

Aa — Zz

Type Design Tips

Apex

Apex sits above Baseline

Terminal

Double storey

Single storey

Overshoot

Counter

Bar

Bar sits below center

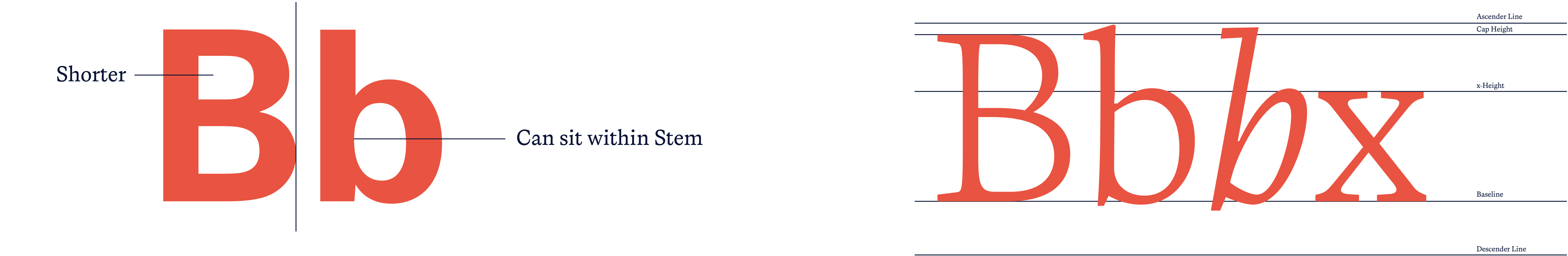
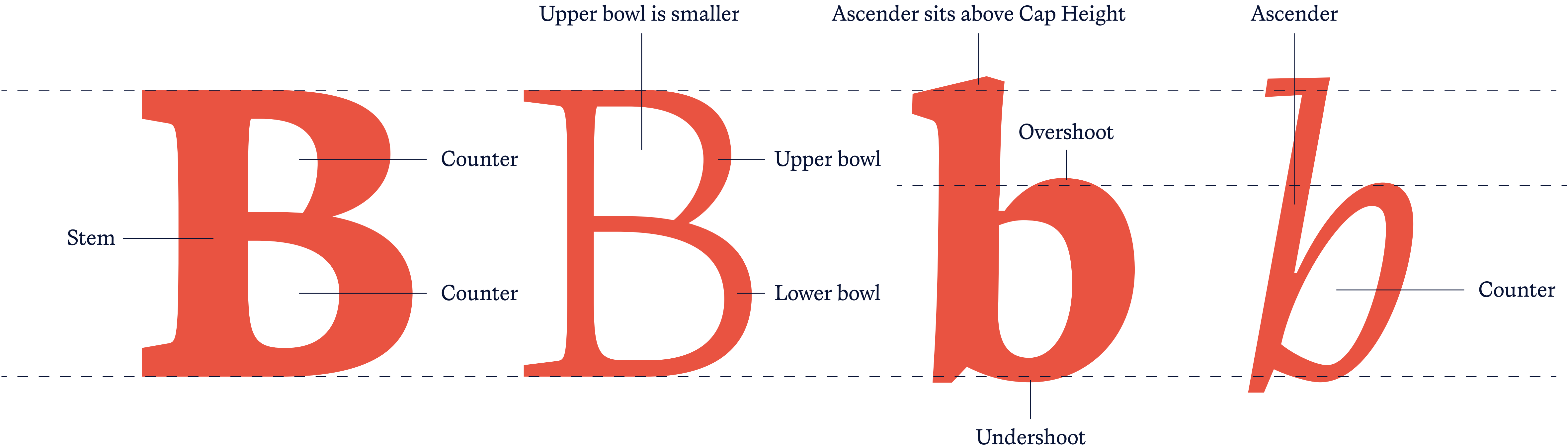
Bowl

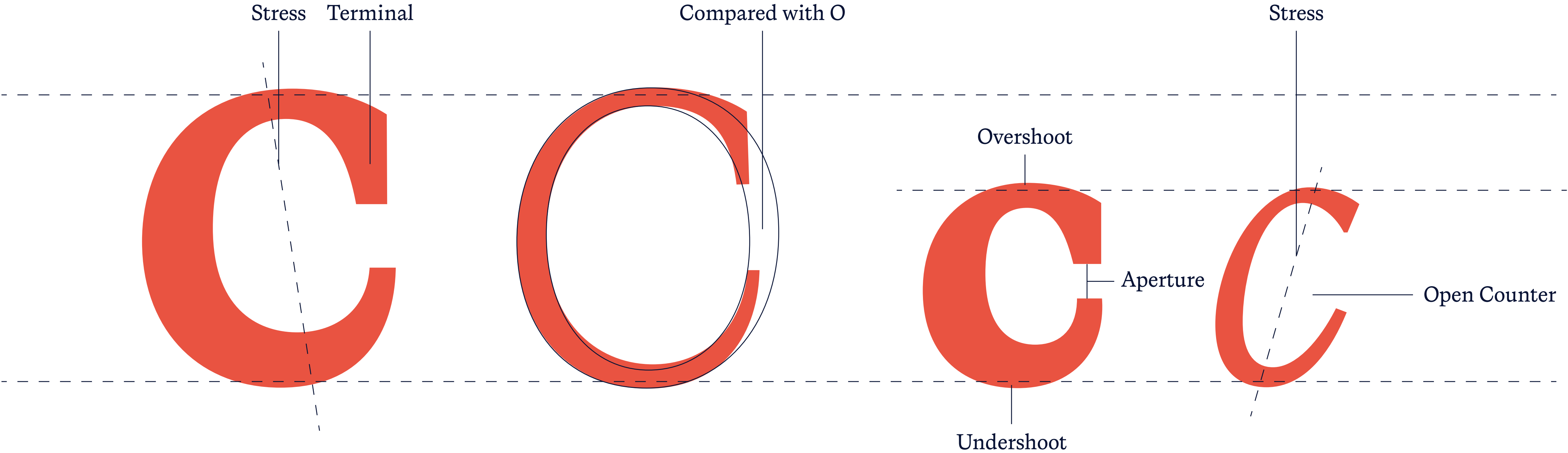
Undershoot

Tapered

Inner serifs often longer

The diagram illustrates various typographic features and letterforms. It includes uppercase 'A' and lowercase 'a' in different styles (serif, sans-serif, and script), with labels for parts like the apex, bar, bowl, and undershoot. It also shows a row of letters 'A a a x' on a four-line grid with labels for the ascender line, cap height, x-height, baseline, and descender line.





Compared to H

Stem

Ascender sits above Cap Height

Ascender

Overshoot

Counter

Compared with mirrored 'b'

Undershoot

This diagram illustrates the structural components of the letter 'D' and 'd'. It features four examples: a formal serif 'D' compared to an 'H', a serif 'D' with labels for its 'Stem' and 'Counter', a serif 'd' with labels for its 'Ascender' (noting it sits above the cap height) and 'Undershoot', and a cursive 'd' with labels for its 'Ascender' and 'Overshoot'. Dashed horizontal lines indicate the baseline and cap height.

First part is flat

Flared

This diagram shows a serif 'D' and 'd' in red. The 'D' is labeled 'First part is flat' pointing to its vertical stem. The 'd' is labeled 'Flared' pointing to its bowl. The letters are positioned on a solid baseline.

Ascender Line

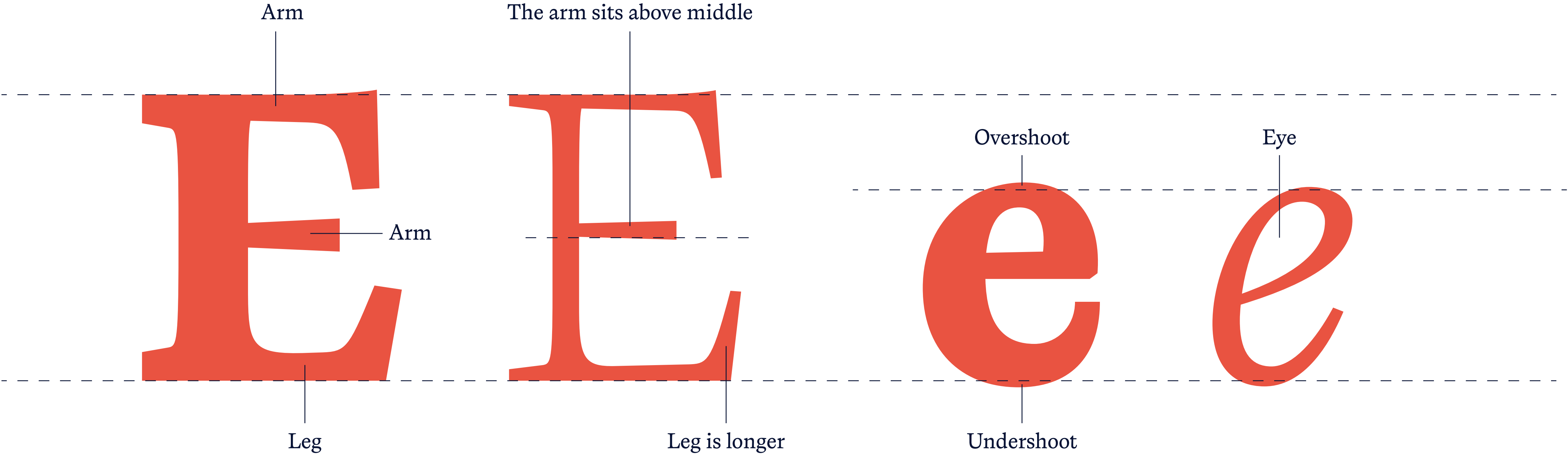
Cap Height

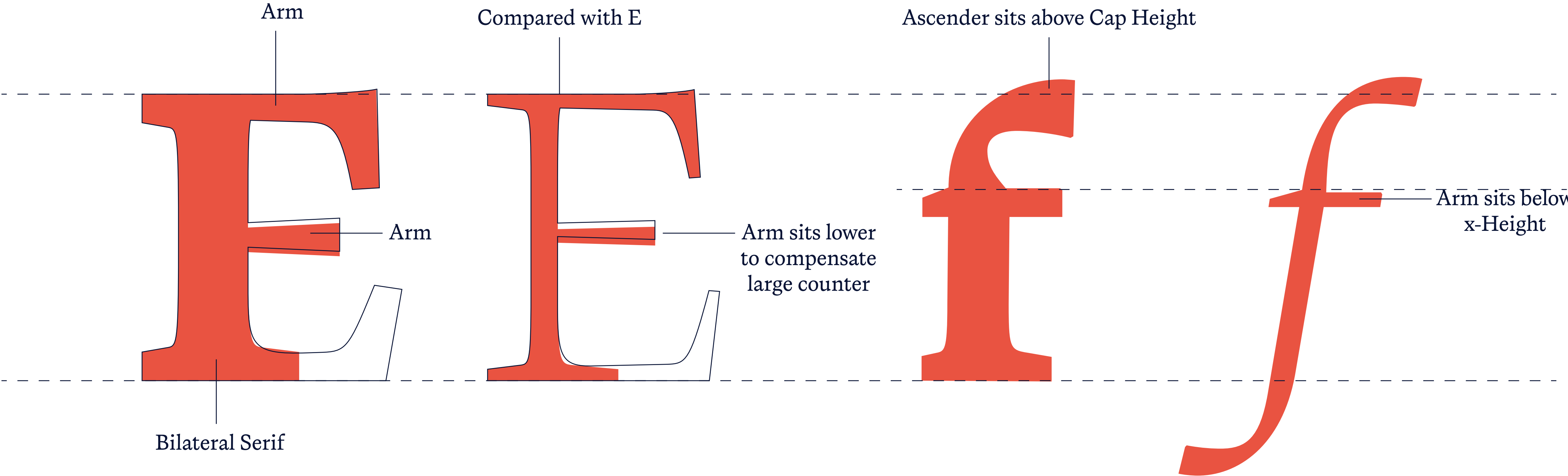
x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line

