

A Modern Handbook
for Optimizing the
Reading Experience

Getting Comfortable with Roboto Serif



This book is secretly a type specimen for Google's latest addition to the Roboto superfamily. You can learn all about it—and what makes it so comfortable to read—on pgs 11-18.

Introduction

You look at a lot of words every day—why not be more comfortable while you read them? For example, how do you feel right now? Are you in a hot tub while you read this? Do you wish you were? How tight are your pants? How loose is your belt? How clean are your glasses? Where's your teddy bear? Where's your mom? What about cookies? How many cookies are in your hand?

This book is for anyone who reads words and likes to be comfortable whilst reading them. You deserve more reading comfort in your everyday life! And this book, brought to you by Roboto Serif, is filled with information on how to get it.

Godspeed, and here's to getting comfortable!



Cover: Optical Size 50pt, Weight 900 Black, Width 100%, Grade 0; Optical Size 13pt, Weight 400 Regular. Opposite: Optical Size 8pt, Weight 700 Bold, Width 100%, Grade 0. Optical Size 8pt, Weight 900 Black, Width 150%, Grade 0. This page: Optical Size 10pt, Weight 200 ExtraLight and 500 Medium, Width 150%, Grade 0

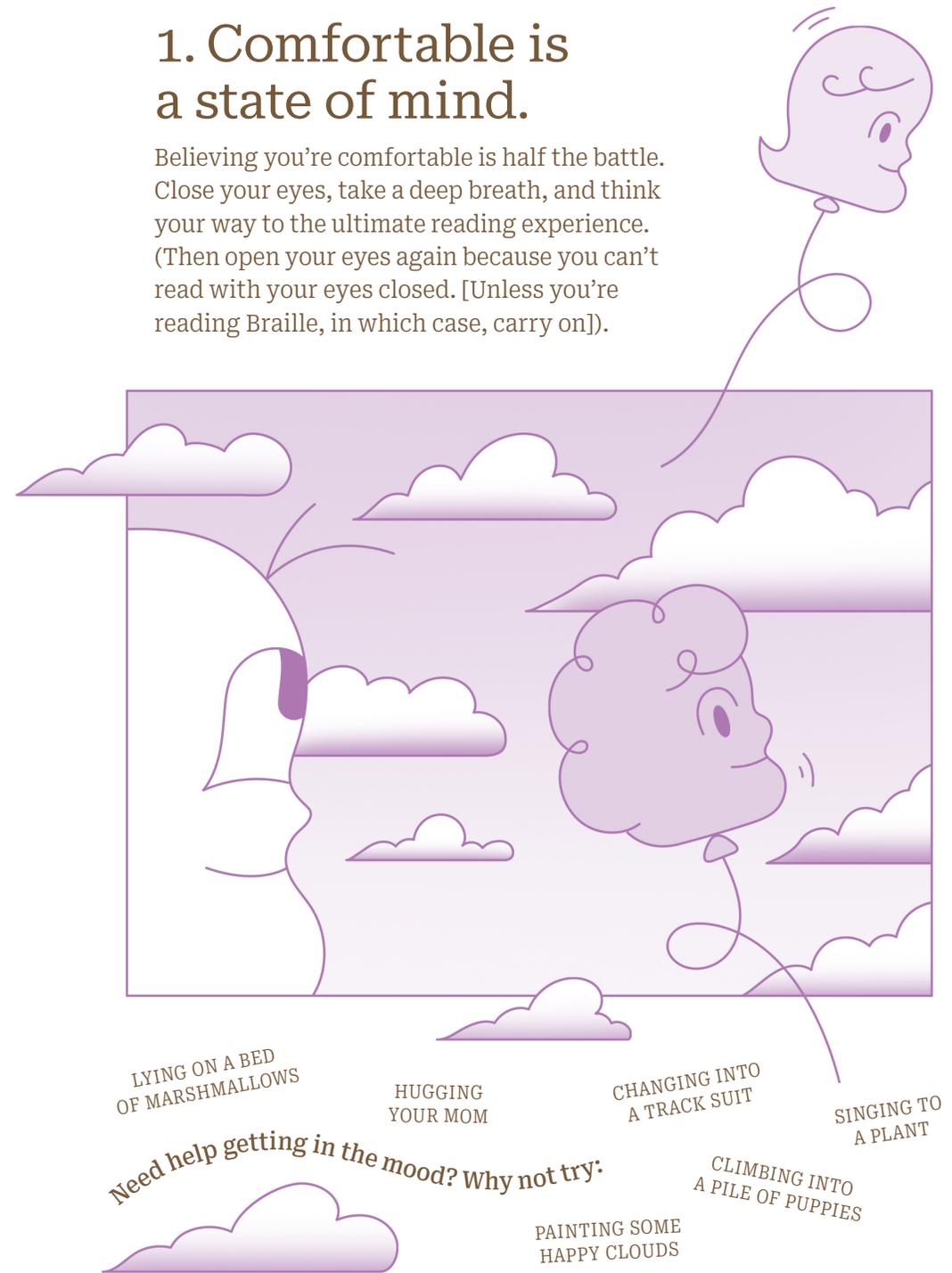
Pleasure Reading

It's likely you've been living *your whole life* without a strategy for reading comfortability. So, congratulations! You've made it this far on pure talent alone. Imagine how comfortable reading is going to get now that you have a roadmap.*

**WARNING: Always remember to exercise these principles in moderation; radical comfort may that lead to sleepiness, a force too powerful for even the most seasoned reader.*

1. Comfortable is a state of mind.

Believing you're comfortable is half the battle. Close your eyes, take a deep breath, and think your way to the ultimate reading experience. (Then open your eyes again because you can't read with your eyes closed. [Unless you're reading Braille, in which case, carry on]).



This page: Optical Size 22pt, Weight 400 Regular, Width 100%, Grade 0. Optical Size 10pt, Weight 300 Light and 500 Medium, Width 70%, Grade 0. Optical Size 8pt, Weight 300 Light, Width 50%, Grade 0. Opposite: Optical Size 28pt; Weight 300 Light, 300 Light Italic, and 500 Medium; Width 100%; Grade 0. Size 7pt, Optical Size 8pt; Weight 500 Regular; Width 110%, Grade 0

2. Lighting is your friend.

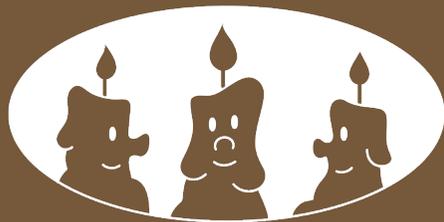
Now that you're in the mood, it's time to get set up. Lighting is crucial; you need to optimize your ambiance and to actually see words:



DO supplement natural light with lamps as needed.



