Typography

Cap Height · Ascender · X-Height · Baseline · Descender · Serifs

Typography is what language **looks** like. The style, arrangement, and appearance of type is used to convey a message. Good typography usually goes unnoticed by most, but bad typography can kill a message. A graphic designer makes choices on the selection of typefaces, point size, line length, line spacing (leading), alignment, and the adjustment of spaces between groups of letters (tracking) and between pairs of letters (kerning) to control the meaning of the message.

Size

Type is measured in points.

8   10   12   14   18   24   36   48   60   72

Body Text   Healine Text

Alignment

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Left Align   Center Align   Right Align   Justified

Line Length

The optimal line length for your body text is considered to be 50-60 characters per line, including spaces.

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Too Short   Just Right   Too Long

Leading

Leading is the space between lines of text. It is measured in points from baseline to baseline. The optimal leading for body text is 20% more than the point size of the text.

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12/10
(12 point text with 10 point leading)

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12/14
(12 point text with 14 point leading)

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12/20
(12 point text with 20 point leading)

Kerning and Tracking

Kerning adjusts the space between individual letter, while tracking adjusts spacing uniformly over a range of letters.

WAVE — Without Kerning

WAVE — With Kerning

TIGHT TRACKING

NORMAL TRACKING

L O O S E   T R A C K I N G