This diagram shows the letters 'D', 'd', and 'dx' in red on a set of five horizontal guidelines. The guidelines are labeled on the right: 'Ascender Line' (top), 'Cap Height' (second line), 'x-Height' (third line), 'Baseline' (fourth line), and 'Descender Line' (bottom). The 'D' and 'd' are positioned between the Baseline and the Cap Height line. The 'dx' is positioned between the Baseline and the Descender Line.





Overshoot

Inner serif is longer

Roman Double storey

Italic Single storey

Spur

Compared with C

Link

Loop

Ear

Counter

Flared

Can sit within Stem

Ascender Line

Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line

Compared with O

Stem

Ascender sits above Cap Height

Shoulder

Crossbar sits above center

This diagram illustrates the construction of the letter 'H' in both uppercase and lowercase forms. The uppercase 'H' is shown with a vertical stem and a horizontal crossbar. The lowercase 'h' is shown with a vertical stem and a curved shoulder. Annotations include: 'Compared with O' pointing to the circular shape of the 'H' bowl; 'Stem' pointing to the vertical part of the 'H'; 'Ascender sits above Cap Height' pointing to the top of the 'h' stem; 'Shoulder' pointing to the curved part of the 'h'; and 'Crossbar sits above center' pointing to the horizontal bar of the 'H'.

Hh

Ascender Line

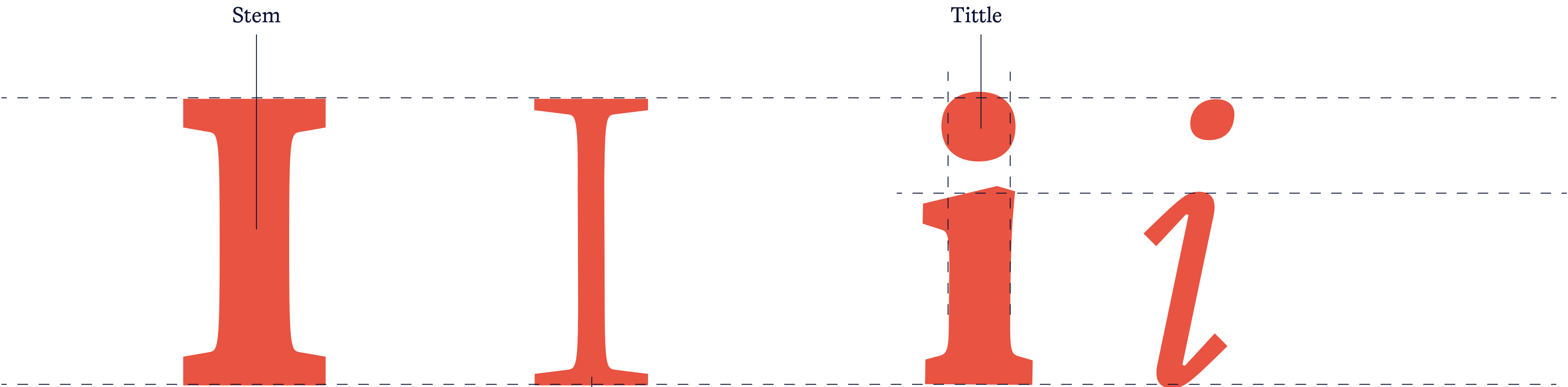
Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line

This diagram shows the letter 'H' in both uppercase and lowercase forms, along with the letter 'x', on a set of horizontal guidelines. The guidelines are labeled: 'Ascender Line' (top line), 'Cap Height' (line below ascender), 'x-Height' (line below cap height), 'Baseline' (line below x-height), and 'Descender Line' (bottom line). The uppercase 'H' and lowercase 'h' are shown in a serif font, while the 'x' is shown in a sans-serif font.



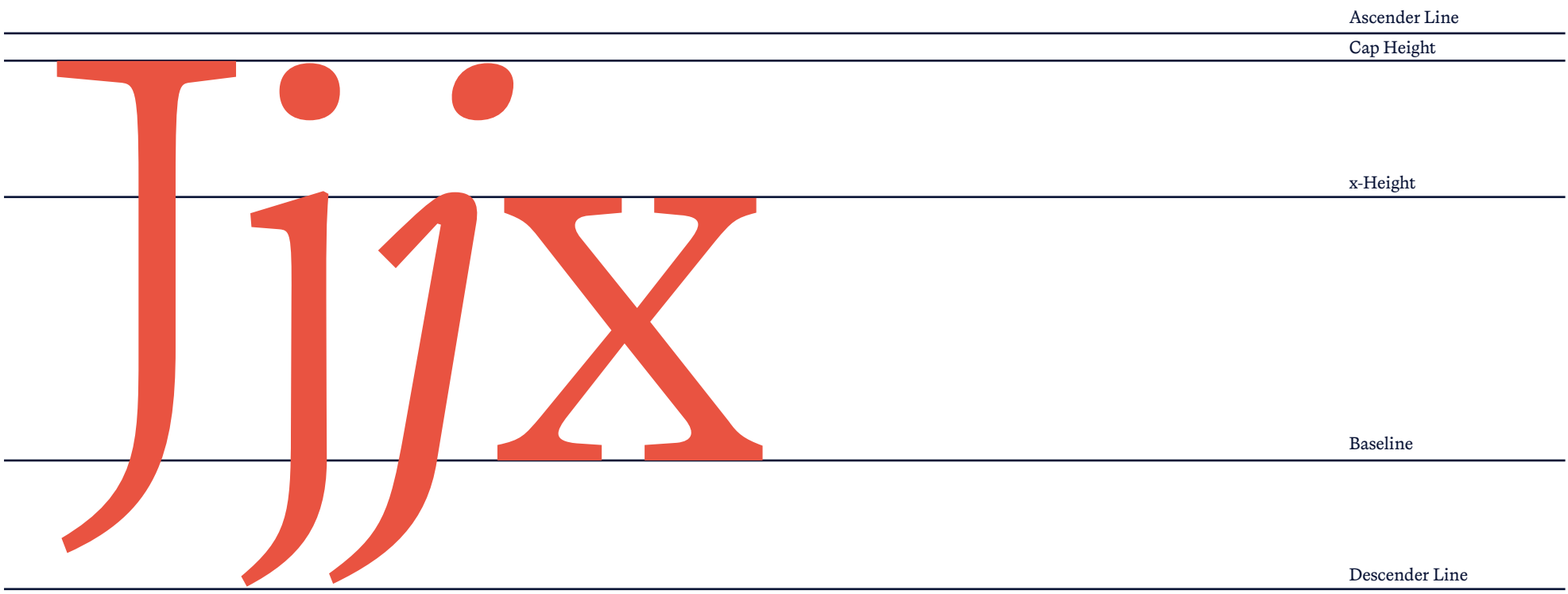
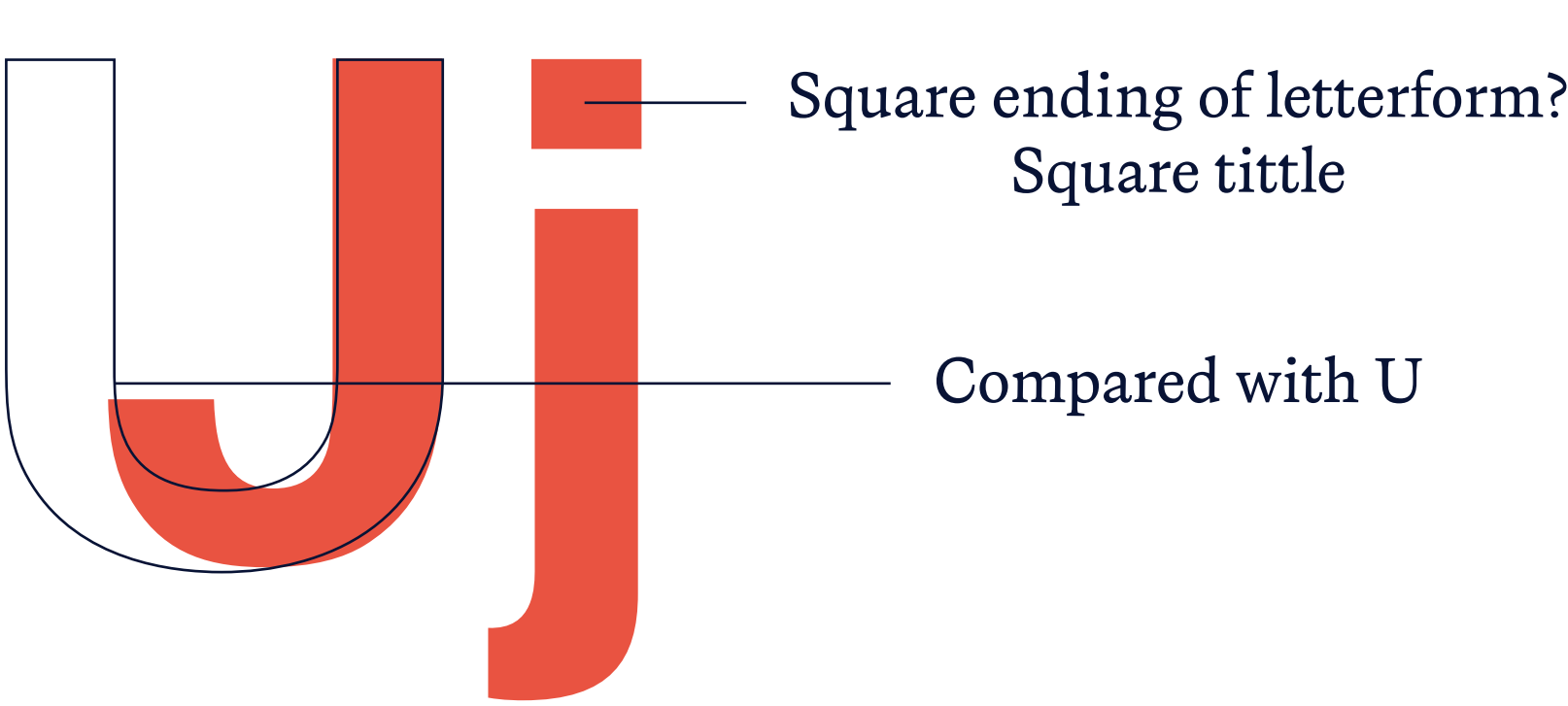
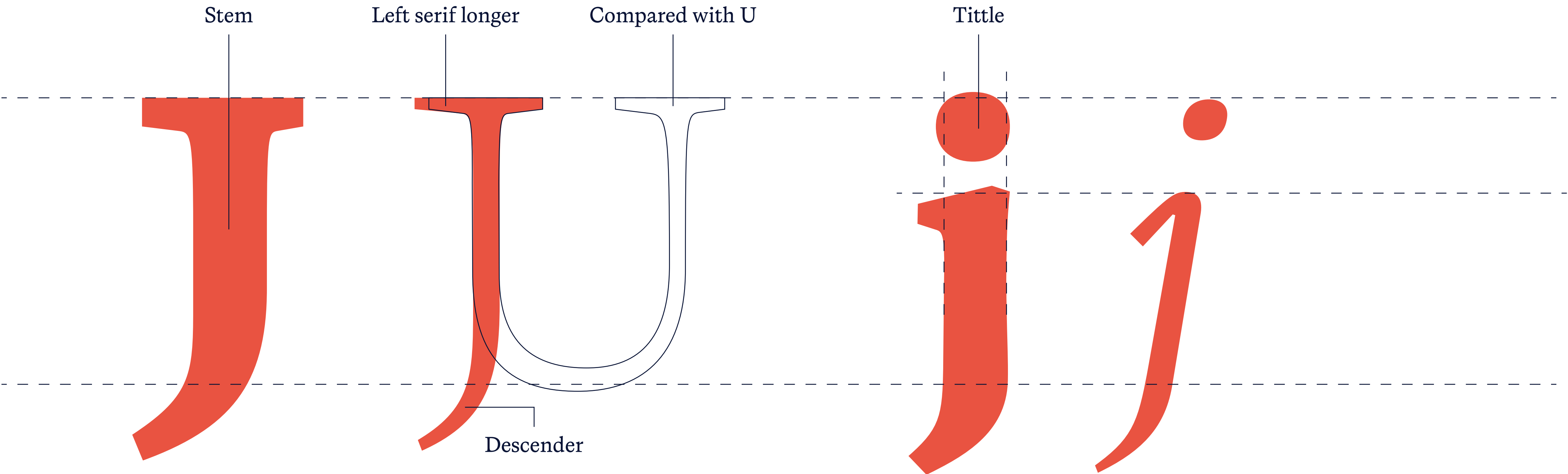
Square ending of letterform?
Square tittle