DON'T rely on the moon for anything more than mood lighting.



DO use candles liberally.



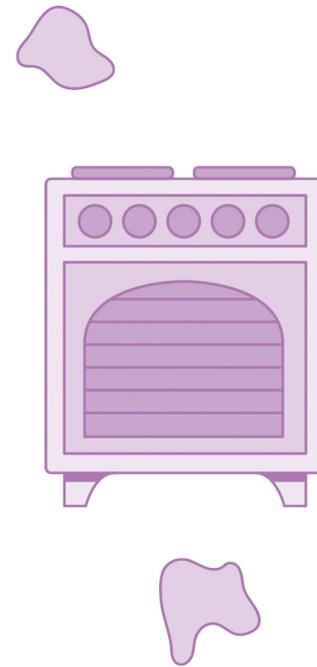
DON'T fall asleep and let the candles burn your house down.



DO consider anti-glare protectors for your device screens.



DON'T forget to do your eye yoga exercises after long periods of screen time.



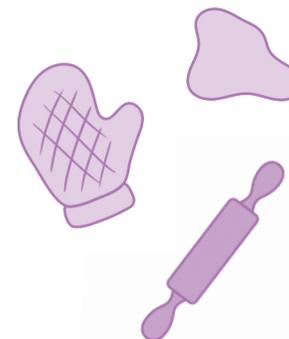
3. Enhance the experience with snacks.

Not all great “comfort foods” make great “comfortable-reading foods,” but necessity is the mother of invention. If you can figure out a way to turn mashed potatoes and gravy into a finger food, you should 100% do that. Otherwise, opt for a simpler (and just as comforting) snack like shortbread. This classic version will go great with whatever you're reading, but if you're feeling adventurous, try a classics-inspired variation like the ones below.

CLASSIC SHORTBREAD

- 2 cups (250g) all-purpose flour
- 2 sticks (226g) butter, cold, cut into 1" pieces
- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup (150g) sugar

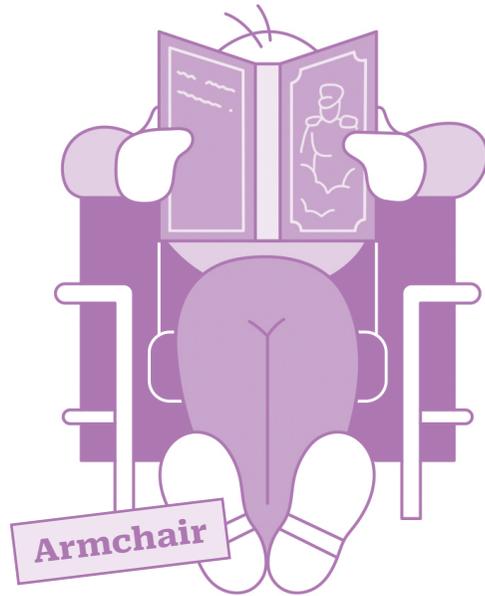
- {1} HEAT oven to 325°.
- {2} COMBINE flour and sugar.
- {3} ADD butter and combine until crumbly.
- {4} PRESS dough into an ungreased] 8" pan. Use a toothpick to poke holes all over.
- {5} BAKE 45 min or until golden. Cut into squares (or whatever shape you want) while still warm.



VARIATIONS: ♦ *Gullivers Travels*: Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup mini chocolate chips ♦ *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*: Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh Snozberries (or $\frac{1}{3}$ cup dried if fresh aren't available) ♦ *A Wrinkle in Time*: Add $\frac{2}{3}$ cup chopped raisins ♦ *Roots*: Add $\frac{3}{4}$ cup minced crystallized ginger root ♦ *A Clockwork Orange*: Add 2 tbsp orange zest ♦ *Lord of the Flies*: Add 2 tbsp minced, freeze-dried, edible locusts ♦ *The Hunger Games*: Double recipe

4. Take a comfy seat.

If you think this one is obvious, fair point. But even if you've already found the absolute most perfect reading chair in all the land, why not test out a few more to make sure?

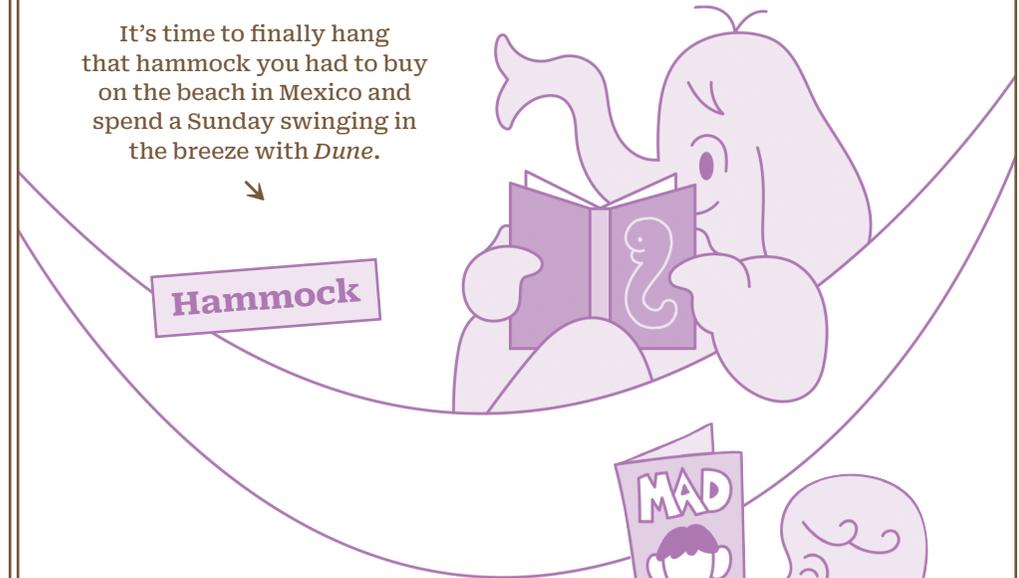


↑
Settle in for the long haul into the deep seat of a buttery leather LC2 archair, and finally get around to finishing *War and Peace*.

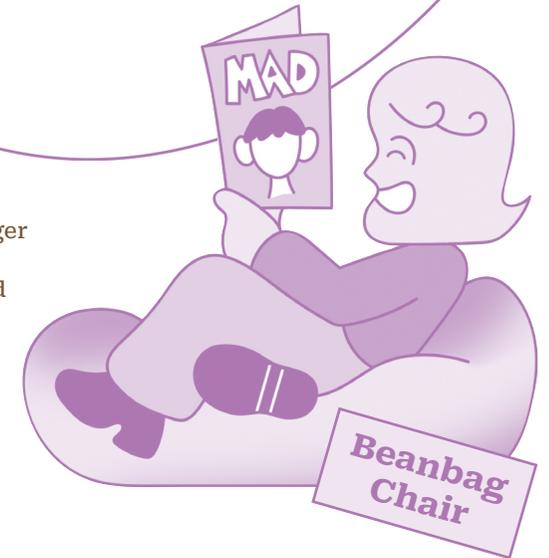
←
You don't have to be a baby or a 19th century ghost to enjoy *The Velveteen Rabbit* from the gentle embrace of a rocking chair.

