# Fonts

## What is it for?

Fonts are used everywhere, whether that's in a Word document, in a design, in a slide deck, or on a website. Not all fonts are created equal. Many people will have come across Wingdings and similar fonts (Wingdings has an interesting history; for more information, see an article on Wingdings font history), so we're all aware of fonts that are completely unreadable. However, some fonts may appear to be easy to read to some, but incredibly challenging for others.

Fonts are impactful to everyone, but especially for the following people:

- People with reading difficulties (like dyslexia)
- People with visual impairments

## How to support it

This section focuses on what to look for when choosing a font.

Mirroring is when a reader mixes up two characters, because one looks like the other turned around. For example, someone might read a lowercase b as a d, or 6 as 9. This means the word bog could be read as dog.

Transposition is when letters seem to swap places. For people with dyslexia and other reading difficulties, this is often a bigger problem than mirroring. For example, someone might read “loin” as “lion”, or “lien” as “line”.

To help with mirroring and transposition, choose a font where characters like these look clearly different from each other:

- q p
- d b
- 0 O
- n u
- i l 1 I
- 6 9
- a 8

- a 6
- 6 g 9
- rn m

When choosing a font, especially a sans serif (Google Fonts glossary), compare the uppercase `I`, lowercase `l` and number `1`. In many fonts, all three are a single straight line, so they're easy to mix up. Look for a font that makes them different, for example a flat base on the `1` or a tail on the `l`. Small differences in height or line thickness also help.

Fonts such as Atkinson Hyperlegible Next have become popular with individuals who have visual or cognitive disabilities.

## Useful links

- Introducing accessibility in typography
- Siteimprove: Accessible fonts
- What is an accessible font?