

# Sirba

A low-contrast serif that's warm  
and even in complex settings.

DESIGNED BY

**Nicolien van der Keur**

YEAR

2010

Sirba is Nicolien van der Keur's low-contrast, high-functioning serif family. Sirba was designed with a friendly personality specifically to serve the high demands of complex text environments like dictionaries, academic texts, annual reports, novels, and magazines. Sirba's design was guided by in-depth research of letterpress printed Bibles and dictionaries, particularly concerning readability in small point sizes.

Sirba has a classic touch revealed by its beauty in such design details as the asymmetrical bottom serifs, curved bracketing, and terminals with calligraphic undertones.

Because of its open counters, large x-height, and short ascenders and descenders, it provides a pleasant reading experience and high legibility even in texts of demanding scope. Furthermore, annual reports and tables benefit from the low cap height and consistent width of the tabular numerals between the weights.

Sirba is available in the four basic styles plus a Black version, which is unique in that its proportions are designed so the counters remain prominent enough for excellent legibility when set in very small text sizes. Since the stem width is twice as thick as the Regular weight, Sirba Black's spacing and letter width are

rather generous in comparison to other typefaces of the same weight. Much attention was given to the italic and roman as equal counterparts while designing the type family. The italic distinguishes itself just enough without creating unevenness when looking at the text as a whole. To get a sense of Sirba's personality, look at the flame-like interrobang and question mark or the artistic paragraph and section symbols.

Sirba has five styles and its character set covers over 50 languages that use the Latin script, plus polytonic Greek (consultation by Irene Vlachou and Gerry Leonidas), a full set of IPA symbols for phonetic pronunciation, and support for Cyrillic, including Bulgarian alternates (consultation by Kiril Zlatkov). It also includes many OpenType niceties such as a set of arrows, ornaments, extended ligatures, small caps, five sets of numerals, and more. Taken together, these characteristics make Sirba a great choice for handling important information in an enjoyable way.

The complete Sirba family, along with our entire catalogue, has been optimised for today's varied screen uses.

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#### STYLES

**Regular**

*Italic*

**Bold**

***Bold Italic***

**Black**

*Ästhetik*  
*Foneettinen*  
**Left**  
Slovníky  
*fallegt*

# Academia

*Fournier's genius lay in his ability to modernise—in the typographical*

# *Gramática*

*Novas imagens de Plutão são ponta do iceberg, dizem cientistas*

# *“Responsibility”*

●\*\*●\*\*●\*●\*\*●\*\*●

School tests for 8 and 11 years old

# Dutch...!

*Afscheid van het normale*

*Bestaan er nog wel normale kinderen? Het lijkt wel*

# GLOBAL 3

Chic without the suffering: FASHION DISPLAYS its ethical face at

REGULAR 25/30PT

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And now I was on my journey, *in a pair of thick boots* and with a hazel

BOLD 25/30PT

---

And now I was on my journey, *in a pair of thick boots* and with a hazel

BLACK 25/30PT

---

**And now I was on my journey, in a pair of thick boots and with a hazel**

REGULAR 18/22PT

---

Whenever Henry Wilt took the dog for a walk, or, to be more accurate, *when the dog took him*, or, to be exact, when Mrs Wilt told them both *to go and take themselves out of the house* so that she could

BOLD 18/22PT

---

**Whenever Henry Wilt took the dog for a walk, or, to be more accurate, *when the dog took him*, or, to be exact, when Mrs Wilt told them both *to go and take themselves* out of the house so that she could**

BLACK 18/22PT

---

**Whenever Henry Wilt took the dog for a walk, or, to be more accurate, when the dog took him, or, to be exact, when Mrs Wilt told them both to go and take themselves out of the house so that she could**

REGULAR 10/13PT

As might have been foreseen, Franconia proved to be an excellent place in which to study the difficult family of *flycatchers*. All our common eastern Massachusetts species were present — the *kingbird*, the *phoebe*, the *wood pewee*, and the *least flycatcher* — and with them the *crested flycatcher* (not common), the *olive-sided*, the *traill*, and the *yellow-bellied*. The phoebe-like cry of the *traill* was to be heard constantly from the hotel piazza. The yellow-bellied seemed to be confined to deep and rather swampy woods in the valley, and to the mountain-side forests; being most

