

Basic Fine-Tuning and Tweaking

Type Size

The primary consideration is the readability. The size you select somewhat depends on the type of typeface design you select, since the capsizes and x-heights vary from different fonts. Display or headline text is primarily meant to catch the eye of the viewer and draw the attention of the viewer.

Line Length

The larger the point size, the longer the line length. If a line length is too short, there will be too many hyphenated words. These interfere with the readability of the text and force the reader to jump to new lines that it affects reading comprehension. Too long line lengths can create confusion by making it more difficult for the eye to find the beginning of the next line in large blocks of text. A line should have a general range of 50 to 70 characters per line.

Line Leading

Line spacing refers to the vertical space between lines of type from baseline to baseline. Also referred to as leading, which is a term from the days when type was set in metal, and slugs of lead in varying thicknesses were inserted between the lines of metal type to add space between the lines. Too-tight leading makes type harder to read, especially in small sizes. Most design programs have a default setting, called auto leading, which is around 20 percent of the point size. A very basic guideline for text would be a minimum of 2 points leading up to 5 points. All caps can be set with little or no leading and often look best with negative leading.

Flush Left

Most common for Latin alphabets and usually is the default setting. It is the style that is more readable and what our eyes are the most used to. It aligns the text on the left and leaves a right margin depending on the line width.

Centred Type

This style can be very effective when used for short blocks of copy, such as titles and headlines, subheads, invitations, announcements, and poetry. It centers the lines of type without adding extra space, making a ragged right and left edge. This technique adds symmetry and elegance but decreases readability when used for large amounts of copy.

Flush Right

Aligns the text on the right side of the page, and leaves a ragged left margin. More difficult to read due to how we read since our eyes have to follow a wavering left hand margin when they move to the next line down the column. Should only be used when a specific design is desired.

Text Wrap

This is the type that aligns around the contour of an illustration, photo, or another graphic element. It can be applied to either the right, left or both margins.

Text Wrap Example

Alignment

Justified

Space is inserted in between words and individual characters to stretch out a line so both margins align. This creates the text to look like a geometrical square. This technique is commonly used in newspapers and magazines. Justified settings can also create rivers of white space, which should be avoided at any cost.

Widows & Orphans

A widow is a short line of one or two words, or a hyphenated word at the end of paragraphs and undesirable. An orphan is related to a widow and it is a single word or very short line appearing at the beginning of a column or page.

Advanced Fine-Tuning and Tweaking

Hyphenation

Allowed for a better-looking, tighter rag, or a more natural block of justified type that needs less stretching as well as allowing fitting more words on a line. It is acceptable to have two lines in a row ending in a hyphenated word.

Hung Punctuation – Or Optical Alignment

A block of text that is aligned flush left (or justified), certain punctuation marks—such as an apostrophe or quotation mark, occurring at the beginning of a line—can make it visually appear as if that line is indented slightly, creating a visually uneven alignment. The same is true when these punctuation marks as well as others, such as a period or comma, appear at the end of a line in a block of copy aligned flush right or justified. To help your margins visually align, it helps to extend the punctuation beyond the margin just a bit to make the copy look optically aligned. This is traditionally called “hung punctuation” or “optical alignment” by some software manufacturers.

Visual Alignment

The characteristics of the spacing of certain characters, such as a cap T or A or the numeral 1, as well as periods, commas, apostrophes, dashes, and quotation marks, create a visual hole or indentation above or below other characters or lines. One way is to add a space in front of the first character and adjust the point size of that space up or down until the proper alignment is achieved. And finally, some of the newer programs allow you to insert a narrow space, or a “thin” space anywhere you need a small adjustment.

KERNING IS INDIVIDUAL, TRACKING IS THE PARAGRAPH

Kerning

Kerning is the adjustment of the space between two specific characters. Reduction of space, but it can also refer to adding space. Balances the white space between certain letter combinations to create an even colour and texture and to optimize readability. Spacing consists of the width of the character plus the right and left side bearings. The object of proper letter fit is to achieve even texture and colour balance between characters, which in turn leads to a consistent overall texture.

Tracking

Tracking is the addition or reduction of the overall letter spacing in a block of text. Fonts are spaced and kerned to look their best at certain point-size ranges. If the type is much smaller than this range, you will want to open the tracking to improve the readability. When the type is larger, might need to tighten up the tracking. Can also refer to the popular style of setting a open type for stylistic and design purposes. This technique is most effectively used with all-cap settings and should be limited to a few words or small amounts of text.

Word Spacing

The amount of space between words. It should not be so little that the words start to run into each other and not so much that the eye has trouble reading groups of words because it is interrupted by large white blocks. This value is predetermined but can be modified by changing the optimum space value in the H&J preferences in your page-layout program.

