

LINOTYPE  
KEYBOARD OPERATION

# *Linotype* Keyboard Operation



Methods of Study  
and Procedures for Setting Various  
Kinds of Composition on  
the Linotype

Mergenthaler Linotype Company  
Brooklyn 5, New York

COPYRIGHT, 1957, by  
*Mergenthaler Linotype Company*  
in U.S.A. and Foreign Countries  
*All Rights Reserved*

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

FOURTH EDITION

*Composed entirely on the Linotype*  
*in Caledonia, Bodoni and*  
*Indicated Faces*

# Foreword

## Methods of Teaching the Linotype

AS IN THE fields of music numerous distinctly different methods of instruction have each produced brilliantly successful graduates, so have varying teaching methods on the Linotype brought forth thoroughly competent operators.

Realizing the divergence of technique even among the instructors in its own schools, the Mergenthaler Linotype Company brought the heads of its schools together for a protracted conference with other teachers and Linotype experts. It was hoped that a wholly unified, standard course of instruction might be developed for general use. But lively debate demonstrated that instructional needs vary somewhat in different parts of the world, and further that, with differing methods attaining equal results, the teachers' established technique is bound to prevail.

Comparison of school schedules and lengths of study term also indicated that a skeleton short-term course of essential fundamentals could not readily be "padded" to fill the needs of a longer term.

Therefore, this book is not written in lesson units. Nor does it represent merely the combined or standardized viewpoint of the many Linotype teachers who have contributed to its compilation or review. Rather does it present, approximately in sequence of difficulty, the typographic problems which the operator meets in commercial practice. Thus it becomes a reference textbook which can be used in any school and correlated to any course of instruction. For the thousands of operators who want to amplify their present attainments, this unit treatment will prove most directly useful for ready reference.

PART I contains (a) an outline of the qualifications considered necessary for a beginner to become a successful operator; (b) a **fingering system**; (c) **keyboard practice**; (d) **figure work**; (e) **capitals and small capitals**; (f) **proof-reader's marks**.

PART II covers the setting of intricate composition, problems of book and job work being included.

PART III comprises the composition used in newspaper work, showing headings, text, tables and the advertising work customary on daily and weekly newspapers.

Equipment information is **provided in PART IV** of the book. Here, also, will be found a description of **the point systems** commonly used in measuring type, supplemented by tables, which will be found useful.

Instruction in mechanism is provided in a separate textbook and is not touched upon in these pages. The mechanical instruction is fully covered in *Linotype Machine Principles*, which is on sale at all agencies.

The technique of keyboard fingering is subject to the most widely varying opinion. The method presented here is the result of practical teaching and is thus entirely trustworthy. Other routines of practice or variations of fingering may be equally successful. But unless the teacher or student can substitute a tried and proved method he is urged to adhere to this book.

Particularly would the Company, in issuing this book, stress the need for the operator's understanding of the niceties of composition. The Linotype as a tool will produce a tremendous output. But the typographic merit of that output depends upon the operator's knowledge. His own success as an individual, multiplied by the thousands who are similarly striving, can make or mar the success of the Linotype in the great fields of printing and publishing.

## Capability of Machine and Operator

IN JULY, 1886, the first Linotype installation was made in the plant of the *New York Tribune*. Today the Mergenthaler Linotype Company serves most of the publishers and printers throughout the world and the Linotype has become indeed the universal machine. It is used for composition in more than a hundred different languages in all parts of the world. Linotype-set newspapers, books, periodical publications, and business printing go into practically every home.

The Linotype should be termed a composing rather than a typesetting machine. Its product is the most economical type unit, the slug, a completely set line, cast in one piece. In operation the machine has several distinct and simultaneous functions. When the operator has manipulated the keyboard to assemble a line of type matrices and spacebands he forwards the line into the casting operation and proceeds with the assembling of the next line. Meantime the previous line of matrices moves over into casting position, is justified to establish fixed width and then locked into position before the mold. Molten metal is forced into the mold, filling the type characters in the matrices and forming the body of the slug. The matrices are released, carried over and upward (the spacebands meantime being removed and returned) and the distributor returns each individual matrix to its source. Meantime the cast slug is carried past trimming knives and ejected upon the galley in orderly sequence. Thus there are several procedures in simultaneous operation and composition proceeds at a pace up to six lines a minute of body type on average measures.

The Linotype is designed for wide flexibility in the production of many body sizes, lengths of line, and type faces. New type faces are frequently

brought forth to keep pace with the continual growth and change of typographic customs throughout the world. The complex requirements of modern composition are met with a range of body size from four to forty-five points, with faces up to sixty point, and length of line up to thirty picas on standard models and to forty-two picas on other models. Single or multiple distribution, with standard main magazines and auxiliary side magazines, provides machine equipment for all the infinite variety of modern composition. Thus the machine produces all kinds of newspaper matter, commercial printing, and book work, from the simplest to editions de luxe. The skilled operator of today may be called upon to set every kind and class of composition.