BOLD 10/13PT

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BLACK 10/13PT

**As might have been foreseen, Franconia proved to be an excellent place in which to study the difficult family of flycatchers. All our common eastern Massachusetts species were present — the kingbird, the phoebe, the wood pewee, and the least flycatcher — and with them the crested flycatcher (not common), the olive-sided, the traill, and the yellow-bellied. The phoebe-like cry of the traill was to be heard constantly from the hotel piazza.**

REGULAR 12/15PT

As might have been foreseen, Franconia proved to be an excellent place in which to study the difficult family of *flycatchers*. All our common eastern Massachusetts species were present — the *kingbird*, the *phoebe*, the *wood pewee*, and the *least flycatcher* — and with them the *crested flycatcher* (not common), the *olive-sided*, the *traill*, and the *yellow-bellied*. The phoebe-like cry of the *traill* was to be heard constantly from the hotel

BOLD 12/15PT

As might have been foreseen, Franconia proved to be an excellent place in which to study the difficult family of *flycatchers*. All our common eastern Massachusetts species were present — the *kingbird*, the *phoebe*, the *wood pewee*, and the *least flycatcher* — and with them the *crested flycatcher* (not common), the *olive-sided*, the *traill*, and the *yellow-bellied*. The *phoebe-like* cry of the *traill* was to be heard con-

BLACK 12/15PT

**As might have been foreseen, Franconia proved to be an excellent place in which to study the difficult family of flycatchers. All our common eastern Massachusetts species were present — the kingbird, the phoebe, the wood pewee, and the least flycatcher — and with them the crested flycatcher (not common), the olive-sided, the**

## GERMAN 9/11PT

Im speziellen Sinn bezeichnet das Wort Sprache eine bestimmte Einzelsprache wie Deutsch, Japanisch oder Swahili etc. Die gesprochenen Sprachen der Menschheit werden gemäß ihrer genetischen Verwandtschaft in Sprachfamilien gegliedert. Jede einzelne Sprache wird dabei anhand der sogenannten Language Codes nach den ISO-639-Teilnormen international eindeutig klassifiziert. Von den heute rund 6500 gezählten

## PORTUGUESE 9/11PT

Linguagem pode se referir tanto à capacidade especificamente humana para aquisição e utilização de sistemas complexos de comunicação, quanto a uma instância específica de um sistema de comunicação complexo. O estudo científico da linguagem, em qualquer um de seus sentidos, é chamado linguística. Atualmente, entre 3000 e 6000 línguas são usadas pela espécie humana, e um número muito maior era usado no passado. As línguas naturais são os exemplos mais

## TURKISH 9/11PT

İnsanlar arasındaki anlaşmayı sağlayan bir araç olarak tanımlanabilir. Bu bağlamda dil, kelimelerden oluşan, yani vücut dili gibi sözlü olmayan iletişim biçimlerinin yanı sıra insanların en etkili iletişim şekli olan sözlü iletişimi tanımlar. Dil, ses dalgaları aracılığıyla akustik olarak ve kelimeler aracılığıyla veya işaret dilinde olduğu gibi işaretler aracılığıyla görsel olarak aktarılır (“İşaret dili” ile karşılaştırınız). Ayrıca dokunma vasıtasıyla dokunsal işaretlerle

## ICELANDIC 9/11PT

Mál er kerfi merkja, tákna, hljóða og orða sem notuð eru saman til þess að lýsa hugtökum, hugmyndum, merkingum og hugsunum. Málfræðingar eru þeir sem að rannsaka mál, en í nútímanum var málfræði fyrst kynnt sem vísindagrein af Ferdinand de Saussure. Þeir sem að tala mál, eða nota það á annan hátt, eru taldir með sem hluti af málsamfélagi þess máls. Tungumál er hugtak sérstaklega notað um þau mál sem að hafa hljóðkerfi. Fjölmörg tungumál eru til

## FRENCH 9/11PT

Les gestes sont la méthode de communication la plus connue, utilisée par diverses espèces dont l'ensemble des primates. C'est également le cas des abeilles et leurs danses : lorsqu'une abeille exploratrice revient vers sa ruche après avoir trouvé une source de nectar, elle peut effectuer une danse en rond indiquant que cette source se situe à moins de 50 mètres, ou une danse en huit indiquant que cette source est plus loin-