Don't be fooled! Not all seating options are ideal for reading e.g.
→ Dentist's chair → Chair of nails → Iron Throne → Toadstool → Electric Chair
→ Silverchair (this is a 90's Australian band, not an actual chair)

It's time to finally hang that hammock you had to buy on the beach in Mexico and spend a Sunday swinging in the breeze with *Dune*.



→
Channel your inner 70s teenager by sinking into a beanbag chair and revisiting your old issues of *Mad* magazine.



Porcelain Throne

Just because there's a magazine rack in the bathroom doesn't mean you should touch anything in it. Catch up on Twitter from your own, non-porous, alcohol-swabbable phone instead.



5. Soothe with sounds.

Why read in silence when there's a whole universe of auditory comforts out there to read by? Try Googling one of these classic SFX options:

- Calming Sounds of a Fluffy Blanket
- Distant Trains Echoing in the Rain
- Soothing Grill Sounds w/Sizzling Meat
- 20 Hrs of Kittens Purring
- Mystical Bamboo Forest Winds
- Crackling Holiday Fireplace



Prefer music?

These tracks should get you in the comfort zone:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| 1. "HAPPY HOUSE"
Shuggie Otis | 4. "FANTASY"
Earth, Wind & Fire | 7. "SAILING"
Christopher Cross |
| 2. "LICENSE TO CHILL"
Billy Ocean | 5. "FEELIN' THAT
THE FEELING'S GOOD"
Minnie Riperton | 8. "SUNDOWN"
Gordon Lightfoot |
| 3. "EASY STREET"
Sister Sledge | 6. "BREEZIN"
George Benson | 9. "LOVELY DAY"
Bill Withers |

Reading in Bed

*Oh, what could be better
Than reading in bed,
Or thinking about
All the books that you've read?
With someone who loves you,
A father, a mother,
A doll, or a pet,
Or a sister or brother,
A grandma, a grandpa,
An uncle, an aunt—
(Can you think of anything better?
I can't!)*

*While outside the sky
Is all twinkling with light,
From stars that shine down
As we sleep through the night.
Oh, what could be better
Than sleepin in bed,
When the books that you love
Fill the dreams in your head?*

—Helen H. Moore

N

ot only is a pirate a more comfortable person to read about than a pessimist, but in many respects he is a more comfortable person to read about than a philanthropist. The minute the philanthropist is introduced, the author begins to show his own cleverness by discovering flaws in his motives. You begin to see that the poor man has his limitations. Perhaps his philanthropies are of a different kind from yours, and that irritates you. Musical people, whom I have heard criticize other musical people, seem more offended when some one flirts just a little than when he makes a big ear-splitting discord; and moralists are apt to have the same fastidiousness. The philanthropist is made the victim of the most cruel kind of vivisection,—a character-study.

Here is a fragment of conversation from a study of character: "That was really heroic," said Felix. "That was what he wanted to do," Gertrude went on. "He wanted to be magnanimous; he wanted to have a fine moral pleasure; he made up his mind to do his duty; he felt sublime,—that's how he likes to feel."

This leaves the mind in a painful state of suspense. The first instinct of the unsophisticated reader is that if the person has done a good deed, we ought not to begrudge him a little innocent pleasure in it. If he is magnanimous, why not let him feel magnanimous? But after Gertrude has made these subtle suggestions we begin to experience something like antipathy for a man who is capable of having a fine moral pleasure; who not only does his duty, but really likes to do it. There is something wrong about him, and it is all the more aggravating because we are not sure just what it is. There is no trouble of that kind in reading about pirates. You cannot make a character-study out of a pirate,—he has no character. You know just where to place him. You do not expect anything good of him, and when you find a sporadic virtue you are correspondingly elated.

For example, I am pleased to read of the pirate Gibbs that he was "affable and communicative, and when he smiled he exhibited a mild and gentle countenance. His conversation was concise and pertinent, and his style of illustration quite original."

If Gibbs had been a philanthropist, it is doubtful whether these social and literary graces would have been so highly appreciated.

So our author feels a righteous glow when speaking of the natives of the Malabar coasts, and accounting for their truthfulness: "For as they had been used to deal with pirates, they always found them men of honor in the way of trade,—a people enemies of deceit, and that scorned to rob but in their own way."

He is a very literal-minded person, and takes all his pirates seriously, but often we are surprised by some touch of nature that makes the whole world kin.

+ Excerpt +
from
THE
GENTLE
READER
by
SAMUEL
MCCHORD
CROTHERS
+

There was the ferocious Benevedes, who flourished on the west coast of South America, and who, not content with sea power, attempted to gather an army. It is said that "a more finished picture of a pirate cannot be conceived," and the description that follows certainly bears out this assertion. Yet he had his own ideas of civilization, and a power of adaptation that reminds us of the excellent and ingenious Swiss Family Robinson. When he captures the American whaling-ship *Herculia*, we are prepared for a wild scene of carnage; but instead we are told that Benevedes immediately dismantled the ship, and "out of the sails made trousers for half his army." After the trousers had been distributed, Benevedes remarked that his army was complete except in one essential particular,—he had no trumpets for the cavalry: whereupon, at the suggestion of the New Bedford skipper, he ripped off the copper sheets of the vessel, out of which a great variety of copper trumpets were quickly manufactured, and soon "the whole camp resounded with the warlike blasts."

While the delighted pirates were enjoying their instrumental music, the skipper and nine of the crew took occasion to escape in a boat which had been imprudently concealed on the river bank.

In the "Proverbial Philosophy" we are told that

*"Many virtues weighted by excess sink
among the vices,
Many vices, amicably buoyed, float among
the virtues."*

Had Mr. Tupper been acquainted with the career of Captain Davis of the Spanish Main, he would have found many apt illustrations of his thesis. Captain Davis had the vices incidental to a piratical career, but they were amicably buoyed up by some virtues which would have adorned a different station in life. He was a great stickler for parliamentary law, and everything under his direction was done decently and in order. Whenever it was possible, he made his demands in writing, a method which was business-like and left no room for misunderstanding. After a sloop had been seized and duly pillaged, we are informed that:—"In full possession of the vessel and stores and goods, a large bowl of punch was made. Under its exhilarating influence it was proposed to choose a commander, and to form a future mode of policy. The election was soon over and a large majority of legal voters were in favor of Davis, and, no scrutiny being demanded, Davis was declared duly elected. He then addressed them in a short and appropriate speech."