Bilateral Serif

Tittle is wider then the Stem





Stem

Arm

Leg is longer

Inner serif

Foot

Ascender sits above Cap Height

Connected or disconnected

Italic is different

Compared with H

Ascender Line

Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

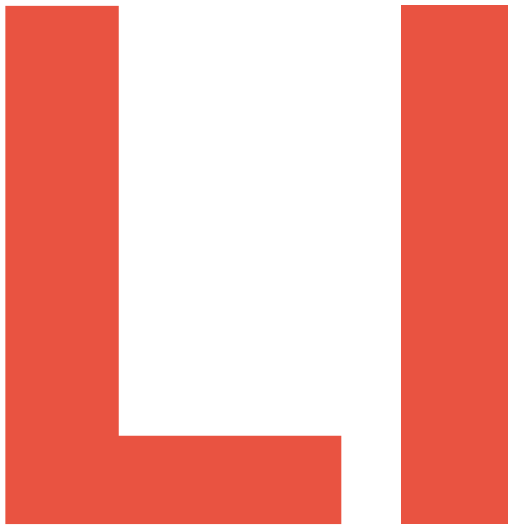
Descender Line

Right serif longer

Ascender sits above Cap Height

Compared with E

Leg



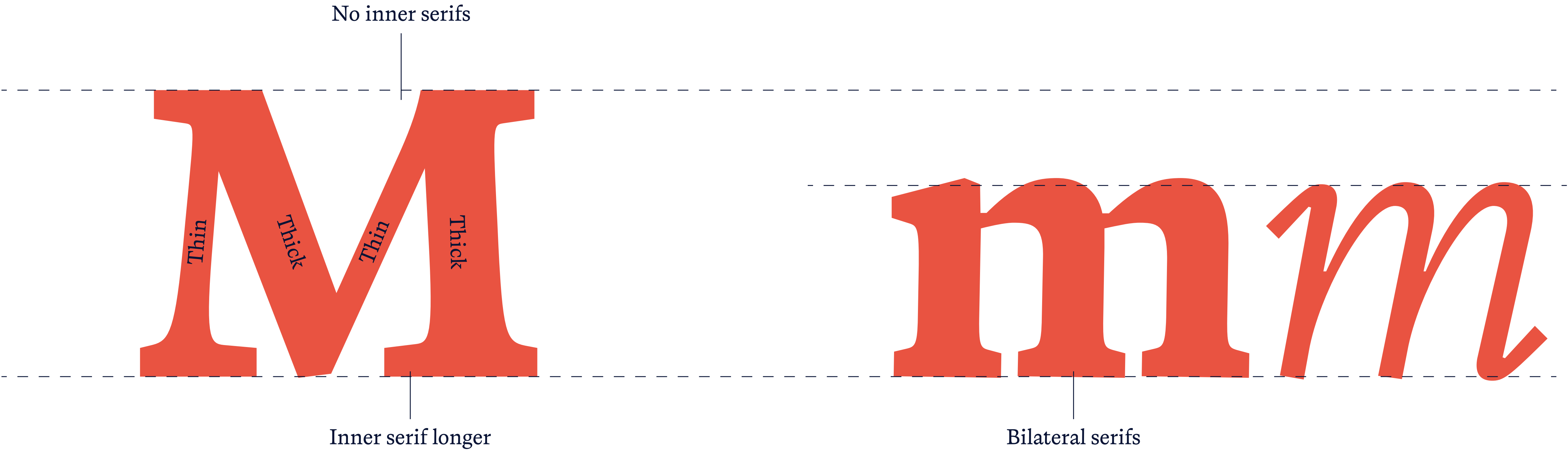
Ascender Line

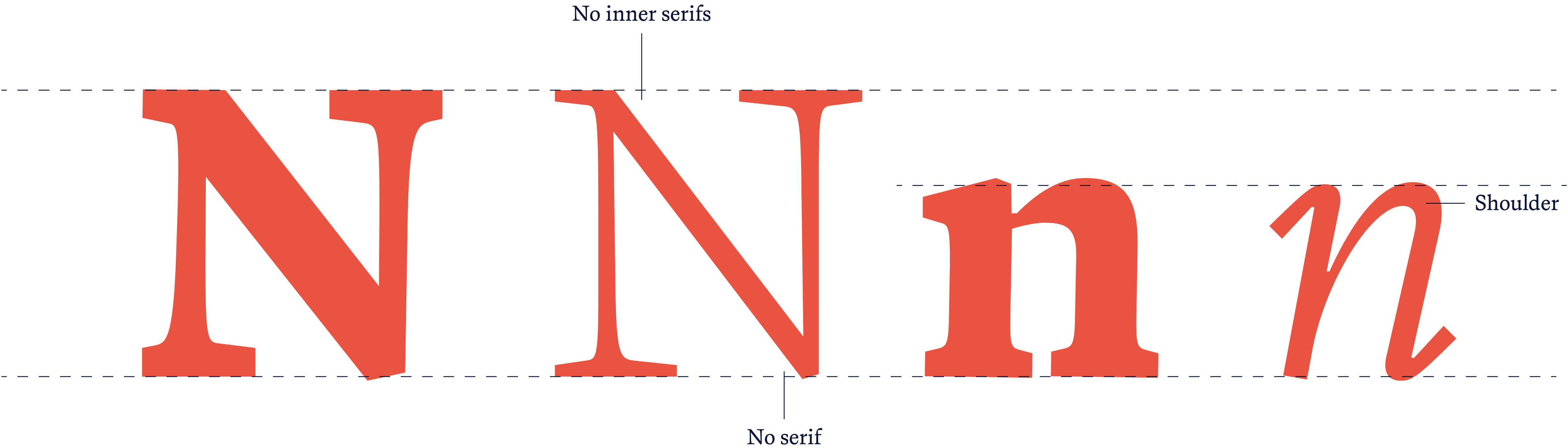
Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