## NORWEGIAN 9/11PT

Et språk er et dynamisk sett av synlige, hørbare eller følbare symboler for kommunikasjon og elementer som brukes for å manipulere dem. Språk kan også henvise til bruken av slike systemer som et generelt fenomen. Eksempler på språk er naturlig språk (menneskelige enkeltspråk, for eksempel norsk), kunstige språk (for eksempel esperanto) og programmeringsspråk (for eksempel Java). Menneskespråk omtales vanligvis som naturlige språk, og vitenskapen

## SWEDISH 9/11PT

Språk eller tungomål är en del av olika system för kommunikation, som används av människor och som vi börjar tillägna stora bitar av redan under våra första levnadsår. Barn lär sig använda språk lika naturligt, som de lär sig att gå. Språket kommuniceras exempelvis via talat språk, teckenspråk, kognitioner och skrift, som är bärare av språk i en rad olika kommunikationssystem. Begreppet språk har två nära sammanbundna men ändå separata betydelser; dels

## SPANISH 9/11PT

Un lenguaje (del provenzal lenguatge y del latín lingua) es un sistema de comunicación estructurado para el que existe un contexto de uso y ciertos principios combinatorios formales. Existen contextos tanto naturales como artificiales. Desde un punto de vista más amplio, el lenguaje indica una característica común a los humanos y a otros animales (animales no simbólicos) para expresar sus experiencias y comunicarlas a otros mediante el uso de símbolos, señales

## CZECH 9/11PT

Vědecký obor zabývající se zkoumáním jazyka se nazývá lingvistika. Otázky týkající se filosofie jazyka byly pokládány již ve starověkém Řecku, byly zde otázky typu zda mohou slova reprezentovat zkušenost nebo motivovanost obsahu slov, konkrétními památkami jsou například Platónovy dialogy Gorgias a Faidros. Ještě časnějším dokladem uvažování o jazyku jsou gramatiky sanskrutu, nejranější záznamy o kodifikaci

## ITALIAN 9/11PT

Il linguaggio, in linguistica, è il complesso definito di suoni, gesti e movimenti attraverso il quale si attiva un processo di comunicazione. La facoltà di rappresentare mentalmente un significato è presente in molte specie di animali, tra le quali l'essere umano. La capacità di elaborare e produrre un linguaggio verbale, nell'uomo, si è sviluppata a seguito di mutamenti strutturali della cavità orale. In particolare l'arretramento dell'ugola ha reso l'essere umano ca-

## POLISH 9/11PT

Język służy do przedstawiania rzeczywistości dotyczącej przedmiotów, czynności czy abstrakcyjnych pojęć za pomocą znaków. Zbiór znaków w języku jest otwarty. Wynika to z faktu, że znakiem językowym jest każdy tekst, każda sformułowana wypowiedź, posiadająca znaczenie. Jednostka posługująca się językiem może więc za pomocą jego systemu stworzyć nieskończoną liczbę nowych znaków, także takich, z którymi nigdy się wcześniej nie zetknęła. Znaki te

## FINNISH 9/11PT

Kieli on järjestelmä, jossa ihminen ilmaisee ajatuksensa kielellisillä merkeillä, abstraktioilla. Näitä merkkejä nimitetään kielellisiksi ilmauksiksi. Puhutuissa kielissä kuuluvua (auditiivisia) merkkejä tuotetaan puhe-elimillä. Kirjoitetussa kielessä kielelliset ilmaukset on tehty silmin nähtäviksi eli luettaviksi. Viitotuissa kielissä kielelliset ilmaukset ovat visuaalisia, eivätkä auditiivisia. Eri kieliä tutkii kielitiede. Kognitiotiede tutkii kieltä hieman erilaisesta näkökulmasta: bio-



