# CHINESE & LATIN

合璧

EAST
MEETS
WEST

# IN DIALOGUE

中文与拉丁文
双语设计手册

# 中西

Manual for Chinese-Latin
Bilingual Design

In a globalised world, Chinese and Latin scripts increasingly coexist in publications, signage, branding, and information design. However, they are based on fundamentally different linguistic structures and the writing systems.

Chinese originates from pictographic writing and forms a compact logographic system, while Latin is based on an alphabetic system and is phonographic, relying on combinations of letters and phonetic spelling. These structural differences make their coexistence within one design framework challenging.

在全球化背景下，中文与拉丁字母的排版正越来越多地在出版物、标识、品牌及信息设计中并用。然而，它们建立在迥然不同的语言结构与书写系统当中。

中文源于象形文字，属于高度浓缩的表意系统，而拉丁基于拉丁字母，是一种表音文字体系，依赖于字母组合和音位拼读。这种根本性的结构差异，使两种语言在同一设计框架中协调共存，成为一项极具挑战的实践。

**Two languages, two cultures, two writing systems, one visual space.**

# 前言

两种语言，两种文化，两种文字系统，一个视觉空间。

Using English as a representative of the Latin writing system, this manual compares Chinese and English typography, identifies key structural differences, and translates them into practical design decisions. The aim is not to make one script follow the other, but to preserve their distinct qualities while creating a balanced visual relationship—"harmony without uniformity, beauty in coexistence." It is hoped that this project can provide references for Chinese and international graphic designers and educators, while encouraging further discussion of bilingual typography within the field of design.

本手册以英文作为拉丁文字母体系的代表，从中英文排版之间的差异出发，对比两种文字系统，识别其关键的结构差异，并进一步将这些差异转化为双语排版的实际决策。其目的不是让一种文字服从另一种规则，而是在保留各自特征的基础上，建立清晰、协调的视觉关系，做到"和而不同，美美与共"。希望本项目能够为中外平面设计师与教育者提供参考，并推动设计领域对双语排版议题的进一步讨论。

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Chinese and Latin do not occupy space in the same way.

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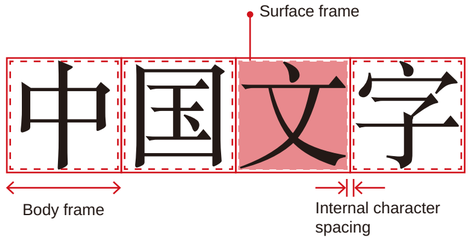
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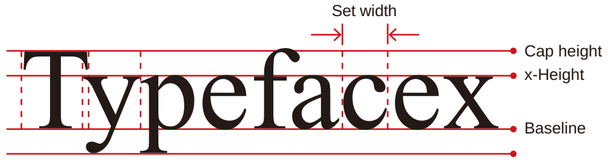
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# Content

# 字符与字母结构

# Character & letter Structure




Chinese characters are monowidth and each character occupies an em-based square space. They do not have uppercase/lower-case distinctions, ascenders or descenders.

汉字单个字符宽度相同，每个字占据一个字身框，且不区分大小写，也没有上部或下部笔画。

Latin letters are proportionally spaced and organised through horizontal reference lines such as baseline, x-height and cap height.

拉丁字母通过基线、x 高和顶高等水平参考线进行比例间距和排列。

# 比例与视觉重量

# Proportion & Visual weight

双语排版 Bilingual Typography

双语排版 BILINGUAL TYPO

Heiti, Arial, 48pt

双语排版 Bilingual Typography

双语排版 BILINGUAL TYPO

Songti, Baskerville, 48pt

**Same point size,**
相同字号
**different visual size.**
不同视觉大小

At the same size, Chinese characters can appear visually larger than Latin text. Chinese characters usually have more complex structures than English. So it tends to look heavier than English, even though stroke weights are similar.

在相同的尺寸下，汉字在视觉上可能比拉丁字母文字显得更大。汉字通常结构比英文更复杂，因此即使笔画粗细相似，也往往看起来更厚重。

# 间距与节奏

# Spacing & Rhythm

同一空间
**Same space,**

不同节奏
**different rhythm.**

As the structure comparison showed before, Chinese characters are monospaced, Latin letters are proportionally spaced. Every Chinese character occupies exactly the same amount of space, while English words have different lengths. Chinese punctuation occupies one character space, while a dash occupies two.