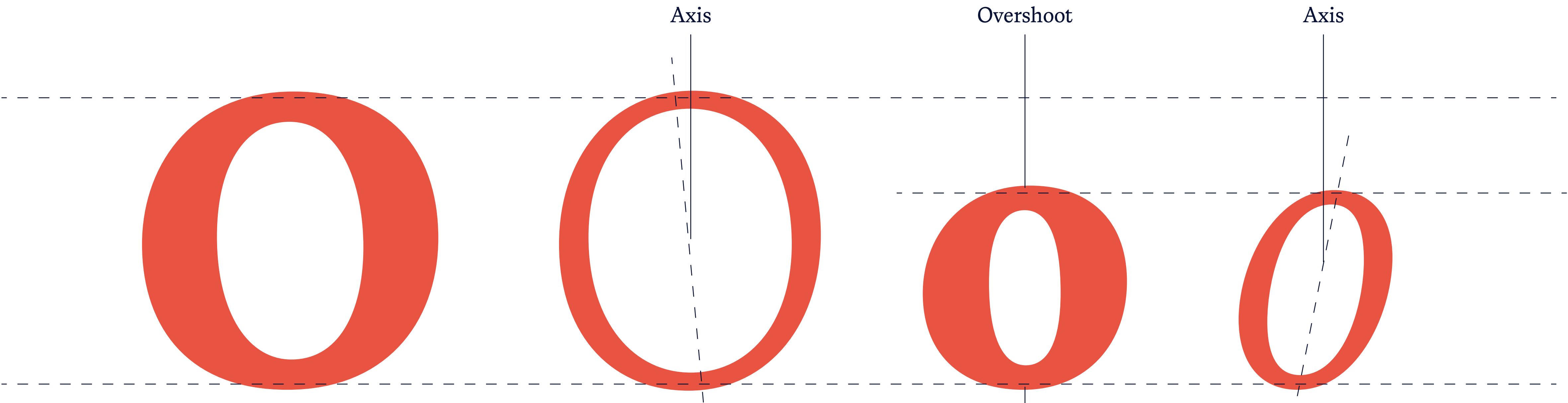
Descender Line





Tapered and thin diagonal

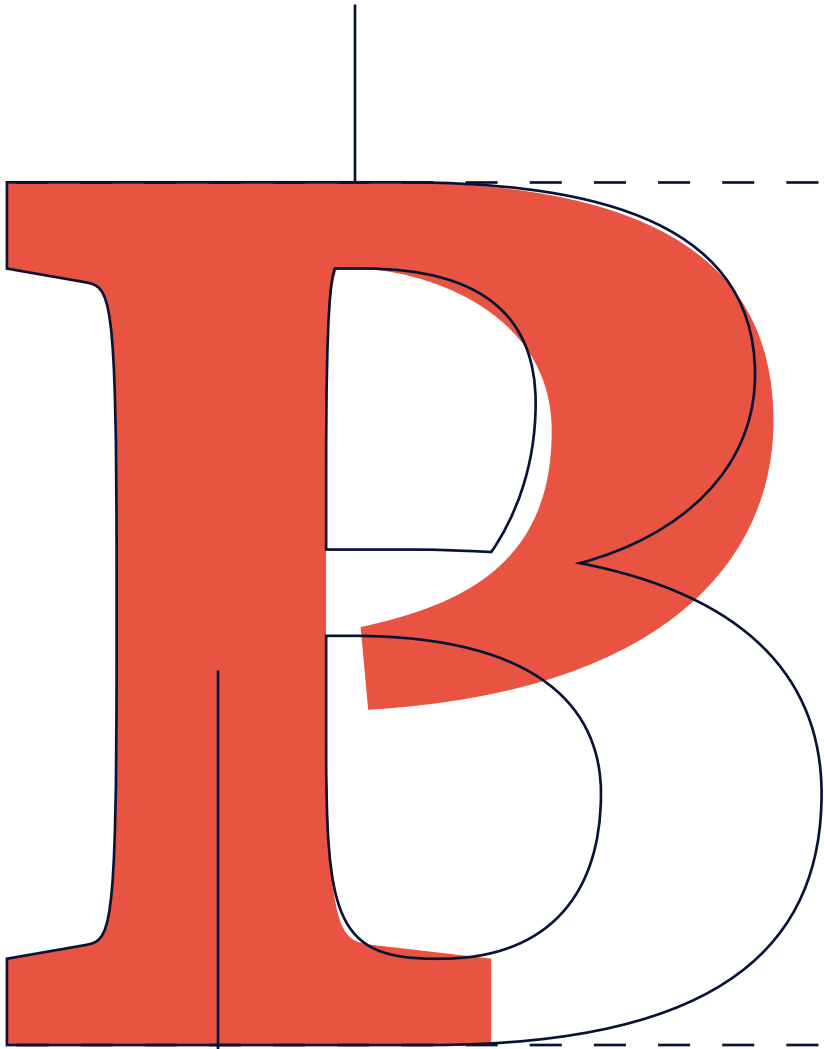




Same shape as uppercase

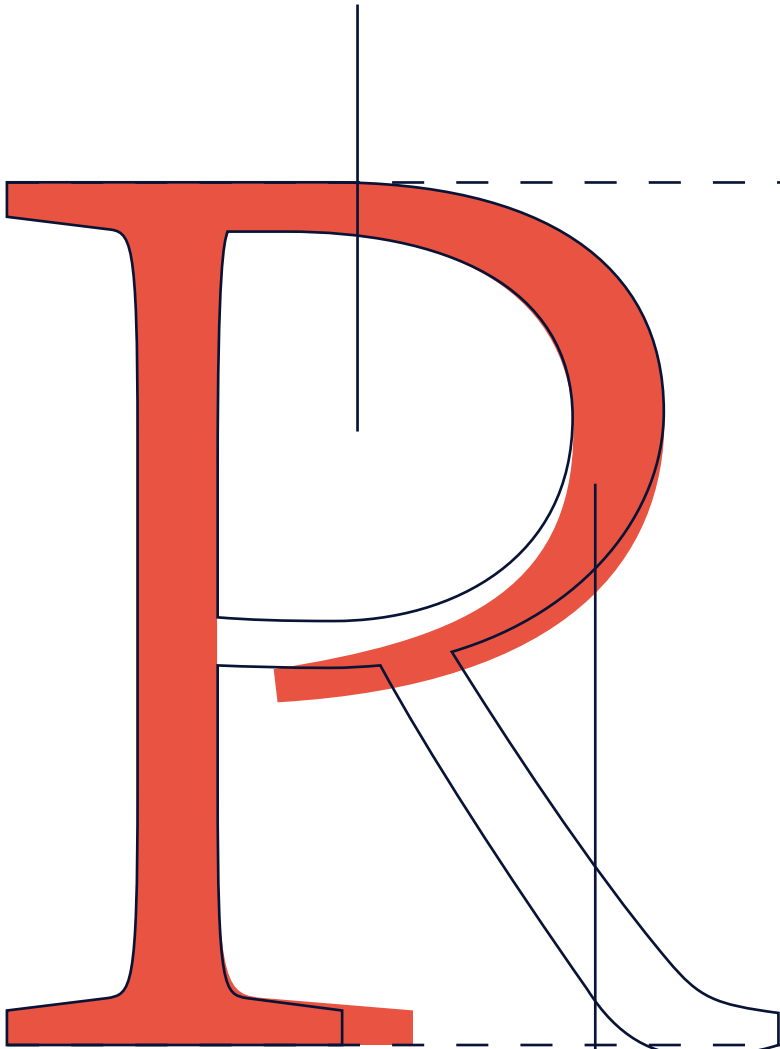


Compared with B

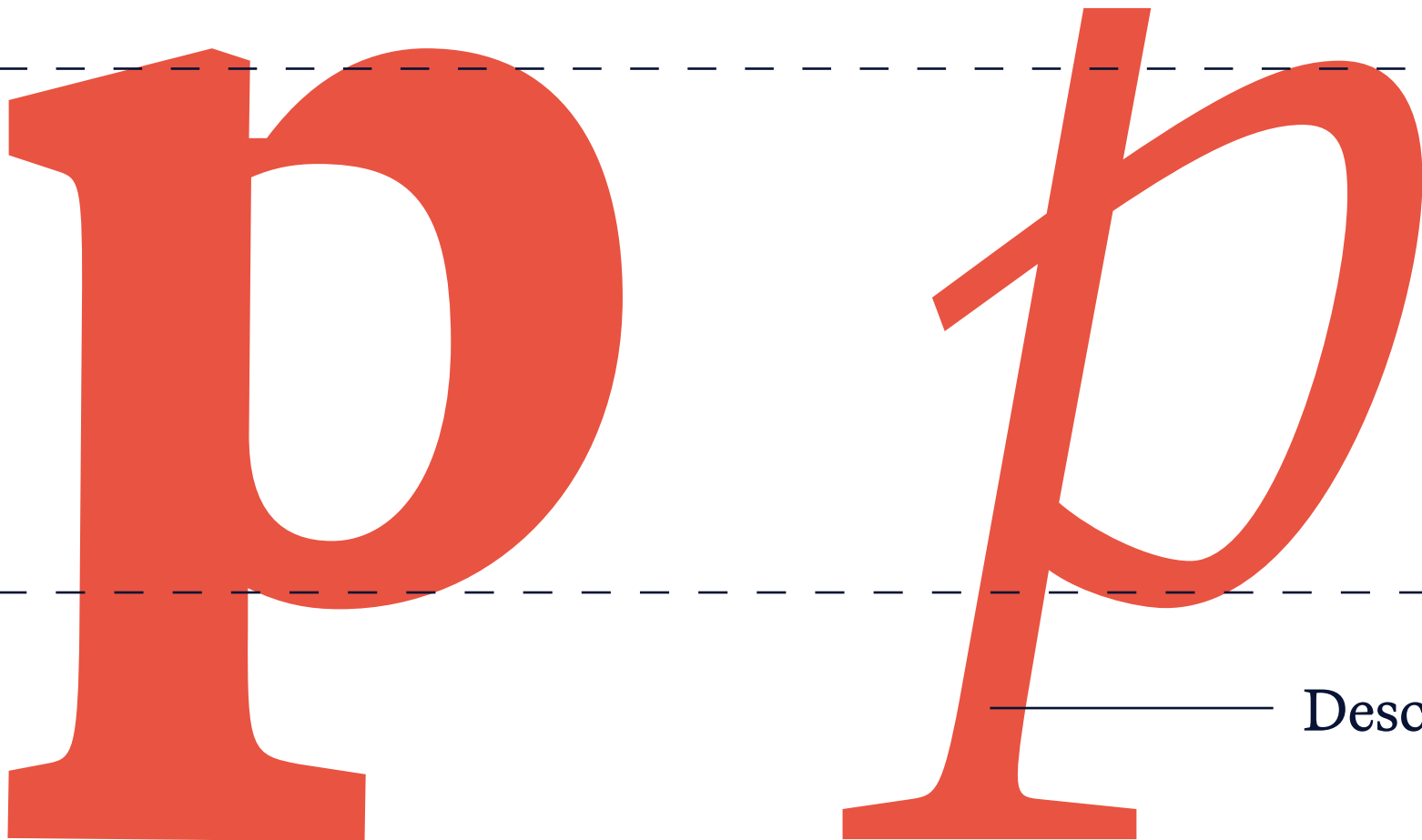


