22
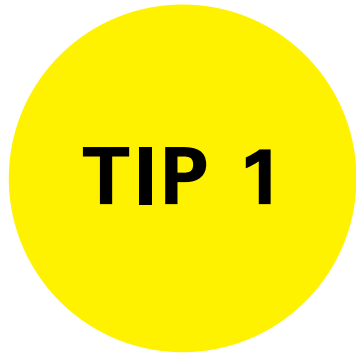# TYPE TIPS

TYPE SIZE

Type is usually measured in points (pts) and sometimes pixels (px) for screen and metric sizes (mm) for example when specifying signage. The x-height of a typeface refers to the distance between the baseline and the mean line of lower-case letters in a typeface.

x-height x-height

Both typefaces have been set at the same given point size – note the difference in their appearing size.
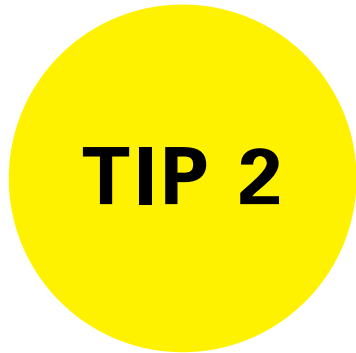

TYPE SIZE

In the example below you can clearly see the difference in visual impact both texts have even though they have been set at the same point size.

A common size for setting body copy in printed texts is between 8 and 11 point. For screen display the default size of 12 point, this ensures the copy is readable.

This body of text has been set in Baskerville 12/15pt to a width of 90mm. Look at how the x-height of the typeface affects how legible the words are and how the line-length and leading is affected in comparison to Helvetica below.

This body of text has been set in Helvetica 10/12pt to a width of 90mm. Look at how the x-height of the typeface affects how legible the words are and how the line-length and leading is affected in comparison to Baskerville above.

TYPE SIZE: NUMBERS

Always set numbers and CAPS at a smaller size than body copy,
so that they visually align with the body copy.

15 Broadway
Ultimo NSW 2007
T+61 2 9514 2000

type all the same size

15 Broadway
Ultimo NSW 2007
T+61 2 9514 2000

all CAPS and numbers here are a point size smaller

TIP 3

LEADING

Leading is the space between lines of text, also called line spacing. Don't rely on the auto settings of software you are using to dictate the leading. The general default setting in most software is 120% ie 10/12pt. Leading can be adjusted to create 'distinctive typographic arrangements'. When setting body copy creating too little or too much space between the lines can make it difficult for the reader to navigate through the text.

Always adjust the leading manually don't rely on the auto settings.

28pt on 20pt leading - too tight
watch out for those ascenders and descenders

Always adjust the leading manually don't rely on the auto settings.

28pt on 33 pt leading - just right :)

Always adjust the

leading manually

don't rely on the

auto settings.

28pt on 44pt leading - too loose

TIP 4

LEADING

Always a good idea to use whole numbers for both type size and leading ie 14.232pt type on 16.346pt leading isn't practical. Generally larger type requires smaller leading values, depending on the application.

36 point type on 40 point leading

TIP 5

LINE LENGTH

The line length when setting body copy should neither be too long or too short, as this will affect the readability of the text. Think about the difference in line length between a book and a newspaper. Reading, a learned process of left to right movement (at least in the western world), transforms into a vertical movement with minimal left to write changes when text is set in a narrow column. This should not make any significant difference to legibility; it is, as Tinker points out, the readers preferences, which have to be considered.

45 to 75 characters (including both letters and spaces) is regarded as an ideal length of line for a single-column page. For multiple-column work a better average is 40 to 50 characters. This serves as a guide only and is dependant on typeface and format.

TIP 6

LINE ENDINGS

When all your copy is in and approved by your client then go in and fix line endings, widows and orphans. Please note that as a last resort limited hyphenation might need to be considered if soft returns can't achieve an even rag (for soft return use the shift + return key). Be mindful when using hyphenation that two subsequent hyphens should never appear together on subsequent lines (even in justified text) and that one short word at the end of a line, e.g. "It" or "The" should always be returned to the start of the following line. Think how the text flows for the reader's eye.
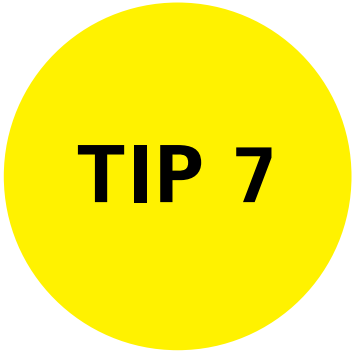
Line endings should have variation within them when left aligned, yet 'stragglers' should be soft returned to the next line.

A **widow** is a short line of text at the end of a paragraph that appears at the top of the next page/column.

An **orphan** is a short line of text at the beginning of a paragraph that appears at the bottom of the page/column.

KERNING & TRACKING

There is a difference!

Tracking refers to the uniform spacing between all the letters in a given selection of text and kerning refers to the spacing between two specific letters.

Type

tracking

kerning

KERNING

The space between individual letters in a word need adjusting manually. Especially noticeable in larger text and all caps - it's good practice to kern all HEADERS.
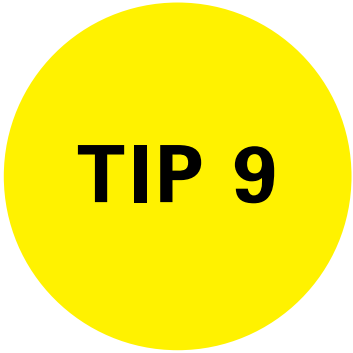
Type

close space here   open space here

KERNING

The space between individual letters in a word need adjusting manually. Especially for ALL HEADERS.