## SMALL CAPS

¿Para texto?  
1708 A–b [Ende] H@I

¿PARA TEXTO?  
1708 A–B [ENDE] H@I

## ALL SMALL CAPS

¿Para texto?  
1708 A–b [Ende] H@I

¿PARA TEXTO?  
1708 A–B [ENDE] H@I

## ALL CAPS

¿Para texto?  
1708 A–b [Ende] H@I

¿PARA TEXTO?  
1708 A–B [ENDE] H@I

## LIGATURES

The, affiliate, físico, fjord, bottle

The, affiliate, físico, fjord, bottle

## DISCRETIONARY LIGATURES

Häckeln, contact, estaño

Häckeln, contact, estaño

## PROPORTIONAL OLDSTYLE (DEFAULT)

0123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ%‰

0123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ%‰

## PROPORTIONAL LINING FIGURES

0123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ%‰

0123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ%‰

## TABULAR OLDSTYLE &amp; SLASHED ZERO

00123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ

00123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ

## TABULAR LINING &amp; SLASHED ZERO

00123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ

00123456789\$€¢£¥ƒ

## NUMERATOR/DENOMINATOR

345/678, 89/120

<sup>345</sup>/<sub>678</sub>, <sup>89</sup>/<sub>120</sub>

## FRACTIONS

1/2 3/4 1/4 5/7 2/9

½ ¾ ¼ ⅝ ⅔

## SUPERIOR/INFERIOR

H<sub>2</sub>O x<sub>b8</sub> y<sup>3+5</sup> a<sub>Index</sub>

H<sub>2</sub>O x<sub>b8</sub> y<sup>3+5</sup> a<sub>Index</sub>

## ORDINALS

1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> M<sup>lle</sup> 2<sup>e</sup> 85<sup>th</sup> M<sup>a</sup> N<sup>o</sup>

1<sup>st</sup> 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> M<sup>lle</sup> 2<sup>e</sup> 85<sup>th</sup> M<sup>a</sup> N<sup>o</sup>

## HISTORICAL FORMS

That is the question

That if the question

STYLISTIC SET 01 (ALTERNATES)

---

Q Q a g ...

Q Q a g ...

STYLISTIC SET 02 (ICONS & SYMBOLS)

---

a b c d e f g i j k l m n o p r



STYLISTIC SET 03 (LONG S & FIGURES)

---

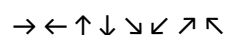
s 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

f 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

STYLISTIC SET 04 (ARROWS)

---

-> <- ->-> <-<- -^ -^ -^ ^- ^- ^-^



STYLISTIC SET 05 (SMART CAP)

---

(Aap) [Aap] AAP Aap (AAP) [AAP]  
{AAP}  
PPN- en PGP-manual

(Aap) [Aap] AAP Aap (AAP) [AAP]  
{AAP}  
PPN- en PGP-manual

TURKISH/AZERI/CRIMEAN TATAR

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Kirtasiye, KIRTASIYE, KIRTASIYE