Stem

Compared with R



Lobe



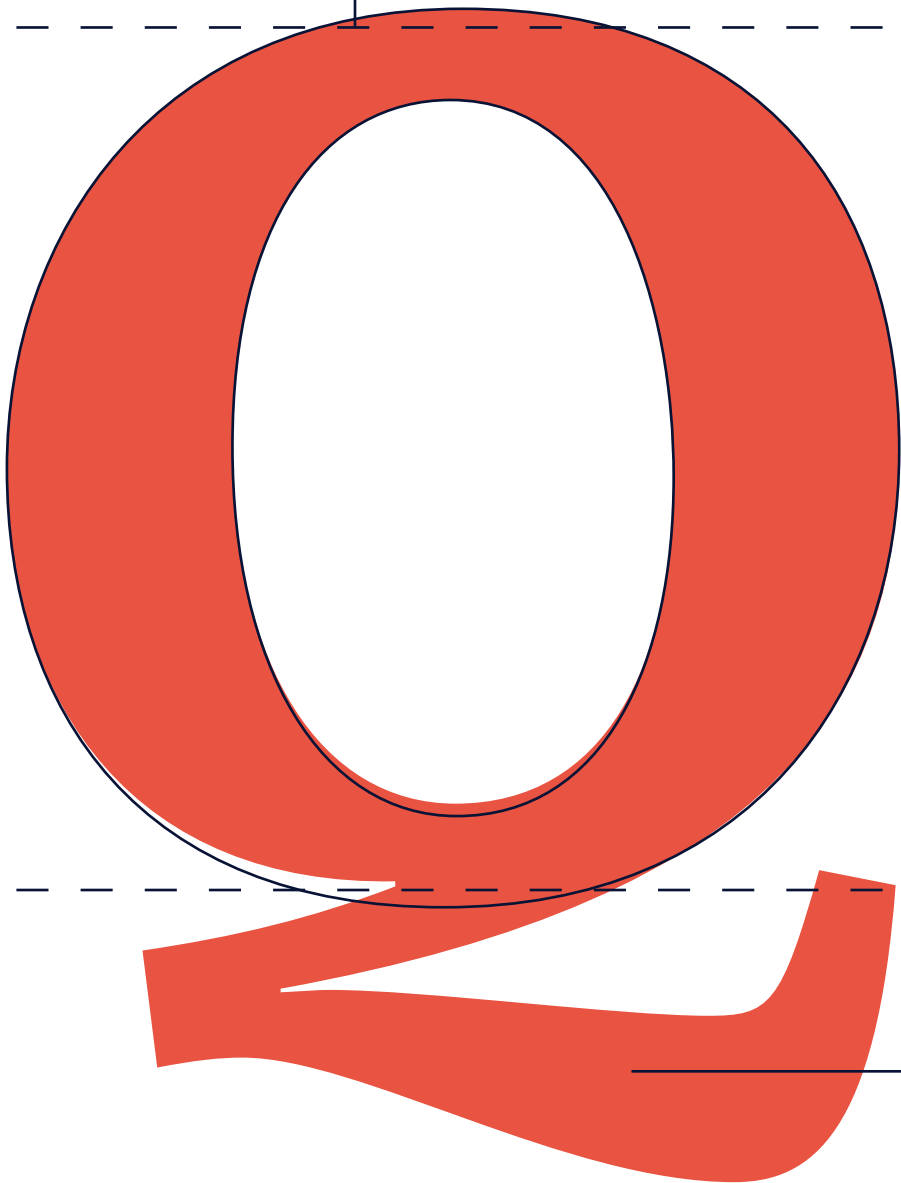
Descender



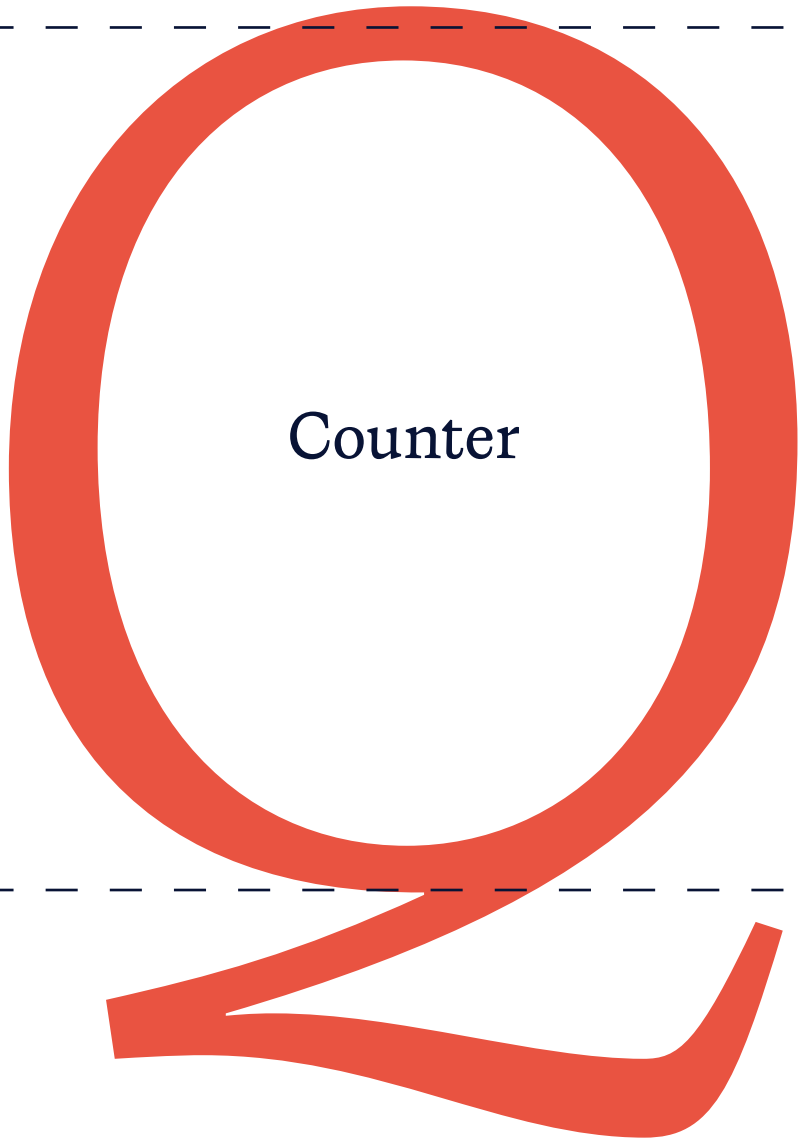
Can sit within Stem



Compared with O



Counter

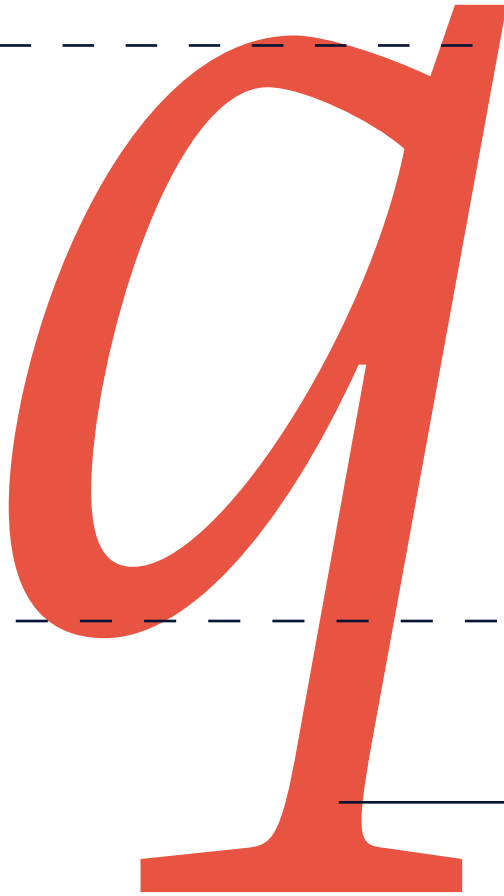
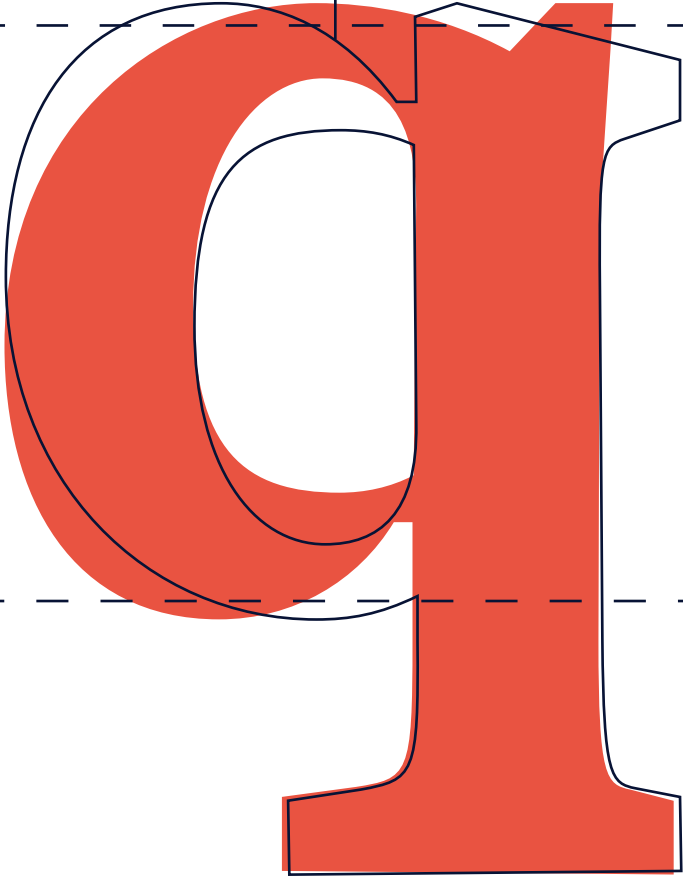


