k, Default b, p, Capital I and J serifs, Unjoined descenders

Joining breaks, or 'pen lifts' can also be introduced if a word is too long for small hands to write. In this example, pen lifts were created by pressing the 'bar' key after each 'a' before entering the next letter. Of course you can also revisit a word and introduce a pen lift anytime.

internationalisation



Using pen lift breaks and combinations of Stylistic Sets for words offers complete flexibility when creating handwriting examples.

CONTEXTUAL ALTERNATE ON/OFF EXAMPLES

When the Contextual Alternate feature is turned OFF, parts of words can be left unjoined, then a Stylistic Set added to illustrate how only those letters join. This action is most useful for long words or large passages of text, where isolating the alternate letter is needed.

bubble bath

Contextual Alternate is OFF, so no letters join.

bubble hubble

Contextual Alternate is ON, so letters join with their 'Default' baseline joining strokes.

bubble trouble

Contextual Alternate is OFF. Contextual Alternate has been applied ONLY to 'bble'.

bubble rubble

Contextual Alternate is OFF. Stylistic Set 1 has been applied ONLY to 'bble'.

Accessing OpenType alternative letters

The method for accessing OpenType font 'Stylistic Sets' feature may be differ depending on the program in use. Examples of how to access Stylistic Sets in different applications are:

MICROSOFT® Word

Select (highlight) the text and right-click. Choose Font menu > Advanced.
Ensure the 'Contextual Alternatives' box is ticked to invoke the joining of letters.
Choose the Stylistic Set required.

TEXTEDIT (Mac)

Select text. Press Command T for font list. Click Font Panels 'Actions' (cogwheel icon) > Typography...
Choose from all available Stylistic Sets feature listed in the palette.

QUARK XPRESS (Mac)

The Stylistic Sets feature is not available in this Application, but characters can be selected individually. From Menu Bar > Show Character Viewer. View: Glyph > Font: Sassoon.
Place insertion point in XP document then select glyph in Viewer > Insert with Font.
All alternatives are available for insertion in this way.

ILLUSTRATOR

Select text in the document and show Font palette.
Click on OpenType tab > Stylistic Alternatives and choose a set.