如前所述的结构对比显示，汉字是等宽排版，而拉丁字母则是按比例排布。每个汉字所占的空间完全相同，而英文单词的长度则各不相同。中文标点占一个字符空间，而破折号占两个。

Chinese spacing is built into each character — there are no spaces between words, unlike Latin spacing, which operates between letters and words.

Times New Roman, Regular 30pt
Tracking -25, Leading 42pt

中文间距是嵌入每个汉字中的——词语之间没有间距，不像拉丁字母那样在字母和单词之间有空格。

Songti, Regular 30pt
Tracking -25, Leading 45pt

# 文本与阅读

# Paragraph & Reading

## Reading order
## 阅读顺序

English reads from left to right and top to bottom. In contrast, Chinese can be set horizontally or vertically: traditional vertical setting runs top-to-bottom and right-to-left, while contemporary horizontal setting commonly runs left-to-right.

Different reading orders can make bilingual design challenging, especially when trying to clearly convey the correspondence between the two texts.

英语从左到右、自上而下阅读。相比之下，中文可以水平或垂直排列：传统的垂直排版从上到下、从右到左，而现代的水平排版通常从左到右。

不同的阅读顺序会使双语设计变得更具挑战性，尤其是在需要清晰传达文本对应关系时。

# Alignment
# 对齐

Chinese continuous text is traditionally justified, in part because the characters form regular square units. There are no rules regarding word breaks at line ends; text should break naturally at the end of a line.

Left alignment is the most natural setting for Latin text. However, raggedness is important to consider. When latin text is justified, several undesired behaviours can occur, such as rivers and excess of hyphenation.

中文连续文本传统上采用两端对齐，部分原因在于汉字构成规则的方块单元。行末的字词分隔没有固定规则，文本应自然地在行末断行。

对于拉丁文文本，左对齐是最自然的设置。然而，需要考虑的是排版的不整齐问题。当拉丁文文本采用两段对齐时，可能会出现一些不希望的现象，例如文字河和连字符使用过多等。

## How dose text move?

The goal of bilingual typography is not to make the two scripts resemble one another, but to strike a balance amidst their differences.

Flush left, ragged right

双语排版的目标并非让两种文字风格彼此相似，而是要在它们的差异中找到平衡。

Justified

双语排版的目标并非让两种文字风格彼此相似，而是要在它们的差异中找到平衡。

Justified

# Length & Leading
# 长度与行距



Chinese text is often more compact than an equivalent English passage because characters carry more semantic information per unit. When English is translated into Chinese, the Chinese text usually is shorter than English in length. This tends to make English look more dominant.

Chinese characters measure their leading according to their visual center line, while Latin letterforms and words measure their leading from baseline to baseline. Hanzi requires more generous leading compared with Latin text.

中文文本通常比同等长度的英文段落更紧凑，因为每个汉字所承载的语义信息单位更多。当英语翻译成中文时，中文译文通常比英文更短，这往往使英文更显主导。

汉字的行距是根据其视觉中心线来测量的，而拉丁字母和单词的行距则是从基线到基线进行测量。与拉丁文本相比，汉字需要更大的行距。

## How dose text occupy space?

Times New Roman, Regular 18pt
Tracking -5, Leading 25.2pt

True Chinese–Western integration does not mean making one script conform to the rules of the other. It means preserving the distinct characteristics of each while establishing a clear and harmonious visual relationship — achieving harmony without uniformity, and beauty through coexistence.



Songti, Regular 18pt
Tracking -5, Leading 27pt

真正的“中西合璧”，不是让一种文字服从另一种规则，而是在保留各自特征的同时，建立清晰、协调的视觉关系，做到“和而不同，美美与共”。



# UNDERSTAND

中文

01 理解

LATIN

*4 Principals*

# 和

拉丁文

CHINESE

*7 Tips*

设计 02

# DESIGN

# 判断关系

# Define the relationship

**Before setting the type, decide how the two languages should relate.**

In bilingual typography, visual parity does not mean making Chinese and Latin look identical. It means making the relationship between the equivalent content clear and consistent.

在双语排版中，视觉对等并不意味着让中文和拉丁文看起来相同，而是指使同等内容之间的关系清晰且一致。

**The relationship can be equal, hierarchical, or integrated.**

## 01 Equal
## 平等的

Same status,
similar visual cues.