Tail



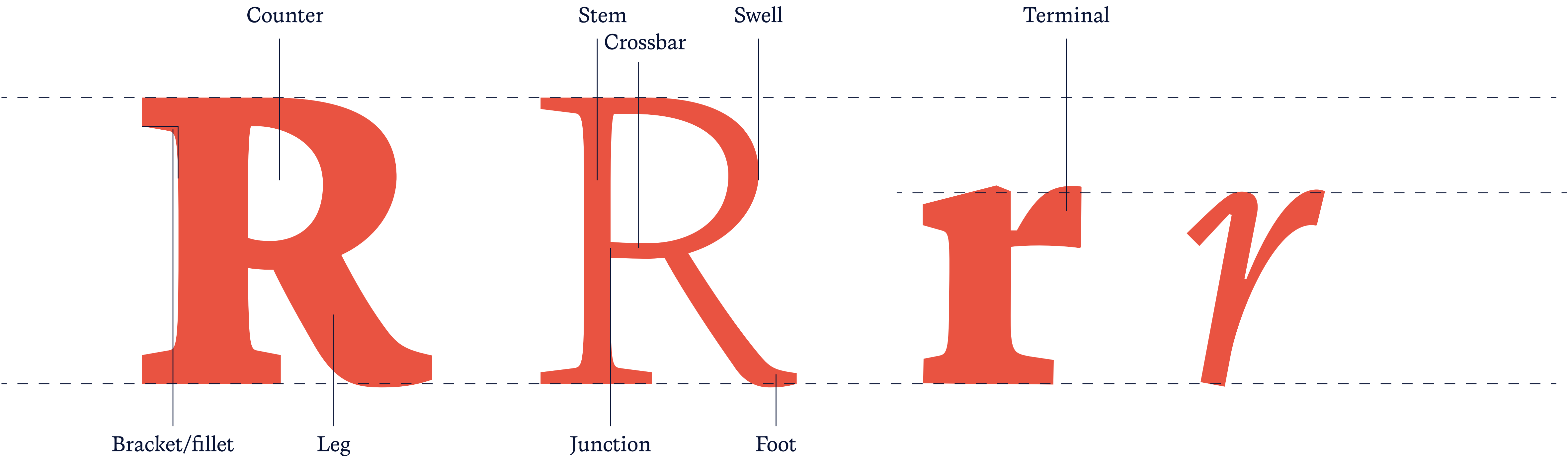
Can sit within Stem

Compared with mirrored p



Descender





Compared with 'n'



Smaller then lower counter

Same style as uppercase

Spine

Beak

This diagram illustrates the construction of uppercase 'S' and lowercase 's' on a two-line grid. The uppercase 'S' is shown on the left, with a vertical line labeled 'Spine' running through its center. The lowercase 's' is shown on the right, with a vertical line labeled 'Beak' at its base. A label 'Smaller then lower counter' points to the top curve of the lowercase 's'. A label 'Same style as uppercase' points to the top curve of the lowercase 's', indicating it should match the style of the uppercase 'S'. Dashed horizontal lines represent the baseline and the top of the cap height.

Ascender Line

Cap Height

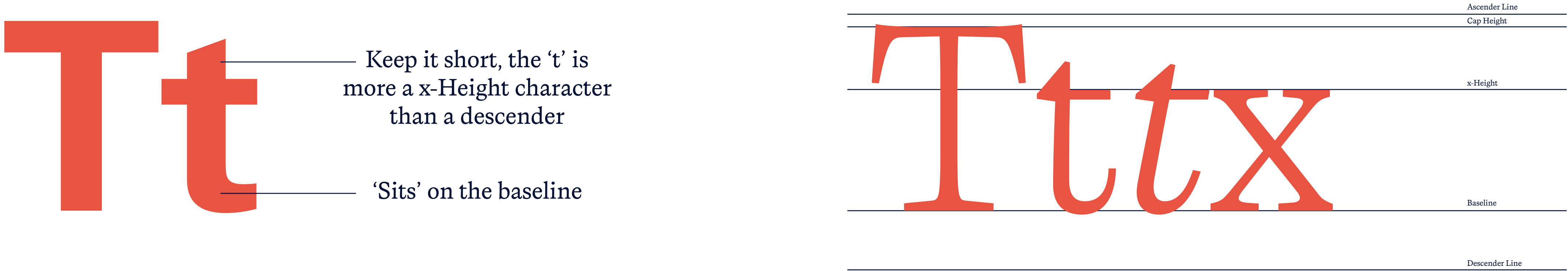
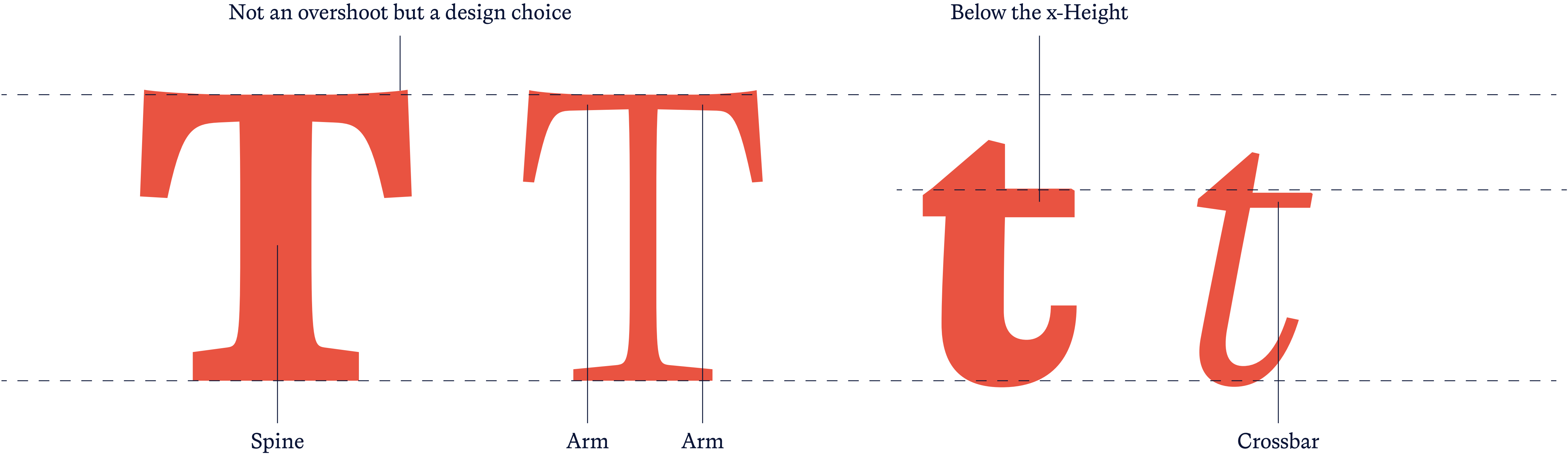
x-Height

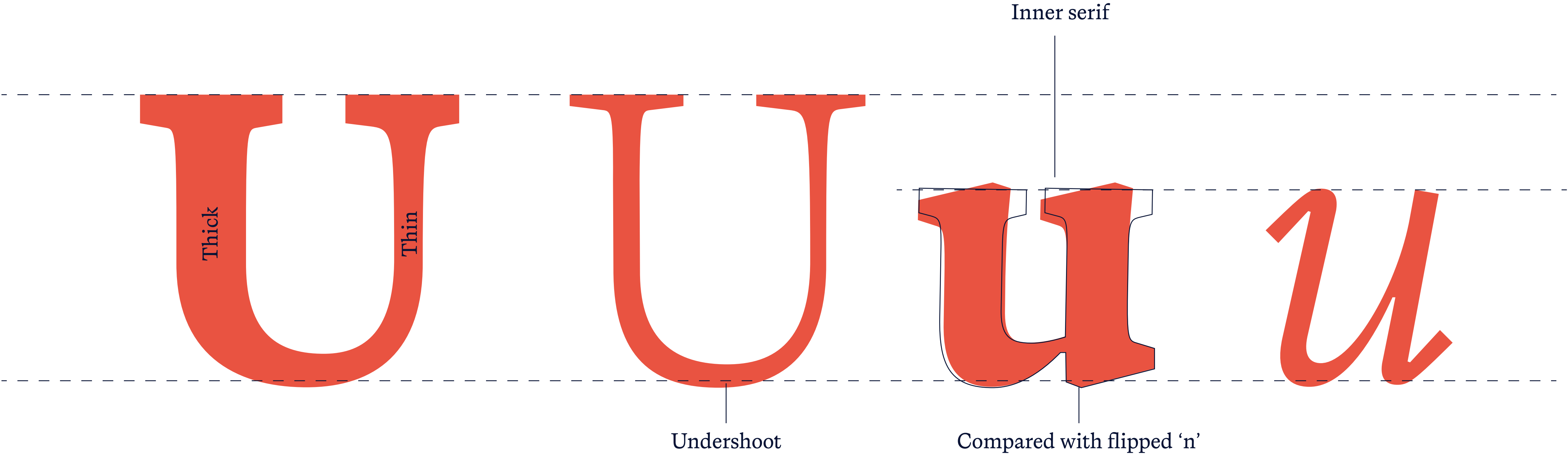
Baseline

Descender Line

Same shape as uppercase

This diagram shows the relationship between uppercase 'S' and lowercase 's' in terms of their vertical alignment and shape. The uppercase 'S' is shown on the left, and the lowercase 's' is shown on the right. A label 'Same shape as uppercase' points to the lowercase 's', indicating it should have the same shape as the uppercase 'S'. The diagram includes several horizontal lines: 'Ascender Line' (top), 'Cap Height' (top of 'S'), 'x-Height' (top of 's'), 'Baseline' (bottom), and 'Descender Line' (bottom). The lowercase 's' is shown between the 'x-Height' and 'Baseline' lines.