The chief virtue of Davis seemed to be neatness, which on one occasion he used to admirable advantage. "Encountering a French ship of twenty-four guns, Davis proposed to the crew to attack her, assuring them that she would prove a rich prize. This appeared to the crew such a hazardous enterprise that they were adverse to the measure; but he acquainted them that he had conceived a stratagem that he was confident would succeed."

About Roboto Serif

Designed by Greg Gazdowicz of Commercial Type together with Google Fonts, Roboto Serif is a variable typeface family designed to create a "frictionless reading experience" at any size, in any format.

Weight

This axis allows you to set the glyph weight anywhere along the scale (i.e.; between the named instances).



THIN

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

EXTRALIGHT

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

LIGHT

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

REGULAR

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

MEDIUM

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

SEMIBOLD

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

BOLD

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

EXTRABOLD

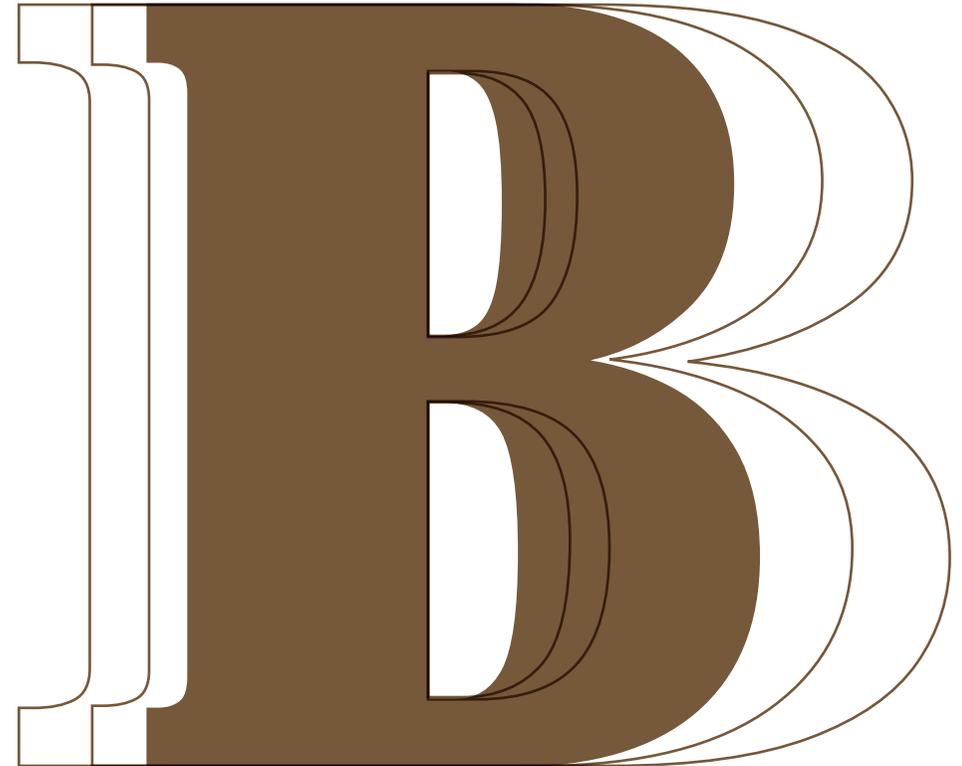
Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

BLACK

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

Width

This axis allows you to set the glyph width anywhere along the scale (i.e.; between the named instances).



CONDENSED

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

REGULAR

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

EXTENDED

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

WIDTH	50	60	70	80	90	100	110	120	130	140	150
WEIGHT 100	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
150	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
200	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
250	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
300	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
350	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
400	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
450	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
500	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
550	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
600	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
650	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
700	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
750	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
800	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
850	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab
900	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab	Ab

ROBOTO
SERIF
VARIABLE
AXES

Optical Size

This axis allows you to maintain optical consistency in your typography at any size on the scale (i.e.; between the named instances).

OPTICAL
SIZE 144

CDef

Roboto
Serif

SIZE 90PT

SIZE 20PT

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

SIZE 8PT

OPTICAL
SIZE 20

CDef

Roboto
Serif

SIZE 90PT

SIZE 20PT

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

SIZE 8PT

OPTICAL
SIZE 8

CDef

Roboto
Serif

SIZE 90PT

SIZE 20PT

Roboto Serif might just very well be ideal for keeping quick readers zooming through lengthy text.

SIZE 8PT

Grade

This axis allows you to fine-tune the the overall weight of text within the confines of your current line breaks. For example: A lighter grade can compensate for the heaviness of dark text on a white background, while a heavier grade can add contrast between text and background.



Free to the public

Roboto Serif is free to download under the Open Font License from Google Fonts: fonts.google.com/specimen/Roboto+Serif

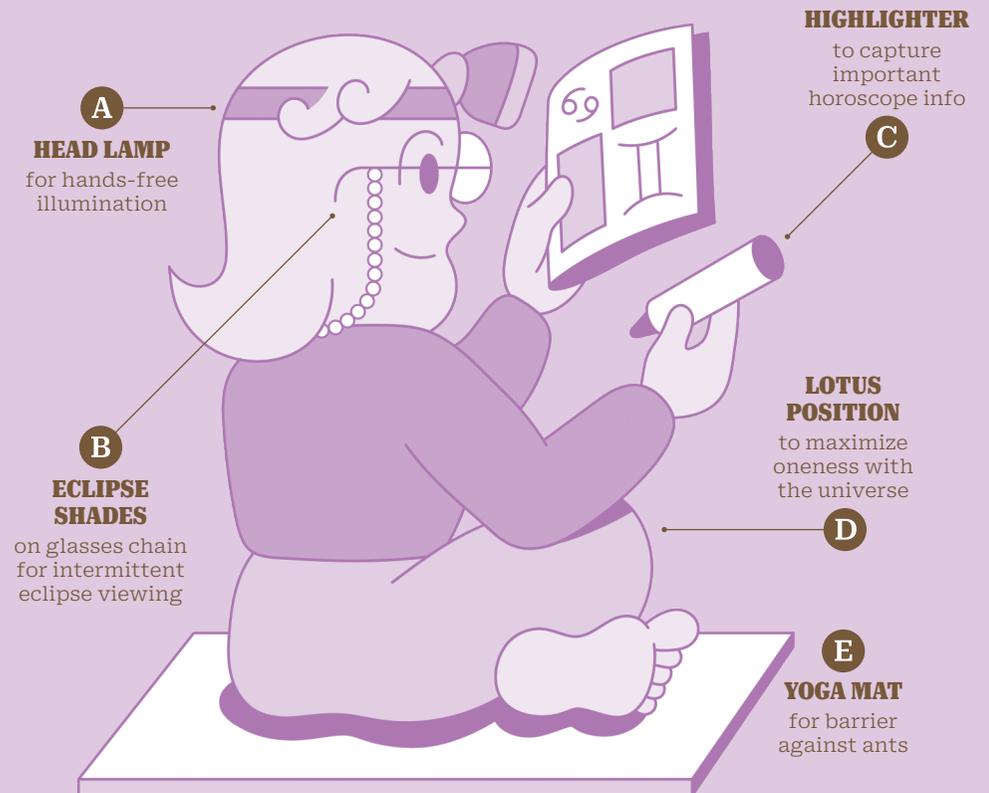
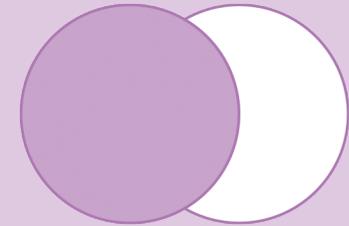
“Outside of a dog, a book is a man’s best friend. Inside of a dog, it’s too dark to read.”