Type

KERNING

The space should get progressively less between letters as shown below in their 'pairs'

li bl bo

straight to straight
letters

round to straight
letters

round to round
letters

KERNING

Use the 'squint' method to see if the letters are visually spaced evenly OR kern the word upside down.

КЕRИ

KERNING

Always kern in three letter blocks - kern the first three letters, then move along progressively to the next three letters

three

three

KERNING

Kerning pairs are letters that have in some typefaces where the kerning has been adjusted already – always look out for these.
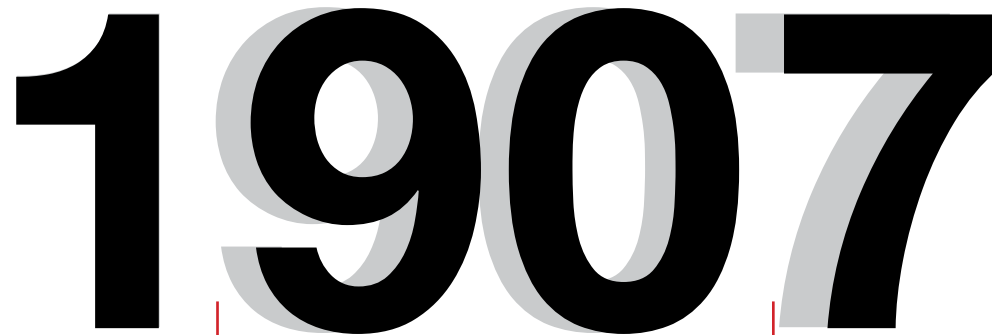Be aware the cheaper/free fonts will have to be adjusted manually.

Wa To Ya

common pairs

KERNING

Also when kerning numbers always be mindful
of the numbers 1 and 7.

1907

always adjust the
space after number 1

and before
the number 7

TRACKING

Tracking is the uniform spacing between all the letters in a given selection of text. Track text only if necessary! As a guide track body text at a minimum of -3 and maximum of +3. A rule of thumb is always to increase tracking when type is reversed out of a solid and be mindful of weight of the typeface specified.

Tracking of text should be to a minimum of -3 and a maximum of +3.

tracking -3

Tracking of text should be to a minimum of -3 and a maximum of +3.

tracking +3

TIP 15

WORD SPACING

Word spacing can be adjusted here
Under paragraph > justification

**La commodiat, velestrud tem
ero dolor ad tin velit velese venis
nonumsan el irit in exero.**

60%

**La commodiat, velestrud tem
ero dolor ad tin velit velese venis
nonumsan el irit in exero.**

80%

Changing these settings is especially
useful if you want improve the look of your
'justified' text – setting the 'minimum'
and 'maximum' word spaces can help to
minimise white holes in your body text.

**La commodiat, velestrud tem
ero dolor ad tin velit velese venis
nonumsan el irit in exero.**

100%

TIP 16

WORD SPACING

When you are supplied copy to work with always a good idea to remove all of the double spaces throughout. You can do this easily in indesign Edit > find/change > replace double spaces with single spaces. It's better to do this before you start setting the copy.

Remove double spaces throughout body copy before you start setting. They often appear after the full stop.
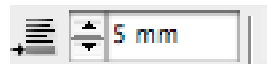
TIP 17

PARAGRAPH SPACING

Paragraphs should be separated by line spaces or if indenting NO space.
The indent should ideally be equal to one em space. Don't indent the first paragraph, unless using a drop cap.

5mm

In indesign you can add specific distance to paragraphs and adjust accordingly—do not use full returns here.

5 mm

PARAGRAPH SPACING

Remember never to mix alignments when setting paragraphs and be consistent with paragraph spacing and indentation.

Paragraphs should be separated by line spaces or if indenting NO space.
The indent should ideally be equal to one em space. Don't indent the first paragraph, unless using a drop cap.

In indesign you can add specific distance to paragraphs and adjust accordingly—do not use full returns here.
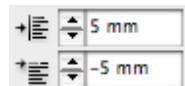
HANGING PUNCTUATION

TIP 18

It's a nice idea to 'overhang' your bullets and punctuation as below.

• Bullet points, quotation marks and brackets should always be aligned visually to the text column unless you are nesting styles.

"Ensure you set these consistently throughout."

visually align text

5 mm
-5 mm

TIP 19

HYPHEN, EM and EN DASHES

Always lots of confusion here. In indesign they can be found under Type > insert special character > hyphens and dashes. Note: no spaces either side of the hyphen, em and en dash. However, pay careful attention to kerning and spacing either side of the dash especially adjacent to numbers.

A **hyphen** is used commonly to combine words eg. stressed-out

An **em dash**—is used to create a strong break in a sentence.

An **en dash** means through eg 2016–2017.

TIP 20

SMART QUOTES

Always use smart quotation marks. In indesign they can be found under Type > insert special character > quotation marks

"smart quotation marks"

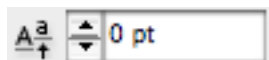# "dumb quotation marks"

TIP 21

BASELINE SHIFT

Always adjust baseline shift for symbols and punctuation where needed.

(parenthesis) + @ **not** adjusted

(parenthesis) + @ adjusted

adjust to x height of font

A‚a 0 pt

TIP 22

SPELL CHECK

Always spell check copy when you receive it from your client and just before it goes to print/goes live.

SPELL CHECK!