When two languages share the same status, corresponding elements should be given similar visual cues, even when their scripts are visually different.

当两种语言处于同等地位时，即使其文字在视觉上不同，相应元素也应提供相似的视觉线索。

## 02 Hierarchical
## 层级的

Different status,
different visual weight.

When two languages have different status, their visual hierarchy can be expressed through differences in type size, weight, placement or contrast, making the relationship between primary and the secondary content clear.

当两种语言地位不同时，可以通过字号、字重、排版位置或对比度的差异来体现视觉层级，从而清晰地呈现主次内容之间的关系。

## 03 Integrated
## 融合的

Shared space,
closer visual interaction.

When two languages are integrated within the same space, their typographic elements can interact more closely through alignment, overlap, or shared visual structures, creating a even more connected composition.

当两种语言融合于同一空间时，它们的排版元素可以通过对齐、重叠或共享视觉结构进行更紧密的互动，从而营造出一种联系更为紧密的构图。

# 匹配字体与字号

# Pair typefaces & Match sizes

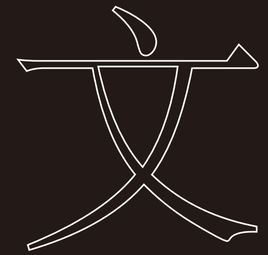
When the goal is visual coherence, typefaces should complement rather than compete. Research shows that Latin typefaces offer a wider range of styles than Chinese typefaces. Therefore, start with the Chinese typeface, then look for a Latin counterpart that complements its visual characteristics. Compare style and overall density rather than exact stroke widths.

Songti or Mingti can correspond with Latin serif typefaces, while Heiti can pair with sans serif styles. Latin typefaces with a larger x-height often harmonise better with Chinese. When Latin is inserted into Chinese text, a more condensed Latin typeface can help maintain overall spacing and rhythm.

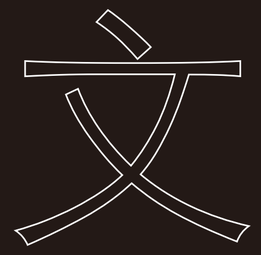
当目标是视觉协调时，字体应相辅相成而非相互竞争。研究表明，拉丁字体的风格范围比汉字字体更广。因此，可先选择汉字字体，再寻找一种能与其视觉特征相配的拉丁字体。比较时应关注整体风格和整体密度，而非笔画宽度的精确度。

宋体或明体可与拉丁衬线字体搭配，而黑体则适合无衬线字体。具有较大 x 高度的拉丁字体通常与汉字更协调。当拉丁文插入中文文本时，采用更紧凑的拉丁字体有助于保持整体间距与节奏感。

**Start with Chinese, match the visual logic**



Songti



Heiti



Xingkai



Serif



Sans serif



Script

Choose a Chinese size that remains legible across characters with different stroke densities, then adjust the size of the Latin type in relation to it. At the same point size, Chinese may appear visually heavier, so slightly reducing the Chinese size or increasing the Latin size can create better optical harmony.

选择一个能够确保不同笔画密度的汉字都保持良好可读性的字号，然后以此为基准调整拉丁文字的字号。在相同字号下，中文可能会在视觉上显得更厚重，因此可以适当缩小中文字号，或适当增大拉丁文字字号，以获得更协调的视觉效果。

**Measure with your eyes, not only with points.**

# 平衡文本

# Balance text

## Paragraph length
## 段落长度

In parallel layouts, when both languages share the same column width, use visual elements such as images or graphics to balance differences in paragraph length. For a more integrated layout, instead of placing the two texts side by side, set them within the same column to create a continuous reading flow.

If both languages need to remain parallel, use different column widths while keeping the paragraph lengths visually balanced. A 1:2 Chinese–Latin proportion or a 1:1:1 three-column system can help distribute the difference more evenly.

在平行排版中，如果两种语言使用相同的栏宽，可以通过加入图片或图形等视觉元素，来平衡段落长度上的差异。为了实现更融合的布局，将两种语言放置在同一栏中，而不是并排排列，从而形成更加连贯的阅读流程。

如果两种语言需要保持平行结构，则可以使用不同的栏宽，同时让两段文字在视觉长度上保持平衡。1:2 的中文拉丁文栏宽比例或 1:1:1 的三栏系统，都可以帮助更好地协调两种文字之间的差异。

# Alignment
# 对齐

When bilingual paragraphs are set in parallel, justified alignment can be a logical choice: matching the alignment can create similar rectangular structures and strengthens the sense of a unified composition.