—Groucho Marx

Reading Ergonomics

Here are a few examples of how you can be comfortable and chiropractor-free in any reading scenario. All it takes is a little strategic planning.

[Fig. 1]
READING HOROSCOPES DURING A SOLAR ECLIPSE



Passy, May 23. 1785.

Dear old Friend

By Mr. Dolland's Saying that my double Spectacles can only serve particular Eyes, I doubt he has not been rightly inform'd of their Construction. I imagine it will be found pretty generally true, that the same Convexity of Glass through which a Man sees clearest and best at the Distance proper for Reading, is not the best for greater Distances. I therefore had formerly two Pair of Spectacles, which I shifted occasionally, as in travelling I sometimes read and often wanted to regard the Prospects. Finding this Change troublesome and not always sufficiently ready, I had the Glasses cut, and half of each kind associated in the same Circle, thus By this means, as I wear my Spectacles constantly, I have only to move my Eyes up or down as I want to see distinctly far or near, the proper glasses being always ready. This I find more particularly convenient since my being in France, the Glasses that serve me best at Table to see what I eat, not being the best to see the Faces of those on the other Side of the Table who speak to me; and when one's Ears are not well accustomed to the Sounds of a Language, a Sight of the Movements in the Features of him that speaks helps to explain, so that I understand French better by the help of my Spectacles.

...

Excerpt from a letter from
BENJAMIN FRANKLIN to GEO. WHATLEY ESQUIRE

A

BRIGHT LIGHTING

to minimize eye strain

[Fig. 2]

READING SHAMPOO BOTTLES IN THE SHOWER



C

BOTTLE

held at eye level to allow head tiltage

B

HEAD

tilted back slightly to prevent deluge in eyes

STANCE

firm and wide for maximum balance

D

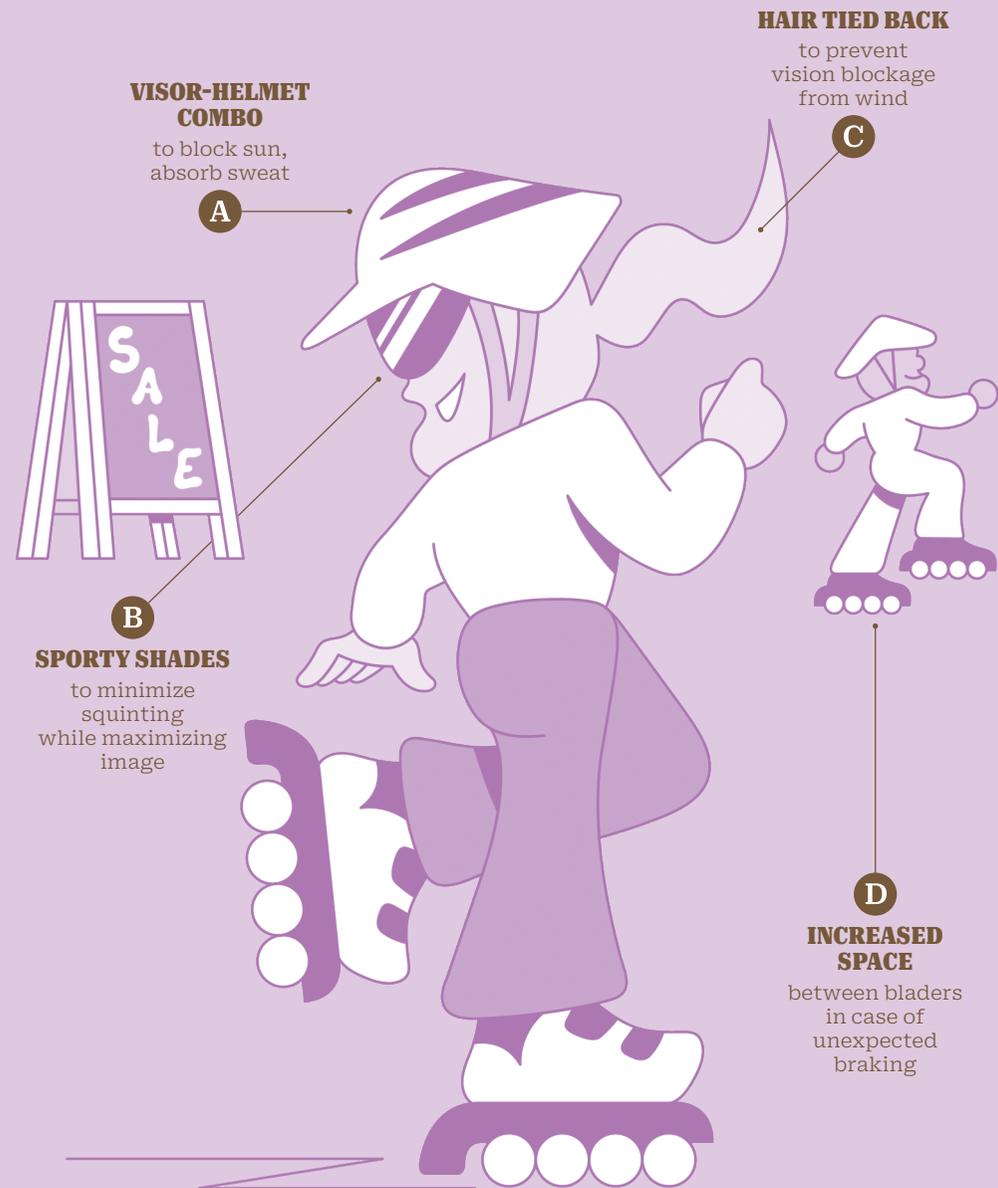
RUBBER DAISY APPLIQUES

on shower floor for extra traction

E

[Fig. 3]

