

“Design is as much an act of spacing as an act of marking.”

Imaginetryingtoreadalineoftextwithoutspacing.

kern



kern

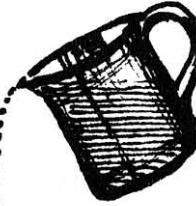


OPTICAL VOLUMES • TRY TO MAKE THESE VOLUMES



"LOOK" EQUAL.

THINK OF POURING ROUGHLY EQUAL VOLUMES OF SAND OR SALT BETWEEN LETTERS.



hiktoey

LETTERSPACING SCALE • TO LETTERSPACE WELL YOU



NEED VISUAL BENCHMARKS.

SHOWN HERE ARE THE EXTREME SPACING LIMITS.
BUILD YOUR OWN LETTERSPACING SYSTEM AND
ACHIEVE CONSISTENCY.

● FARTHEST APART

● IN-BETWEEN

● CLOSEST TOGETHER

ni

os

xy

● VERTICAL-VERTICAL

● CURSIVE-CURSIVE

● INCLINED-INCLINED

SMALL VOLUME

MEDIUM VOLUME

LARGE VOLUME

MAXIMIZE SPACE

ADJUST SPACE

MINIMIZE SPACE

Ha

METRIC KERNING

Ha

OPTICAL KERNING

Takes Two

SCALA PRO, WITH KERNING SUPPRESSED

Spacing appears uneven, with gaps around T/a, T/w, and w,

Takes Two

SCALA PRO, WITH METRIC KERNING

Spacing appears more even between T/a and T/w.

Takes Two

SCALA PRO, WITH OPTICAL KERNING

Spacing seems more even between T/a, T/w, and w/o.

Warm Type

SCALA PRO ITALIC, WITH KERNING SUPPRESSED

Spacing appears uneven between W/a and T/y.

Warm Type

SCALA PRO ITALIC, WITH METRIC KERNING

Spacing appears more even between W/a and T/y.

Warm Type

SCALA PRO ITALIC, WITH OPTICAL KERNING

Spacing is comparable to metric kerning.

Books And Harlots Have Their Quarrels In Public.

Books And Harlots Can Be Taken To Bed.

Books and harlots—
footnotes in one are
as banknotes in the
stockings of the other.

—WALTER BENJAMIN, 1925

QUADRAAT SANS, WITH METRIC KERNING

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QUADRAAT SANS, WITH OPTICAL KERNING

TRACKING

NORMAL TRACKING

Letters do love one another. However, due to their anatomical differences, some letters have a hard time achieving intimacy. Consider the letter V, for example, whose seductive valley makes her limbs stretch out above her base. In contrast, L solidly holds his ground yet harbors a certain emptiness above the waist. Capital letters, being square and conservative, prefer to keep a little distance from their neighbors.

POSITIVE TRACKING (+20)

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NEGATIVE TRACKING (-20)

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TYPE CRIME

TIGHTLY TRACKED TEXT

Letters are tracked too close for comfort.

Books and harlots—both have their type of man, who both lives off and harasses them. In the case of books, critics. WALTER BENJAMIN, 1925

REVERSED TYPE, NO TRACKING

Books and harlots—both have their type of man, who both lives off and harasses them. In the case of books, critics. WALTER BENJAMIN, 1925

REVERSED TYPE, TRACKED +25

LOVE LETTERS

CAPITALS: NORMAL TRACKING

LOVE LETTERS

CAPITALS: LOOSE TRACKING (+75)

LOVE LETTERS, LOVE LETTERS

SMALL CAPS: NORMAL VS. LOOSE TRACKING (+75)

love letters, *love letters*

LOWER CASE: NORMAL TRACKING

love letters, *love letters*

LOWER CASE: LOOSE TRACKING (+75)

TYPE CRIME: TRACKING LOWERCASE LETTERS

Loosely spaced lowercase letters—especially italics—look awkward because these characters are designed to sit closely together on a line.

different
folks
different
strokes

TYPE CRIME
*Here, auto spacing yields
an uneven effect.*

different
folks
different
strokes

*Adjusting line spacing with
the baseline shift tool helps create
an even appearance.*

Aa
↑

NERD ALERT: A *baseline shift* is a manual adjustment of the horizontal position of one or more characters. Baseline shifts are often used when mixing different sizes or styles of type. The baseline shift tool can be found in the Type tool bar of standard software applications.

The distance from the baseline of one line of type to another is called *line spacing*. It is also called *leading*, in reference to the strips of lead used to separate lines of metal type. The default setting in most layout and imaging software is 120 percent of the type size. Thus 10-pt type is set with 12 pts of line spacing. Designers play with line spacing in order to create distinctive layouts. Reducing the standard distance creates a denser typographic color—while risking collisions between ascenders and descenders.

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6/6 SCALA PRO
(6 pt type with 6 pts line spacing, or “set solid”)

6/7.2 SCALA PRO
(Auto spacing; 6 pt type with 7.2 pts line spacing)

6/8 SCALA PRO
(6 pt type with 8 pts line spacing)

6/12 SCALA PRO
(6 pt type with 12 pts line spacing)

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Although the two terms are often used interchangeably, **readability** and legibility are actually two quite different terms. Readability pertains to how easily words, sentences, and entire blocks of texts can be read by the average reader. The more readable a text is, the less energy someone has to expend while reading. Legibility, on the other hand, is a measure of how easy it is for the reader to distinguish one letter or character in a text from another.

Legibility

NOT

lEgible lEtteRs

BUT

Readable Words

top: legible letters,
not designed to go together

bad rhythm

bad rhythm

uneven

In memory this is not so minimal