However, it is not automatically the best option: choose the alignment that works best for the specific text and layout, and check Latin text carefully for hyphenation, rivers, and widows.

当双语段落以平行结构排版时，两端对齐可以是一种合理的选择：采用一致的对齐方式能够让两种文字形成相近的矩形结构，从而增强整体构图的统一感。

然而，两端对齐并不一定是最好的选择：应根据具体的文本内容和版面选择合适的对齐方式，并仔细检查拉丁文字中的连字、视觉河流以及孤行问题。

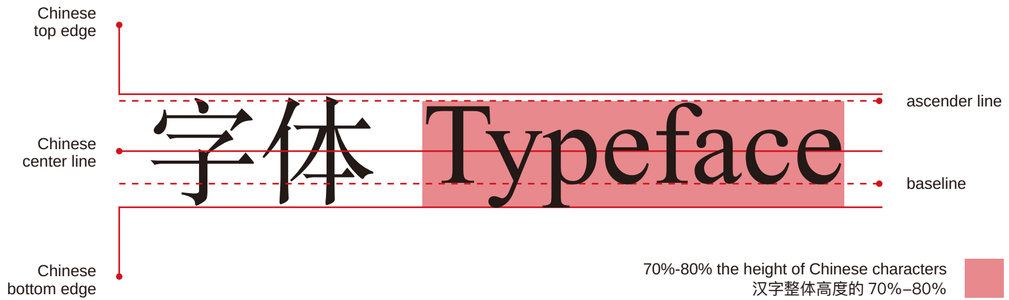
**Justified is not automatically better.**

# Leading
# 行距

**Align the visual height, not just the baseline.**

Let the Latin baseline sit slightly above the bottom of the Chinese character, while its ascenders remain below the top edge. Check the overall height and visual rhythm of both scripts, and keep parallel lines aligned whenever possible.

让拉丁文字的基线略高于汉字底部，字母的上伸部低于汉字顶部。同时观察两种文字的整体高度与视觉节奏，并尽可能保持平行文本行的对齐。




Parallel rows aligned is highly desirable for a comfortable reading, and if is not possible for each row of a body of text, at least should be considered for the first row of each paragraph.

1:2 Chinese–Latin
column proportion

Times New Roman, Regular 18pt
Tracking -5, Leading 25.2pt, Justified

行间距对阅读舒适度非常重要，如果无法实现整段文字的统一行距，至少应考虑每段首行的行距。

Songti, Regular 18pt
Tracking -5, Leading 27pt, Justified

# 构建布局

# Build the layout

# How should the two languages share the page?

## 01 Parallel
## 平行的

Use the parallel layouts when the two languages need to be compared or referenced side by side. Keeping corresponding texts in the same horizontal field makes their relationship clear and supports cross-language comparison.

适合两种语言需要相互对照、查阅的情况。 将对应内容并置，可以清晰地建立两种语言之间的对应关系，便于跨语言比较。

## 02 Stacked
## 层叠的

Use the stacked layouts when the two languages follow a clear reading sequence. Placing one language above the other creates a simple hierarchy and keeps each the text block independent.

适合两种语言需要按照明确顺序阅读的情况。上下排列可以建立清晰的阅读层级，同时保持两个文本块的独立性。

## 03 Integrated
## 融合的

Use the integrated layouts when the two languages need to interact within the same visual space. Mixing or embedding the scripts can create a closer visual relationship, while the distinct characteristics of each script remain visible.

适合两种语言需要在同一视觉空间产生互动的情况。通过混合、嵌入等方式建立更紧密的视觉关系，同时保留两种文字各自的特征。

# Before you export:

## 01 Type 字体

- ☐ Typeface pairing
- ☐ Size & visual weight

## 02 Space 空间

- ☐ Character & word spacing
- ☐ Leading & rhythm

## 03 Alignment 对齐

- ☐ Chosen alignment
- ☐ Rivers & widows

## 04 Layout 布局

- ☐ Equal / Stacked / Integrated
- ☐ Visual cues

**Check the relationship, not just the details.**

**Difference is not the problem, how we *design* it is.**

二零二六年九月

韦思琪创作

A Graphic Design Bachelor's project
on Chinese & Latin typography

# 中文与拉丁文的交流对话