READING SANDWICH BOARDS WHILE BLADING



VISOR-HELMET COMBO

to block sun, absorb sweat

A

HAIR TIED BACK

to prevent vision blockage from wind

C



B

SPORTY SHADES

to minimize squinting while maximizing image



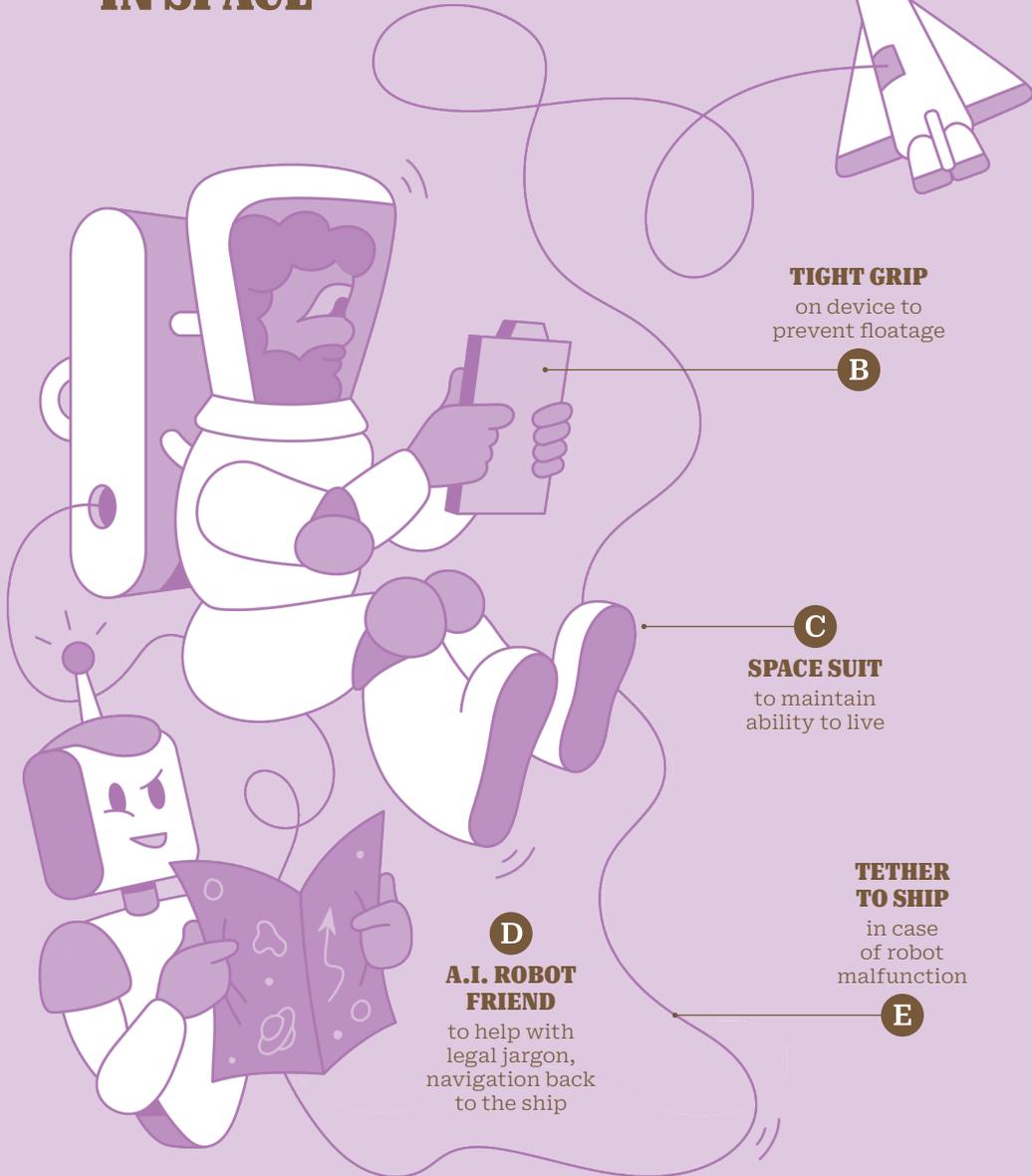
D

INCREASED SPACE

between bladers in case of unexpected braking

[Fig. 4]

READING MORTGAGE REFINANCING DOCUMENTS IN SPACE



GIANT BALLS OF FIRE (E.G. THE SUN)
positioned to optimize brightness while preventing cornea disintegration

