

Anatomy of the letterform. The Baseline is the most stable axis along a line of text, and it is a crucial edge for aligning text with images or with other text.

type

type

t y p e

Expanding tracking creates a more airy look. When san-serifs, caps, or small caps are used, more tracking is preferred. Negative tracking is rarely desirable.



type type

**Manual kerning should be spaced visually not mathematically,
so letters have rhythm.**

Sad Sad Sad

Kerning is more noticeable when the word is larger, which is why designers kern headlines and subheads.

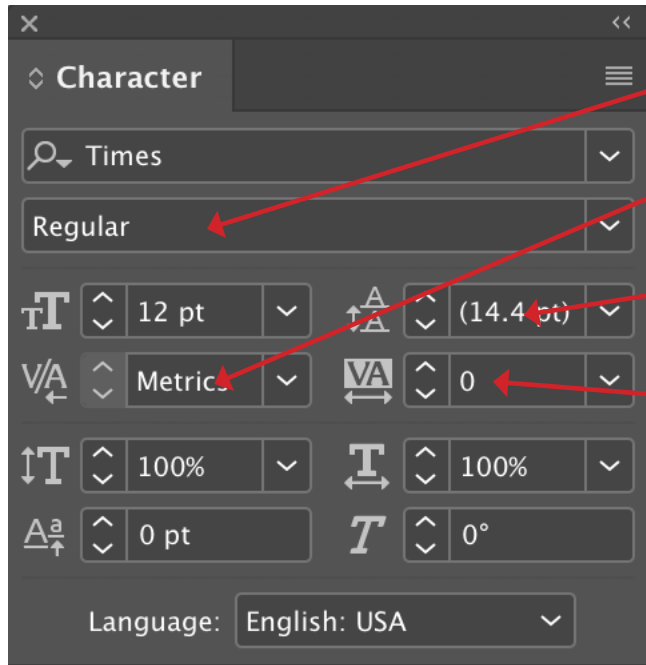
Metric kerning is using the space that was intended by the type designer. It usually looks good.

Optical kerning assesses the shapes of all characters and adjusts the spacing when needed.

spacing
leading

spacing
leading

Leading measures the space between lines of text. Tight leading happens when the ascender and descender interfere with each other. Large x-heights need more leading.



weight thickness of letters stroke.

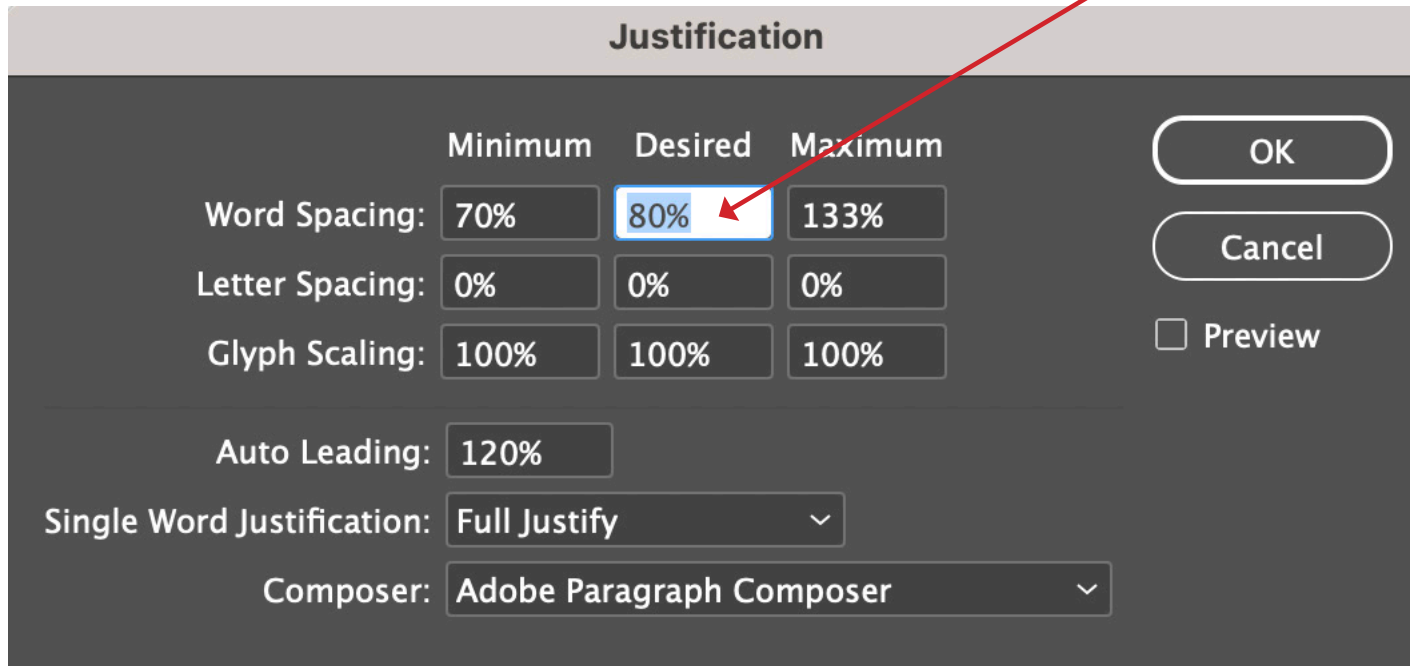
kerning space between individual letters.