Kirtasiye, KIRTASIYE, KIRTASIYE

ROMANIAN/MOLDAVIAN

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Timiș, BUCUREȘTI, MULȚUMESC

Timiș, BUCUREȘTI, MULȚUMESC





## SUPPORTED LATIN LANGUAGES

Abenaki, Afaan Oromo, Afar, Afrikaans, Albanian, Alsatian, Amis, Anuta, Aragonese, Aranese, Aromanian, Arrernte, Arvanitic (Latin), Asturian, Atayal, Aymara, Bashkir (Latin), Basque, Belarusian (Latin), Bemba, Bikol, Bislama, Bosnian, Breton, Cape Verdean Creole, Catalan, Cebuano, Chamorro, Chavacano, Chichewa, Chickasaw, Cimbrian, Cofán, Cornish, Corsican, Creek, Crimean Tatar (Latin), Croatian, Czech, Danish, Dawan, Delaware, Dholuo, Drehu, Dutch, English, Esperanto, Estonian, Faroese, Fijian, Filipino, Finnish, Folkspraak, French, Frisian, Friulian, Gagauz (Latin), Galician, Ganda, Genoese, German, Gikuyu, Gooniyandi, Greenlandic (Kalaallisut), Guadeloupean Creole, Gwich'in, Haitian Creole, Hän, Hawaiian, Hiligaynon, Hopi, Hotçak (Latin), Hungarian, Icelandic, Ido, Ilocano, Indonesian, Interglossa, Interlingua, Irish, Istro-Romanian, Italian, Jamaican, Javanese (Latin), Jèrriais, Kala Lagaw Ya, Kapampangan (Latin), Kaqchikel, Karakalpak (Latin), Karelian (Latin), Kashubian, Kikongo, Kinyarwanda, Kiribati, Kirundi, Kurdish (Latin), Ladin, Latin, Latvian, Lithuanian, Lojban, Lombard, Low Saxon, Luxembourgish, Maasai, Makhuwa, Malay, Maltese, Manx, Māori, Marquesan, Megleno-Romanian, Meriam Mir, Mirandese, Mohawk, Moldovan, Montagnais, Montenegrin, Murrinh-Patha, Nagamese Creole, Ndebele, Neapolitan, Ngiyambaa, Niuean, Noongar, Norwegian, Novial, Occidental, Occitan, Oshiwambo, Ossetian (Latin), Palauan, Papiamentu, Piedmontese, Polish, Portuguese, Potawatomi, Q'eqchi', Quechua, Rarotongan, Romanian, Romansh, Rotokas, Sami, Sango, Saramaccan, Sardinian, Scottish Gaelic, Serbian (Latin), Seri, Seychellois Creole, Shawnee, Shona, Sicilian, Silesian, Slovak, Slovenian, Slovio (Latin), Somali, Sorbian, Sotho (Northern), Sotho (Southern), Spanish, Sranan, Sundanese (Latin), Swahili, Swazi, Swedish, Tagalog, Tahitian, Tetum, Tok Pisin, Tokelauan, Tongan, Tshiluba, Tsonga, Tswana, Tumbuka, Turkish, Turkmen (Latin), Tuvaluan, Tzotzil, Uzbek (Latin), Venetian, Vepsian, Volapük, Vöro, Wallisian, Walloon, Waray-Waray, Warlpiri, Wayuu, Welsh, Wik-Mungkan, Wiradjuri, Wolof, Xavante, Xhosa, Yapese, Yindjibarndi, Zapotec, Zulu, Zuni, ...

## SUPPORTED LANGUAGES (INCLUDE IPA)

IPA, International phonetic alphabet ...

## EXTENDED TYPOGRAPHIC FEATURES:

All caps, basic ligatures, case-sensitive forms, class kerning, discretionary ligatures, denominators & numerators, fractions, alternative fractions, historical forms, 5 sets of figures (oldstyle numerals, lining figures, proportional figures, tabular figures, and small caps), localised forms, ordinals, ornaments, small capitals, small capitals from capitals, stylistic sets (SS01, SS02, SS03, etc), superiors & inferiors, slashed zero, ...

## THE DESIGNERS

**Nicolien van der Keur**, a Dutch graphic designer. Her starting point was to design several public and sponsored magazines. She also supported designers to accomplish a smooth transition from manual page lay-out to computer based lay-out.

In 1990 she started her own graphic design studio, 'Van der Keur (typo)graphic design'. Nicolien's personal way of working and versatile interests brought her a broad range of work, such as magazines, books, websites, corporate identities and packing material.

While working with books, magazines and corporate identities she experienced the pleasure of choosing a typeface that reads and functions well and is appropriate for its application. This and her experience with type in general, sparked her interest even further in how typefaces and typography can help to structure texts and make the navigation for the reader as clear as possible. This curiosity directed her to the University of Reading (UK), where she received an MA degree, specialising in designing a typeface for dictionaries, encyclopedias and other high-density complex text-environments.

Nicolien's special interest is in the combination of designing typefaces and then working with them to produce a desired effect.

Nicolien published Sirba, Sirba Cyrillic & Sirba Greek with TypeTogether.

CREDITS

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*Lead design and concept*

**Nicolien van der Keur**

*Graphic design*

Elena Veguillas

Roxane Gataud

*Copywriting*

Joshua Farmer

FAMILY UPGRADES

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SIRBA

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Design: Nicolien van der Keur  
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TEXT CREDITS

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*As I walked out one midsummer morning*,  
by Laurie Lee (London, 1969).  
*Wilt*, by Tom Sharpe (1976).  
*Foot-path way*, by Bradford Torrey (Boston, 1892).  
'Rhythm & Reaction' gets under the skin of a British love affair with American jazz, in *Eye Magazine* blog.

ABOUT THIS SPECIMEN

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This specimen has been set using Ebony Light and Ebony Bold. If you print this specimen, please be kind to the environment and consider printing only the pages you need.