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Web fonts slowing the page: font-display, fewer files and hosting them yourself

Images, Files & Front-End

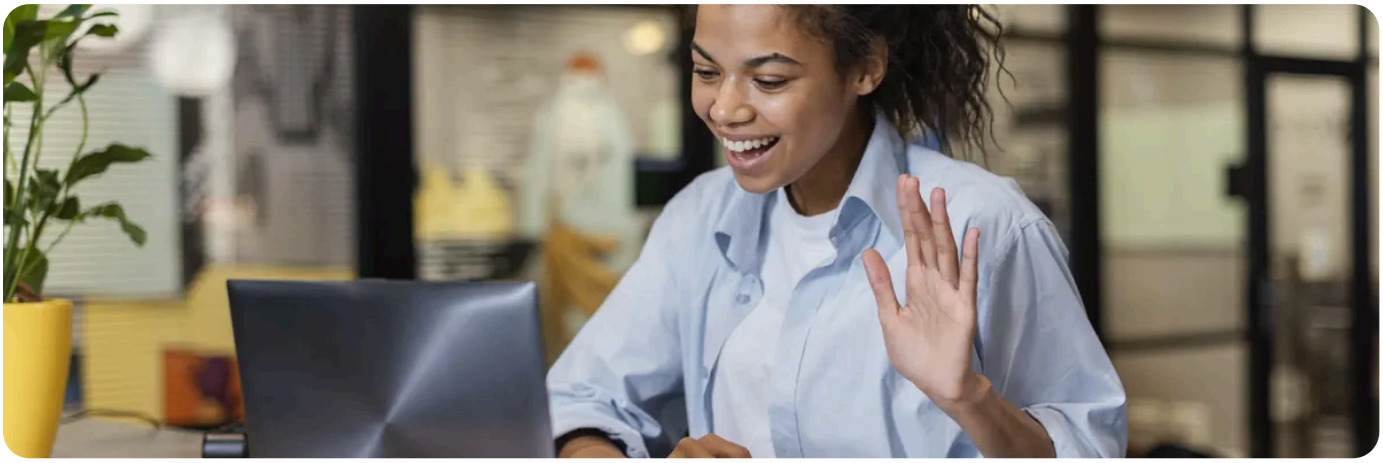
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https://www.my.mozout.com/knowledgebase/4386

Web fonts slowing the page: font-display, fewer files and hosting them yourself

Images, Files & Front-End Created on **October 10, 2026** 3 min read



Every typeface the site uses is **a file to download**, and every variant (regular, bold, italic) is another. If the browser waits for them before showing the text, the page looks empty; if it shows the text in one font and swaps later, the page jumps. You have three levers: **ask for less**, **tell the browser what to do while it waits** (`font-display`) and **serve the fonts from your own site**.

1. Ask for less

What to do	Why
Use two or three variants, not eight	Every weight and style is a file. A theme with six typefaces at five weights each is a problem on its own.
Prefer the woff2 format	It is the compressed format current browsers accept.
Pick only the subset you need	The “latin” subset includes the accents used in Portuguese. There is no need to download alphabets the site does not use.
Consider a variable font	A single file can cover several weights.
Or use system fonts	Zero cost: nothing to download. You give up the brand’s own letterforms.

2. Tell the browser what to do while it waits

The CSS rule `font-display` sets the behaviour. The values most used:

Value	What it does	Effect
swap	Shows the text at once in a system font and swaps when the right one arrives.	Text always readable; there may be a small jump. See **how to fix CLS**.

Value	What it does	Effect
optional	Gives the font a very short time; if it does not arrive, the system one stays for that visit.	No jumps. On the first visit the brand's typeface may not appear.
block	Hides the text until the font arrives (for a limited time).	Invisible text: avoid for body text.

In your own files, the line goes inside the `@font-face`. When the fonts come from Google Fonts, the address carries the `display=swap` parameter. LiteSpeed Cache has options for this; the names change between versions.

3. Serve the fonts from your own site

1. **Download the font files** (in woff2) and upload them to the site, or use a plugin that downloads them and serves them from your own site.
2. **Point the CSS** at those files in the `@font-face`.
3. **Preload the main font**, only that one, with `<link rel="preload" as="font" type="font/woff2" href="..." crossorigin>`. The `crossorigin` attribute is required even for fonts from the same site.
4. **Confirm**: F12, Network tab, "Font" filter. The fonts should come from your own address and carry a long `cache-control`.

The advantages: one connection fewer to another address; the fonts share the same cache and compression as the rest; and the visitor's IP address does not go to a third party just for loading a typeface, which matters to whoever looks after the site's privacy. Current browsers separate the cache per site, so the old advantage of "the visitor already had that font from another site" no longer exists.

Beware of icon fonts.
A full icon font can weigh more than all the site's typefaces together. If you only use four icons, use SVG or a reduced set.

Measure before and after.
If the Network tab shows fonts among the heaviest or latest files, it is worth it. If not, leave it and look elsewhere. See **PageSpeed Insights warnings explained**.

NEED A HAND?

Does the text go invisible or jump when the page opens? Send us the address and the font name.

Open a support ticket →

SEE ALSO

- How to fix CLS →
- How to fix a slow LCP →
- PageSpeed Insights warnings explained →
- LiteSpeed Cache: the first settings →

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