

Traditional American and (some) English Type Body Size Names

With Approximate American Point System Equivalents

<u>Points</u>	<u>American Name</u>	<u>Sources</u>	<u>English Name</u>	<u>Sources</u>
1	American	1		
1 1/2	German	1		
2	Saxon	1		
2 1/2	Norse	1		
3	Brilliant	1		
3	Excelsior	2 3 4	Minikin	3 4
3 1/2	Ruby	1		
4	Excelsior	1		
4	Brilliant	2 3 4	Brilliant	3 4
4 1/2	Diamond	1 2 3 4	Diamond	3 4
5	Pearl	1 2 3 4	Pearl	3 4
5 1/2	Agate	1 2 3 4	Ruby	3 4
6	Nonpareil	1 2 4	Nonpareil	3 4
6 1/2	Minionette	3 4	Emerald	3 4
7	Minion	1 2 3 4	Minion	3 4
8	Brevier	1 2 3 4	Brevier	3 4
9	Bourgeois	1 2 3 4	Bourgeois	3 4
10	Long Primer	1 2 3 4	Long Primer	3 4
11	Small Pica	1 2 3 4	Small Pica	3 4
12	Pica	1 2 3 4	Pica	3 4
14	English	1 2 3 4	English	3 4
16	Columbian	1 2 3 4	Two-Line Brevier	3 4
18	Great Primer	1 2 3 4	Great Primer	3 4
18	Three-Line Nonpareil	2		
20	Paragon	1 2 3 4	Paragon	3 4
22	Two-Line Small Pica	2		
22	Double Small Pica	1 3 4	Double Pica	3 4
24	Two-Line Pica	2		4
24	Double Pica	1 3 4	Two-Line Pica	3 4
28	Two-Line English	2	Two-Line English	3 4
28	Double English	1 3 4		3
30	Five-Line Nonpareil	3 4		
32	Two-Line Columbian	2		
32	Double Columbian	1		
32	Four-Line Brevier	3 4		
36	Two-Line Great Primer	2	Two-Line Great Primer	3 4
36	Double Great Primer	1 3 4		

40	Two-Line Pargon	2			
40	Double Paragon	1	3	4	
44	Meridian	2	3	4	Two-Line Double Pica 3 4
48	Canon	1	2	3	Canon 3 4
48	Four-Line Pica	1	2	4	
48	Pica Canon			4	
48	Four-Line		3		Four-Line 3
					Four-Line Pica 4
60	Five-Line Pica	1	3	4	Five-Line Pica 3
72	Six-Line Pica	1		4	4

Notes

- A. These names apply primarily to metal type. Wood type, which typically was larger, was usually measured in “lines,” where one line was one Pica.
- B. I would guess that “Four-Line” for 48 point, which appears only in DeVinne, is just a shortening of “Four-Line Pica” to get it to fit into his table.
- C. “Double” does not always mean “Two-Line.” See English Double Pica (22 point).
- D. For French, German, Dutch, Italian, and Spanish names, see Legros & Grant, pp. 70-71.
- E. While 1 and 2 point type was never manufactured commercially, leads and rules were.

Sources

- 1. In *The Chicago Specimen* (house organ of Marder, Luse & Co), 3rd quarter, 1879. This has been reprinted by Richard L. Hopkins in his book *The Origin of the American Point System for Printers' Type Measurement*. (Terra Alta, WV: Hill & Dale Private Press, 1979, 1989), p. 35 (of each edition). Hopkins also reprints what might be the first announcement of the system, by Nelson Hawks in San Francisco (earlier in 1879), p. 89 (either edition); it lists fewer sizes than the Marder, Luse announcement.
- 2. Stewart, A. A. *Type: A Primer of Information about the Mechanical Features of Printing Types*. (Chicago: United Typothetae of America, 1918): 15.
- 3. DeVinne, Theodore Low. *The Practice of Typography: Plain Printing Types*. (NY: The Century Company, 1900 [©1899]): 54.
- 4. Legros, Lucien and John Cameron Grant. *Typographical Printing Surfaces*. (London: Longman, Green & Co., 1916): 70-71.

Revisions

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