Font Licenses

CHECKLIST

License Type	What It Covers	Where You Can Use It	Notes / Watch Out For
Desktop License	Allows installation on a computer for design purposes.	Creating static graphics like logos, packaging, print materials, and social graphics.	Only covers your machine unless additional seats are purchased. Client needs their own license if they'll use the font too.
Web License (Webfont)	Embeds the font into a website via CSS.	Client's website only, often limited by monthly page views.	Don't use webfont files in print or logos. Check if you need to self-host or use a service like Adobe Fonts or Google Fonts.
App License	Embeds the font in an app, game, or software interface.	Mobile apps, desktop software, or games.	Usually based on number of downloads or users, rarely needed for branding projects unless client has an app.
ePub License	For embedding fonts in digital publications.	eBooks, PDFs, or digital magazines.	Not the same as a web license, only covers embedded publication files.
Broadcast License	Use of a font in video, film, or television.	TV shows, advertisements, YouTube videos, or motion graphics.	Only required if the font appears in moving media.
Server License	Fonts hosted on a server and generated dynamically (e.g., in templates).	Online design tools or software that generates user content.	Rare for most designers, needed if the client's users generate branded assets.

Quick Rules:

- *Always buy the license under the end client's name, not yours, if the font will live in their brand.*
- *If you use a font just for mockups or internal concepts, you can use your own license, but it can't transfer to the client.*
- *If the font is included in a logo, check if the license allows outline conversion (turning text to vector).*
- *Free fonts (like Google Fonts) still have license terms, check if they allow commercial use before including in brand kits.*

Font File Types

File Type	Best For	Description	Notes
OTF (OpenType Font)	Professional design use (preferred)	Newer, flexible format that supports advanced features (ligatures, alternates).	Best for print, branding, and digital design. Most stable and universal.
TTF (TrueType Font)	General design and desktop use	Older format; still widely supported.	Fine for most uses but lacks advanced typographic features.
WOFF / WOFF2 (Web Open Font Format)	Web use	Compressed versions of fonts optimized for faster web loading.	Use these for websites only, not for print or design programs.
EOT (Embedded OpenType)	Legacy web use	Older format for Internet Explorer compatibility.	Rarely needed now, most modern browsers use WOFF.
SVG Font	Icons or limited web use	Vector-based font files for scalable icons.	Largely outdated, replaced by WOFF/WOFF2.