It is apparent that to measure up to the capabilities of the machine the prospective Linotype student should have a definite educational background if he is to become successful. Any intelligent person can readily learn to set straight matter, but to handle the varied composing requirements he must thoroughly understand the work of the printer. Especially must he know the language he is to set. The rules of capitalization, punctuation, division of words, and grammatical construction are the tools of type composition. If he lacks them he cannot become a capable Linotype operator. With them, diligent study of the machine and its possibilities will make him succeed. Therefore the student is advised to obtain a good working knowledge of printing before he takes up the lessons outlined in this book.

While there have been many instances of shop-taught operation of the Linotype and sometimes purchasers of the machine have even taught themselves to operate it, it is recommended that the student attend a properly equipped Linotype school. Here a good working knowledge of the machine may be obtained under supervised conditions. Even so it is not possible to produce by instruction alone a first-class operator or machinist. The schools provide an adequate foundation but printing shop experience also is essential for skill, speed, and resourceful knowledge of the machine.

Schools and shops are interdependent. Each must do a share of the training. At the end of a good school course the student's production can be commercially profitable through continued practice. It is up to the shop, with its foremen and executives, to make it mutually more profitable.

The Linotype is a wonderfully ingenious tool whose type-composing possibilities are measured by the skill of the operator. This book has been compiled to assist the development of that skill, and to maintain the highest standards for type composition on the Linotype.

# Contents

Foreword . . . . .	v
--------------------	---

## Keyboard Practice

### PART I

Significance of Craftsmanship . . . . .	1
The Linotype Keyboard . . . . .	4
The Fingering System . . . . .	9
Word Practice . . . . .	11
Sentence Practice . . . . .	15
Capital-Letter Practice . . . . .	17
Italic and Bold-Face Practice . . . . .	18
Figure Practice . . . . .	20
Small Capitals, Their Use and Practice . . . . .	22
Casting Slugs . . . . .	24
Marks on the Copy . . . . .	24
Division of Words . . . . .	27
Keyboard Diagrams . . . . .	29, 173

### PART II

## Commercial Composition—Book Work

Craftsmanship in Practice . . . . .	34
Spacing and Justification . . . . .	34
Letterspacing . . . . .	39
Centering Headings . . . . .	41
The Linotype Self-Quadder . . . . .	42
Typographic Refinements . . . . .	42
Swash Characters . . . . .	44
Solid and Leaded Matter . . . . .	44
Double or Multiple Slug Composition . . . . .	46
Lining Up Variable Columns . . . . .	49

Setting Poetry . . . . .	49
Flights of Names . . . . .	52
Cut-in Side-Heads . . . . .	53
Initial Letters . . . . .	54
Linotype Leaders—Their Proper Use . . . . .	59
Open Leader Work . . . . .	60
Setting Around Illustrations . . . . .	62
Justifying Type in Mortises . . . . .	66
Lining Up Roman Numerals or Other Letters . . . . .	66
Folios and Running Headings . . . . .	67
Menu and Bill-of-Fare . . . . .	70
Programs . . . . .	73
Balance and Spacing of Columns . . . . .	78
Constitution and By-Laws . . . . .	80
Resolutions . . . . .	81
Book Composition . . . . .	82
Footnotes . . . . .	86
Copyright Lines . . . . .	87
Contents Pages . . . . .	88
Index Pages . . . . .	90
Credit and Signature Lines . . . . .	92
Mixing Linotype Faces . . . . .	96
Typewriter Composition . . . . .	97
Commercial Printing . . . . .	100
Telephone Directory Composition . . . . .	105
Piece Fractions . . . . .	106
Superior and Inferior Characters . . . . .	107
Accented Letters . . . . .	108
The Three-Character Key Button . . . . .	109
Brace Work . . . . .	110
The Ellipsis . . . . .	113
Ballot Squares . . . . .	113
Recasting on the Linotype . . . . .	114
Borders . . . . .	114
Ruled Forms . . . . .	119
Lining Faces . . . . .	127
Tabular Composition . . . . .	127



## CONTENTS

xi

Self-Spacing Faces . . . . .	136
Mono-Tabular System . . . . .	139
Wax-Ruled Tables . . . . .	140

## PART III

### Newspaper and Advertising Composition

Newspaper Work . . . . .	142
Body Type Used for Newspapers . . . . .	143
Newspaper Headings . . . . .	144
Newspaper Tables . . . . .	150
Baseball Tables . . . . .	153
Football Tables . . . . .	156
Golf Tables . . . . .	157
Tennis Tables . . . . .	157
Racing Results and Charts . . . . .	158
Stocks and Bonds . . . . .	159
Classified Advertisements . . . . .	159
Newspaper Advertisements on the Linotype . . . . .	160
Advertising Figure Layout—Diagram 32 . . . . .	164

## PART IV

### Equipment Information

General . . . . .	165
Figures . . . . .	170
Sizes of Linotype Faces . . . . .	170
Systems of Measurement . . . . .	171
Index . . . . .	181