A

TIGHT GRIP
on device to prevent floatage

B

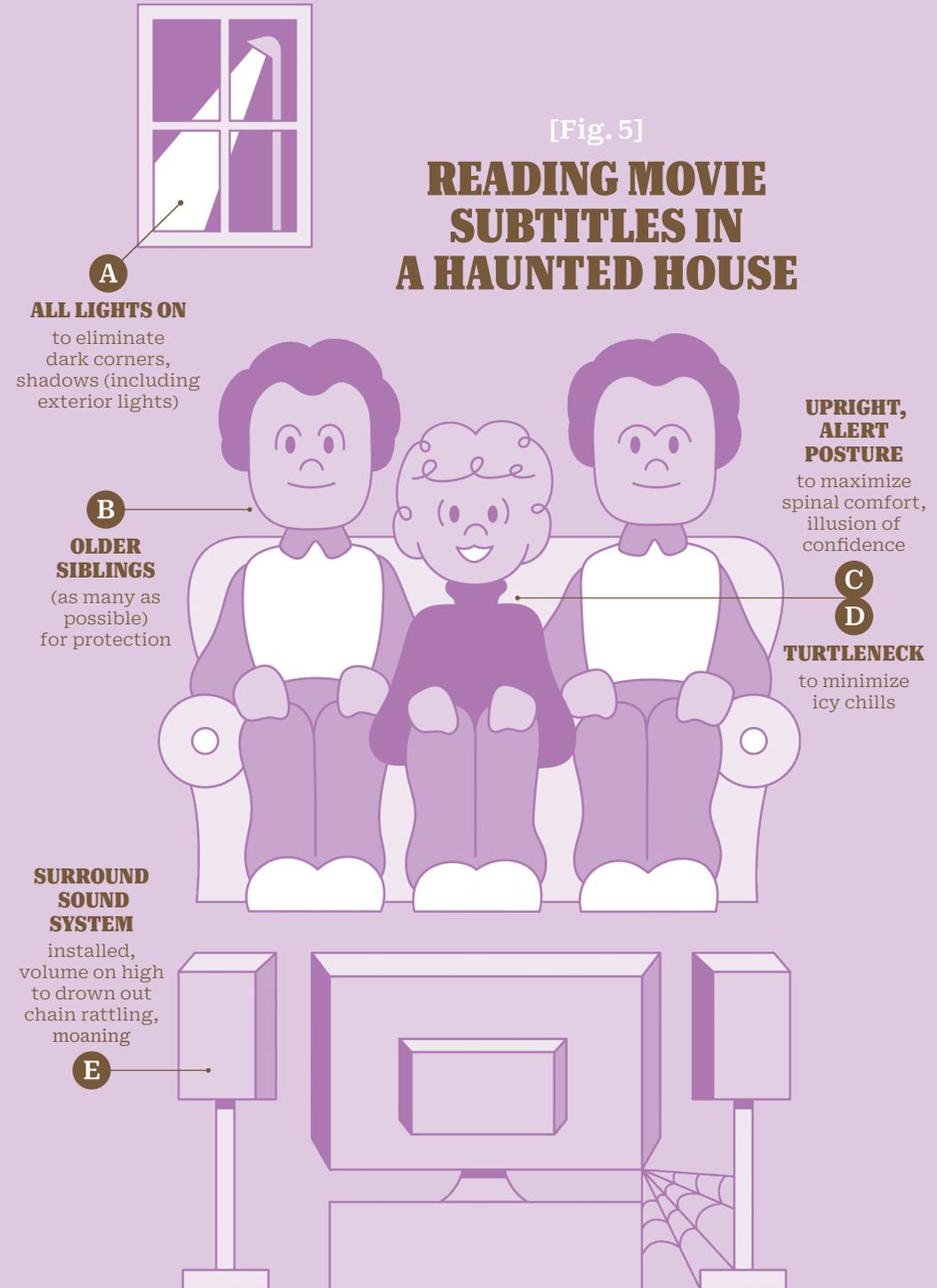
C
SPACE SUIT
to maintain ability to live

D
A.I. ROBOT FRIEND
to help with legal jargon, navigation back to the ship

E
TETHER TO SHIP
in case of robot malfunction

[Fig. 5]

READING MOVIE SUBTITLES IN A HAUNTED HOUSE



A
ALL LIGHTS ON
to eliminate dark corners, shadows (including exterior lights)

B
OLDER SIBLINGS
(as many as possible) for protection

C
UPRIGHT, ALERT POSTURE
to maximize spinal comfort, illusion of confidence

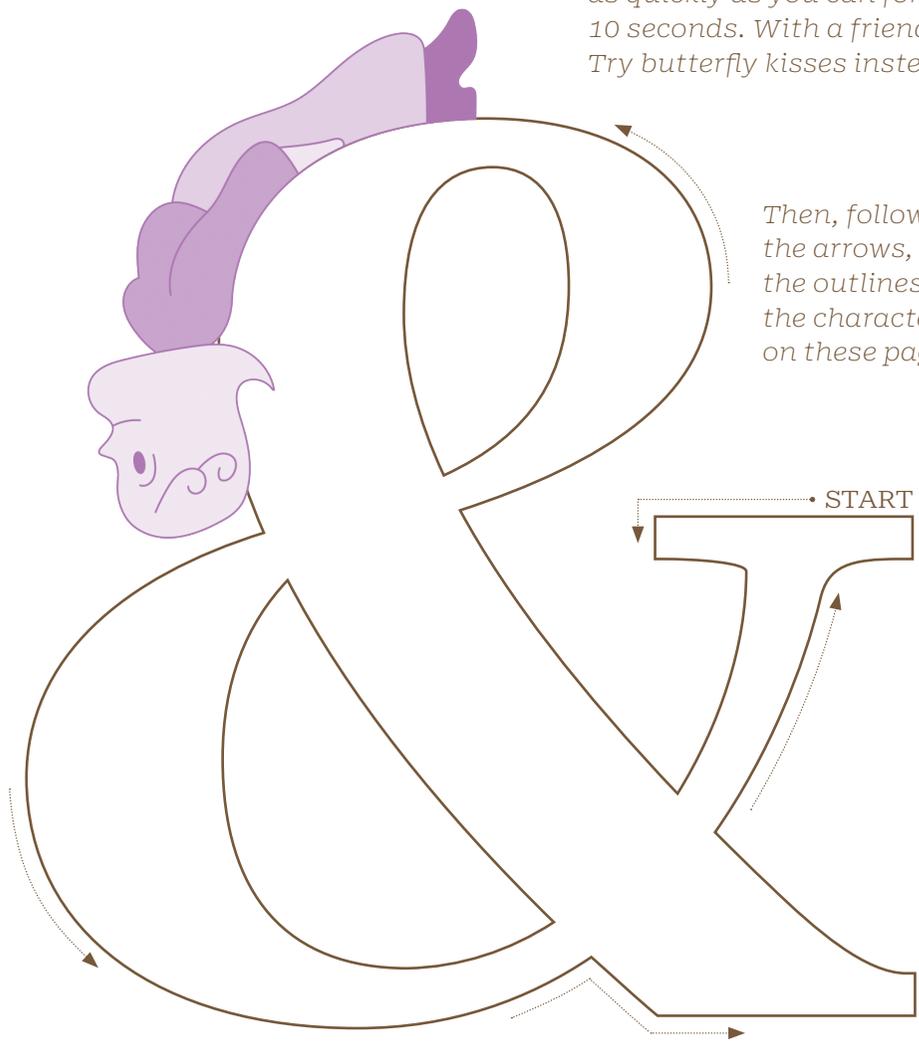
D
TURTLENECK
to minimize icy chills

E
SURROUND SOUND SYSTEM
installed, volume on high to drown out chain rattling, moaning