Signs, Symbols, Dingbats, & Marks

Register, Trademark, and Copyright Symbols

When using a ® or a ™, the point size should be adjusted if necessary, and independently. A guideline is to make these symbols a little smaller than half the x-height; as your text gets larger, they can become smaller, especially in headlines. These symbols are legal designations, making them too large can detract from the design. The copyright symbol (©) is used in two manners: sometimes treated the same size-wise as the (®) and the (™). When it appears before a year, as in ©1998, or the name of a company, the size should be between the x-height and cap-height.

Bullets

A bullet is a large dot used to draw attention to a list of items that either have been extracted from your text or are independent of the text. Bullets should be centred on either the cap height or x-height, depending on the nature of your listing. If all of your items begin with a cap, center the bullet on the cap. If your items all begin with lowercase, center the bullets on the x-height. Bulleted points are usually aligned with the left margin.

Ellipses

The ellipsis (...) is a single character consisting of a series of three evenly spaced dots used to indicate the missing type or a continuation of type.

Accents

Most well-made fonts include a selection of accented characters, accents, and other diacritical marks needed to set foreign words and names. Some are composite characters, which combine characters with accents or marks to create a separate character; others are accents and marks by themselves, called floating accents.

Euro

The euro has been the exclusive currency of 12 European countries, including Austria, Belgium, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, and Spain. The euro symbol looks like a capital C with a double crossbar.

Fractions

Google docs allow you to just press space and will automatically turn into a fraction. Some design software has the ability to create fractions on the fly; others have plugins, extensions, or scripts that do the same thing. If your application does, just turn on the Fractions option in the OpenType menu, type in the numerator, slash or fraction bar, and denominator, and it will automatically convert to a diagonal fraction.

Quotation Marks

Smart quotes have an opening and a closing version, and they are design sensitive, designed differently for each typeface. “Dumb” quotes are usually simple tapered marks. They are also referred to as “primes” or inches and footmarks.

Apostrophes

Similar to the situation for apostrophes is the same as for quotes. That is, the default keyboard character is a straight typewriter apostrophe rather than the typographically correct “smart” apostrophe. Replace them as you would dumb quotations marks.

Spaces

There is never a need for double spaces between sentences when setting type on your computer, as was done when using a typewriter. Typewriter fonts are monospaced, which means that every letter takes up the same space, even the narrow letters. This makes for very open-looking spacing, and a double word space was necessary to achieve a noticeable separation between sentences.

Hyphen, En Dash, and Em Dash

- **Parentheses** are primarily used to enclose interjected, explanatory, or qualifying remarks. They also are of particular use for area codes and mathematical formulas, usually algebra.
- **Brackets**, also called square brackets, are usually used to enclose copy within a parenthetical phrase, or more simply put, copy already enclosed within parentheses. Brackets are also used to enclose explanations or comments by the author, as well as for mathematical expressions and specific scientific compounds.
- **Braces**, also called curly brackets, are a more decorative form of the bracket and are traditionally used for certain mathematical expressions. They are occasionally used to replace parentheses in certain instances, such as to enclose a Web site or e-mail address.
- **Angled brackets** to enclose text has become the accepted style in e-mail and on the Internet, particularly when copying part or all of an email as part of a reply

Parentheses, Brackets, Braces, And Angled Brackets

- **A hyphen** is the shortest in length, is used to hyphenate words that break at the end of a line or to connect elements of a compound word such as go-between, ill-fated, and run-of-the-mill.
- **An en dash** is wider than a hyphen and narrower than an em dash, and it is the least commonly used and understood of the three. It is used to indicate a continuation of time, years, and dates (similar to using the words “to” and “from”) such as 9 am– 5 pm, Monday –Friday, or May 2–7.
- **An em dash**, which is the longest of the three, is used to indicate a break in thought—as is shown in this sentence. It is also occasionally used to separate a thought within a sentence—such as this one—requiring an em-dash at the beginning and the end of the thought.

Non-Print Type & Designing Your Own Typeface

Designing a typeface is not for the faint of heart

Characteristics of Web Typography

Line Breaks

There is no control over where a line will break in running text on the Web, primarily because font size and style can vary from each user. Current browsers don't support hyphenation and because of this, the line breaks and the resulting column rag are unpredictable.

Type Size

Default screen resolutions and browser point sizes vary for every user. The viewer can change these defaults, but the Web designer has no control over them, making a selection of type size a guessing game. Types displayed at a given point size on Windows browsers can look ten to twenty percent larger than on a Mac.

Column Width/Line Length

Column width can be a fixed width in pixels or a variable width in percentage. A very wide text column width, one that goes across the screen, reduces readability greatly. It's common for designers to control the line length of the text by creating hypertext markup language (HTML) tables that are specified in pixels, although some say you should use Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) to fix line lengths.