leading distance from baseline to baseline.

tracking space between words and letters.

word spacing space between words.

(paragraph menu > justification)



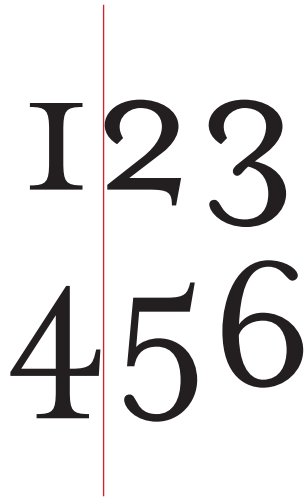
TRUE
SMALL caps

PSEUDO
SMALL caps

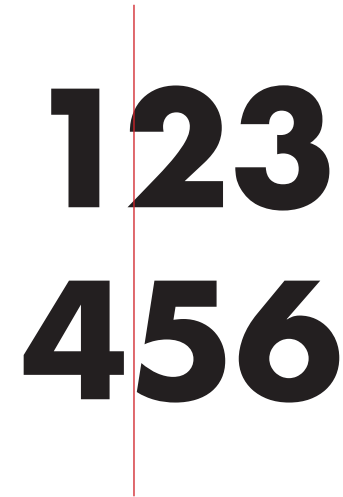
Rather than mixing small caps with capitals, many designers prefer to use all small caps, creating a clean line with no ascending elements. Programs allow users to create false small caps, these letters look out of place.

design AIGA design AIGA

Small caps weight look too thin next to lowercase letters weight. Increase the size of small caps, but don't make them larger than uppercase letters.

A vertical red line is positioned between the first and second digits of the numbers 123 and 456. The numbers are in a serif font. The '1' is tall, the '2' is shorter, and the '3' is the tallest. The '4' is tall, the '5' is shorter, and the '6' is the tallest. This illustrates non-lining numerals where each digit has its own unique width and height.

123
456

A vertical red line is positioned between the first and second digits of the numbers 123 and 456. The numbers are in a bold sans-serif font. All digits are the same height and width, creating a uniform block. This illustrates lining numerals where all digits share the same width and height.

123
456

Lining Numerals take up uniform widths of space, enabling numbers to line up. They are the same height as capital letters, so they can look bulky.

Non-lining numerals have ascenders and descenders, each one has its own set width.

{ [“ “ , , ; ; : : " " ' '] } { [“ “ , , ; ; : : " " ' '] }

5'2" It's 5'2" It's

Helvetica's comma is chunky and Bodoni's is thin stemmed.
A common error is the use of straight hatch marks in place of
apostrophes and quotation marks.