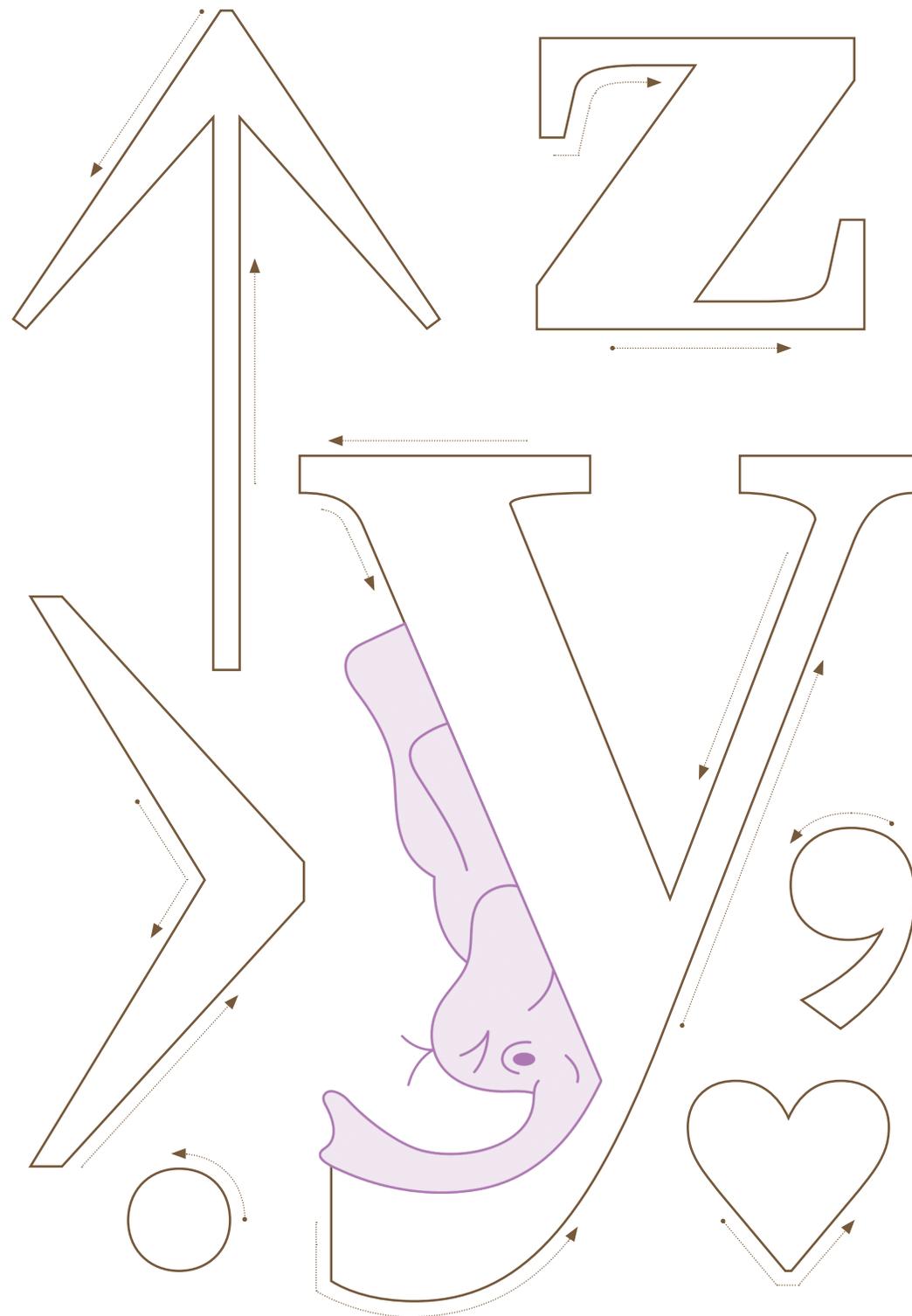
Eye Yoga

Start by blinking your eyes as quickly as you can for 10 seconds. With a friend? Try butterfly kisses instead.

Then, following the arrows, trace the outlines of the characters on these pages.



Practice daily for maximum reading comfortability.
Nam-eye-state!



Afterword

Google Fonts' mission is to make web typography better for everyone. One of the ways we invest in this (and the typography community at large) is by commissioning outside typographers and studios to create new fonts.

For Roboto Serif, we were thrilled to collaborate with Commercial Type for the first time. This latest addition to the Roboto superfamily fills a need we saw in our existing library for a highly readable serif that pairs well with Roboto Sans. In order to create a true serif for Roboto, (not just a 'serif-ized' version of Roboto Sans), Commercial used the vertical proportions of Roboto Sans as a starting point—to make sure the two families could be mixed harmoniously in running text. The result is an elegant, functional typeface that complements Roboto Sans, but can stand on its own as a beautiful, modern face. Expanding Roboto with a serif allows for greater flexibility and variety...which means better functionality and tonality across many, vastly different products and brands.

Roboto Serif is offered as an open-source, variable font (the static files are available, too). Variable fonts are well known for saving font download bandwidth online, but that's just one of their benefits. For example, designers can set Roboto Serif to automatically adjust optical sizing on browsers and other products like Sketch. We've invested heavily in variable font typefaces, as well as in tools for their production, testing, and use, and we're excited to see what creative designers and developers do with this technology. What would you want on an axis?

We hope you enjoy getting comfortable with Roboto Serif! Let us know.

—The Google Fonts team

Roboto Serif was designed by Commercial Type with Google Fonts

This print specimen was written by Sarah Daily and designed by Studio Elana Schlenker with illustration by Kyle Platts. Additional writing contributed by Charles Berret.

Thank you to the teams at Google Design and Google Fonts for their support.

Roboto Serif is available for download in variable and static formats under the Open Font License from Google Fonts (fonts.google.com/specimen/Roboto+Serif).

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Featuring

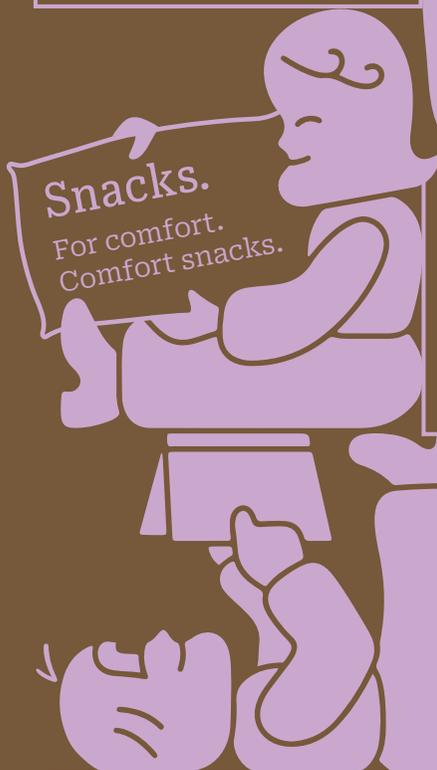
Pleasure Reading.

Mastering the Basics of Comfortable Perusal. How to excel in lighting, seating, and more.



Snacks.

For comfort.
Comfort snacks.



Ergonomics.

From everyday scenarios to extreme situations. From analog media to digital domains. From your bathroom to outer space.



Eye Yoga.

Expert exercises to keep you at the top of your reading game.

PLUS:

Even more content, like a letter from Ben Franklin, a poem about reading in bed, and a bunch of font stuff!