Inner serifs often longer

Lowercase is scaled down V

Vertex

Crotch

Same shape as uppercase

Ascender Line

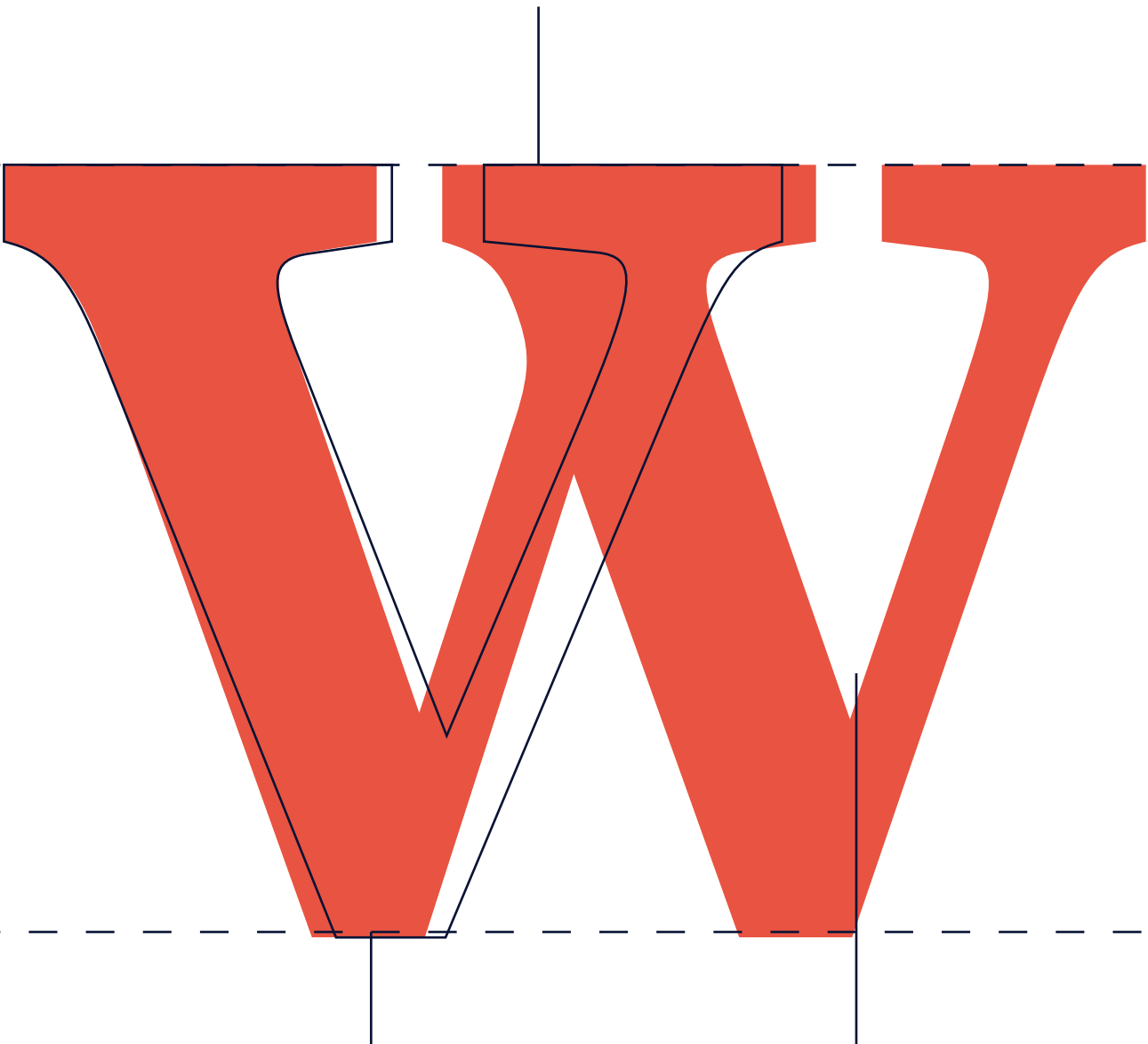
Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line

