Courier

Courier was originally designed in 1956 by Howard Kettler for the revolutionary “golfball” typing head technology IBM was then developing for its electric typewriters. The first typewriter to use the technology was the IBM Selectric Typewriter that debuted in 1961. Courier is one of the most well-recognized typefaces in the world. A typical characteristic of older typewriters is that all characters are given the same amount of space regardless of their width. For example, an i receives just as much room as an m, even though it is much thinner. This principle defined the look of Courier. A line in this typeface has ‘holes’ in what would otherwise be a homogenous look. Due to its origins, Courier is associated with office and telegram-like text. When Apple introduced its first Macintosh computer in 1984 it anachronistically included Courier among its core fonts. In the early 1990s Microsoft, locked in a font format battle with Adobe, hired Monotype Typography to design a series of core fonts for Windows 3.1, many of which were intended to mirror those in the Apple core font group. New Courier, lighter and crisper than Courier, was born.

Today, typewriters have all but disappeared from everyday use and the practical need for such a typeface with them. Nevertheless, the attractive imperfections of Courier have long been appreciated for their usefulness in design applications. It is often seen in advertisements, hypertext and other graphic designs.