Font Style

For fonts to be used on a Website and be viewed by every visitor, they have to be installed on the viewer's computer; if they aren't, the font will default to the user's system, which can have unwanted results.

Column Depth

In print where you have total control over type style and size, column width, and line breaks. With this, it can be difficult in some layouts to align text to related images in adjacent running columns unless they appear at the top of a column or the beginning of the text. It is possible to force an alignment in adjacent columns by placing the text and image in neighboring cells

Colour

Colour varies from computer to computer, depending on the viewer's browser, brand, and type of monitor or screen, how it is calibrated, as well as the colour profile selected. No longer limited to the Web-safe colours, as with older computers, aim for enough contrast between the type and its background colour to allow for colour variations from each viewer which might reduce the readability.

Cascading Style Sheets

Its style sheet language is used to define specific characteristics of Web documents, including elements such as font style, size, spacing, alignment, emphasis, and colour and are a time-saving feature used to assist the designer in having more control over the stylistic preferences and appearance of Web documents.

Font Embedding

Is a technology that is currently most commonly associated with Adobe Flash, a Web development tool used for making interactive types and animation. Allows you to control the font, colour, size, placement, etc. The fonts used are embedded within that file, eliminating the necessity of using only Web-safe fonts

Web-Safe Fonts

Sans Serif
Verdana
Trebuchet MS
Arial
Serif
Georgia
Times New Roman
Symbol Fonts

Font Selection

Selection of the right typeface for motion typography follows many of the same rules as for print in terms of their appropriateness for your message. A consideration includes properties such as colour, surface, size, weight, dimension, in addition to the frame rate and resolution of what you're designing for—all of which affect readability and legibility. There may not be a technological limit on how many typefaces you use, but there are practical and aesthetic considerations.

Three Approaches to Designing a Typeface

- Knowing how to draw well
- Drawing rough sketches of concepts and fine-tuning
- Design software, they do no actual hand-drawing at all. Which takes high skill in PostScript drawing tools, as well as a highly developed ability to conceptualize and actualize a concept on screen

Type in Motion

Combining Type and Motion

The ways in which typography can be used and incorporated to create an engaging, effective, dynamic piece are endless.

- Mixed and combined with photographs, illustrations, and other graphics
- Combined and blended with non typographic animation
- Strictly typographic (type as image) with no other kinds of imagery
- Realistic, conceptual, or a combination of both
- Animation of individual characters to create a picture, an action, a mood, or a feeling
- Illustration or animation of the type and words themselves
- Blended with sounds, such as speech, music, sound effects, or a combination of all three
- Incorporation into a visual collage of type (magazine, newspaper, and other found objects)

Professional Guidelines

1. Begin with a strong, well-developed concept and follow it throughout the design.
2. Have a clear idea of what you intend your design to be used for, whether it be text, display, or midrange sizes.
3. Begin by drawing a test word in lowercase, scan it, and then import it into your font-manipulation software. This test word should contain most of the character shapes that are used in the rest of the alphabet
4. Typeset copy with these characters and look it over carefully in various sizes. Check characters for consistent width, stroke thickness, and overall colour.
5. Work on the caps, figures, and the rest of the character complement. Repeat the same testing procedure.
6. A good way to work is to create a test document that shows all lowercase combinations, important cap-to-lowercase combinations, and as well a text block.
7. Do not kern the typeface until you have done all of the above. Kerning should be the icing on the cake, and it should not be used as a Band-Aid to fix poor spacing.
8. Get away from your project when you can't see it objectively anymore, and take a fresh look in the morning. Our eyes and capacity to observe detail have a daily limit.
9. Finally, know when to let go: You can't carry your "type child" forever

Basic Guidelines

Movement

It can convey a literal, verbal message, as well as take on characteristics of an actual object or concept with its arrangement or movement. Some properties and characteristics you can achieve with motion typography are scale, repetition, rhythm, direction, velocity, and more, depending on your software and your imagination.

Colour

Colour in motion graphics, as with colour on the Web and digital technology which is based on the RGB colour model, can vary slightly or greatly depending on the electronic medium it is being viewed on, a computer screen, movie screen, television, mobile device, etc. Unlike in print, which is based on the CMYK colour model, where you have complete control over what colours the audience sees, motion graphics can have continuously changing and mutating visual characteristics.

Sound

The incorporation of sound with motion graphics adds another dimension. The addition of music, voice, and the spoken word, and other sound effects, adds a very powerful, emotional element that can go a long way toward the setting of a mood, conveying a message, and drawing attention, emphasizing or reinforcing a particular frame or segment.