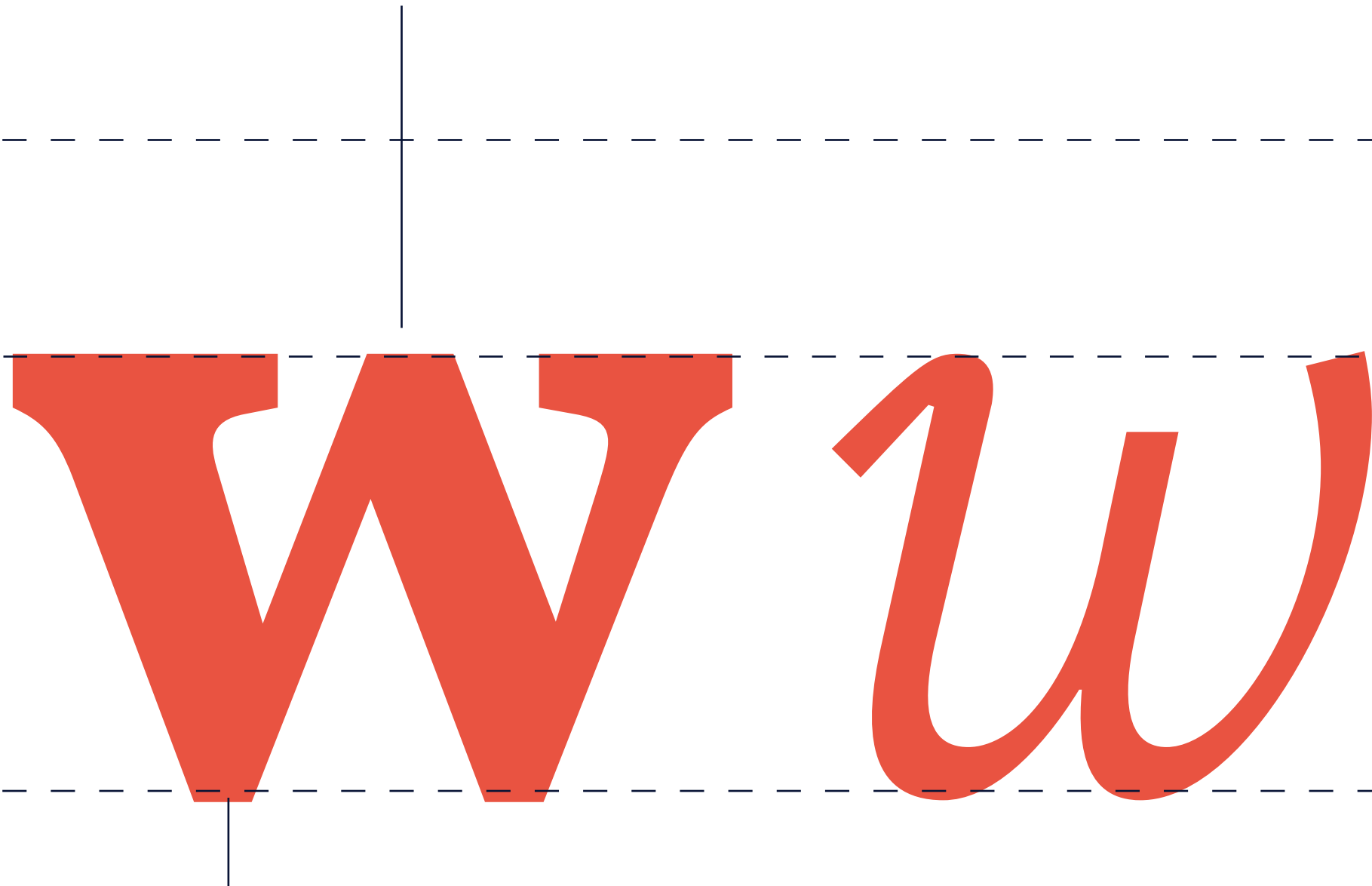
Compared with V



Apex

Crotch

Lowercase often has no inner serifs



Overshoot



Same shape as uppercase



Ascender Line

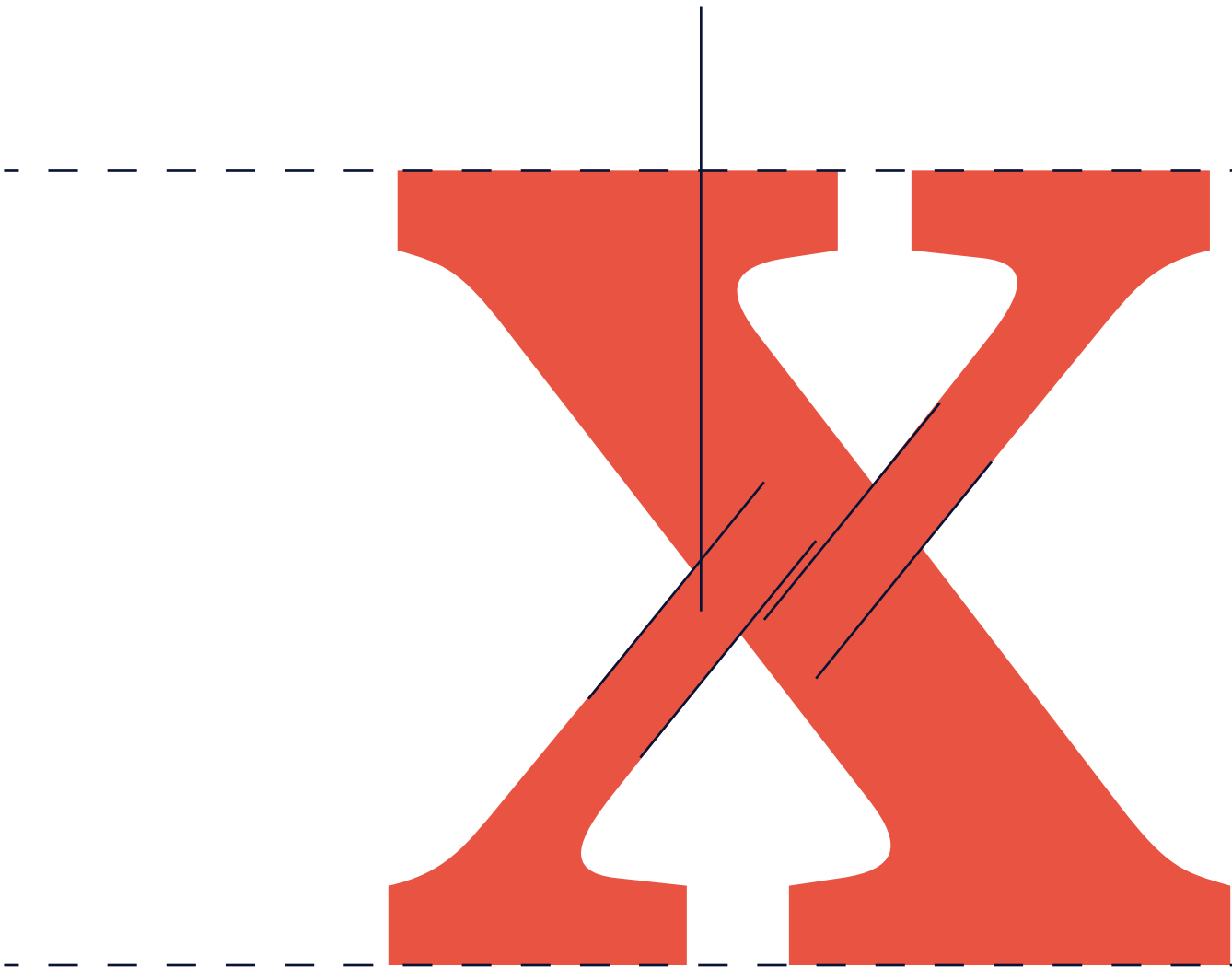
Cap Height

x-Height

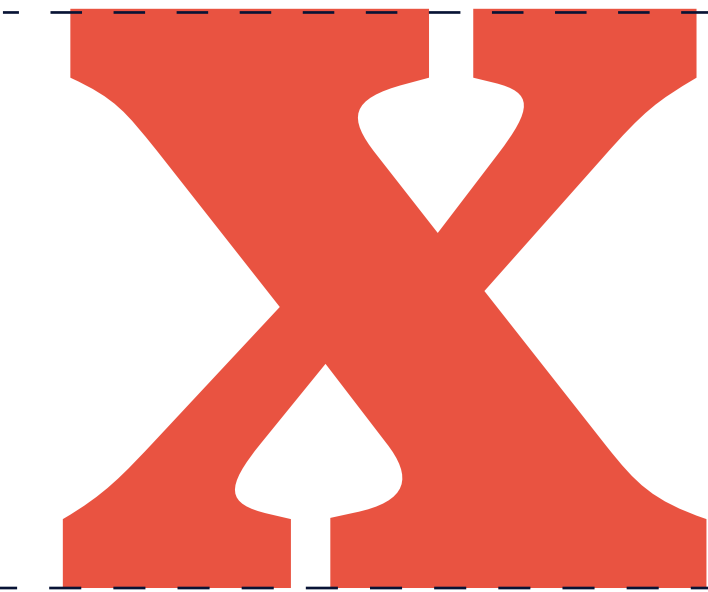
Baseline

Descender Line

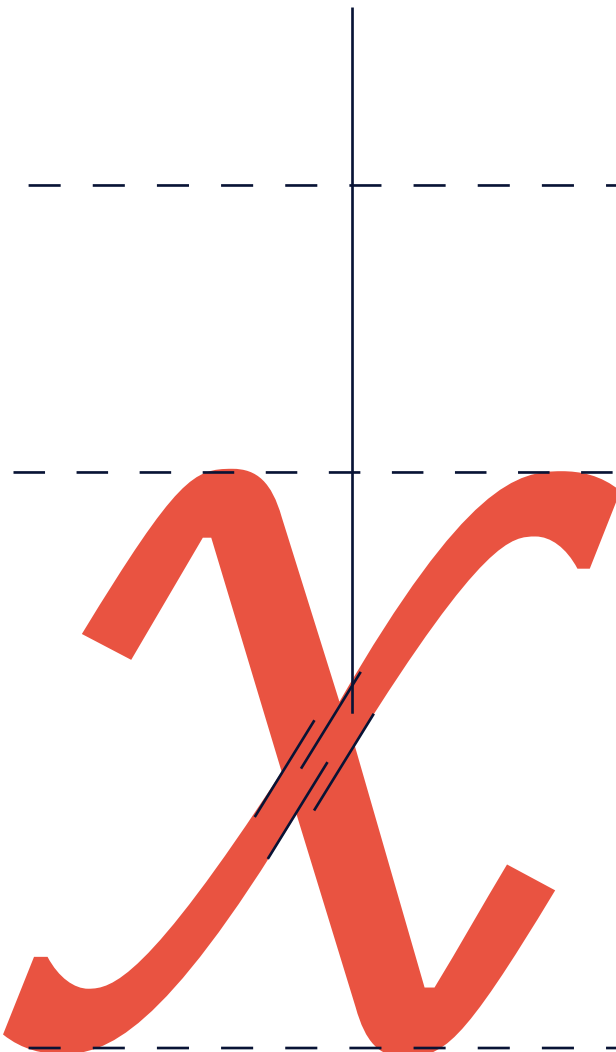
Poggendorf illusion



Inner serifs often longer



Poggendorf illusion



Overhang



Same shape as uppercase
Poggendorf illusion enhanced



Open counter

Crotch

Inner serifs often longer

Compared with v

Compared with v

Tail

Yyxx

Compared with 'v'

Ascender Line

Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line

Thick diagonal

Thin diagonal

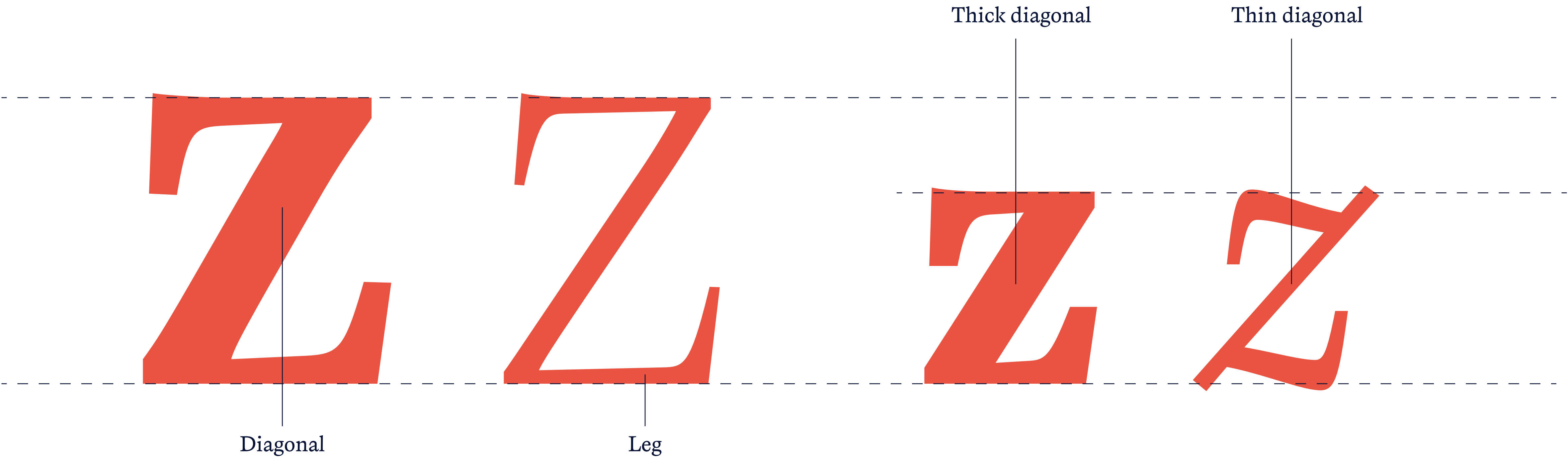


Diagram illustrating the construction of uppercase Z and lowercase z using red strokes on a dashed baseline. The uppercase Z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. The lowercase z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. Labels 'Thick diagonal' and 'Thin diagonal' point to the respective strokes.

Diagonal

Leg

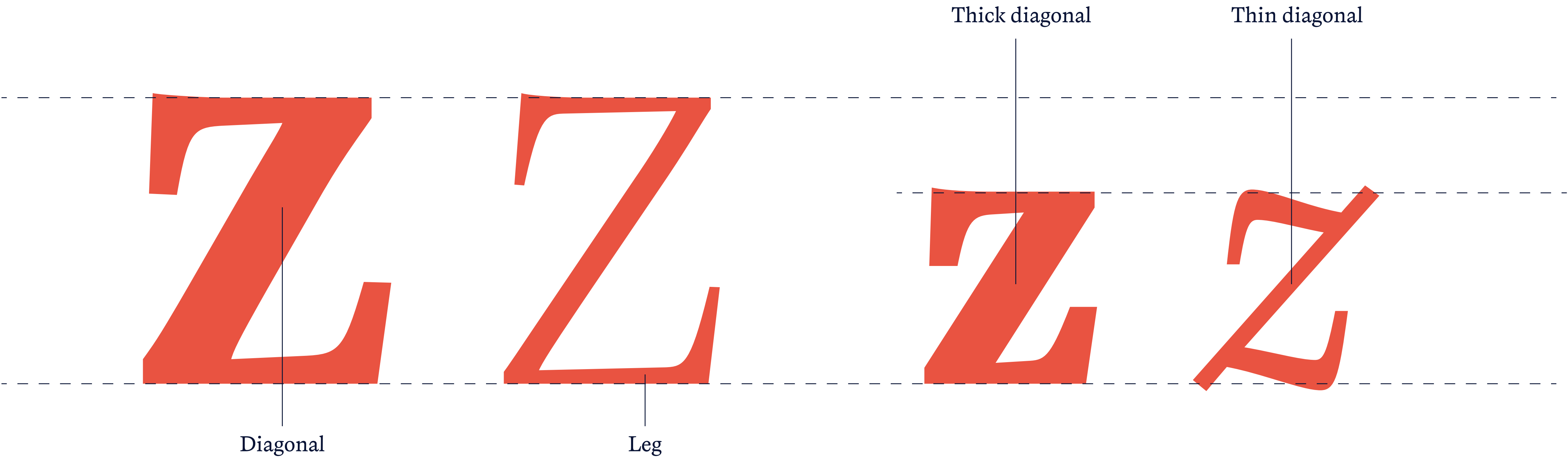


Diagram illustrating the construction of uppercase Z and lowercase z using red strokes on a dashed baseline. The uppercase Z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. The lowercase z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. Labels 'Diagonal' and 'Leg' point to the respective strokes.

Zz

Same shape as uppercase

Ascender Line

Cap Height

x-Height

Baseline

Descender Line



Diagram illustrating the construction of uppercase Z and lowercase z using red strokes on a solid baseline. The uppercase Z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. The lowercase z is shown with a thick diagonal stroke and a thin diagonal stroke. Labels 'Ascender Line', 'Cap Height', 'x-Height', 'Baseline', and 'Descender Line' point to the respective lines.

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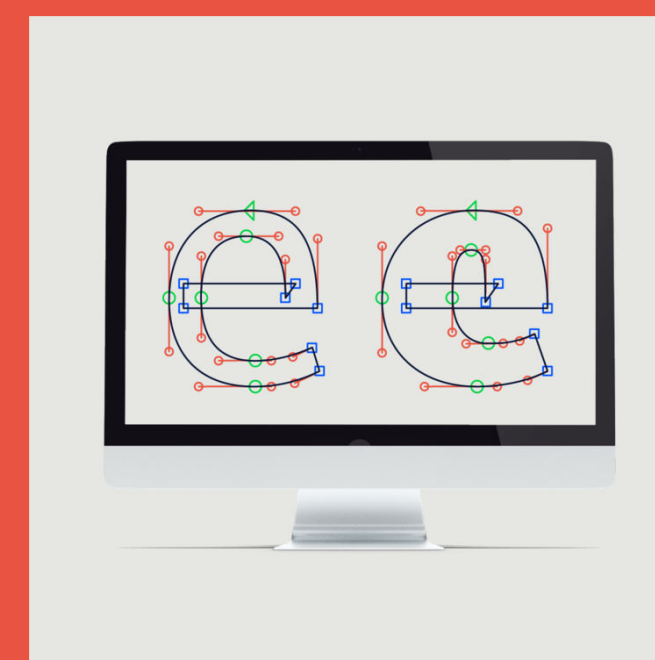
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