

The power of DTP

Some desktop publishing programs have more features than others, but here's a selection of the things you can do:

Paragraph formatting

Every time you press the Return Key you create a new paragraph. It might be the usual type of paragraph, with several lines of text, or it could be a single word.

If your document is going to be anything more substantial than a birthday card, you would give the paragraph a 'format', 'style' or 'tag' (depending on which program you're using). This means giving it a name, such as Body Text or Main Head or Caption, and choosing a typeface and point size for it. First in the field with this facility for the PC was Ventura, who call them tags; we shall therefore follow suit.

When you have created a tag, you can apply it to other selected paragraphs so that they immediately take on all the same characteristics.

For example you might want all your sub-headings to be in Helvetica Bold 12pt. Rather than having to address each one individually and set up the face and size each time, you would select the sub-head, go into the Paragraph Catalogue (usually spelt the American way: 'catalog') and choose the appropriate tag.

The face and size settings for your paragraph are only the beginning. You can also choose any or all of the following:

Paragraph formatting options

ALIGNMENT

Whether the text is justified (straight edges on both sides), ranged left (straight left hand edge, ragged right), centred on the page, or ranged right (straight right hand edge, ragged left).

INDENTS

The text might start 'full out', ie with no indent. You might want an indent for the first line only, or perhaps for the entire block of text. The right hand edge could also be indented so that the text was set to a narrower width than the rest of the document.

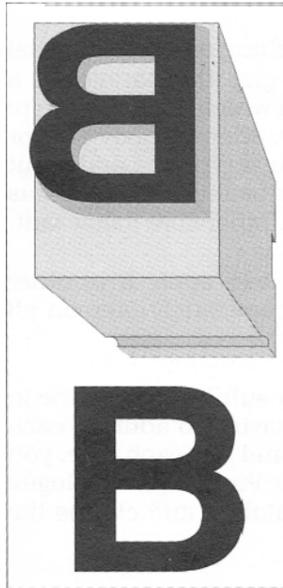
LEADING (INTER-LINE SPACING)

Lines of type are not usually set solid; they have added space between them: normally between one and two points (this paragraph is leaded one and a half points).

'Set solid' comes to us as a term from metal typesetting, and an explanation may help to clarify some of the conflicting terms that have sprung up in the relatively new world of DTP.

A character for metal type is set on a rectangular chunk of lead alloy called the 'body'. Each letter is fixed on its body in such a way that (a) the characters will line up neatly if the bodies are all aligned, and (b) there is enough free metal on each body to give an acceptable minimum space between the lines of type. There are two basic ways of setting metal type: as single characters which can be re-used (hence *The Monotype Corporation*) and the process of casting a line of type at a time (*Linotype*). We'll be talking here about single pieces of type.

In order to increase the spacing between lines, extra lead is added either in the form of cast strips or by using a font with a deeper body. From this we get the word 'leading' which can also be called inter-line spacing. If the lines of type are set solid there will be no leading.



Metal type, showing the character in reverse on the body. Below is the printed character.

Confusion arises because some DTP programs use the word 'leading' to refer to the *pitch* of the lines instead of the added space. This has been derived from the world of the typewriter, where the machine could be set to give a document single or double line spacing. The typewriter, it must be said, has none of the subtlety of movable type.

A ten point font with two points of leading is the equivalent of a ten point font on a twelve point body, and is properly called 10 on 12pt, or 10 / 12pt. There are now two conflicting ways of describing it. The 'typing pool school' would say the inter-line spacing was 12 points, while typographers would call it 2 points. We, therefore, shall be calling it 2 points.

'Leading' can sensibly be called 'inter-line spacing' in the sense of 'extra space added between lines of type'; 'inter-line spacing' could mean the pitch, ie the vertical distance between one baseline and the next. The suggestion that leading might therefore be equated with pitch is untenable on both historical and commonsense grounds. *Ventura* and *FrameMaker* do it properly; some of the others are confused.

PARAGRAPH SPACING

Sets the spacing above and below the paragraph. See, for example how the sub-heading `WEIGHT` is closer to its own text than it is to the last line of this paragraph.

WEIGHT

A choice of medium or bold. Some typefaces, though, have more weights, including light and semi-bold.

ANGLE

Text is almost always set in roman, ie upright, but it is not against the law to have the odd paragraph in italics (some-times called *oblique*) if you have a good reason for it.

TAB SETTING

You can set up paragraphs for columns of figures, or text, with left, right, centre and decimal tabs. Some DTP programs won't let you use tabs if the text is justified.

KEEP WITH NEXT

Of course you'd want a sub-head to be kept with its following text; this seems like a statement of the supremely obvious. Well, so it is when you are working on the piece in question. But what happens when you go off on holiday? Somebody is bound to add some more material on earlier pages while you're away. And Mr Murphy will ensure that there's just enough of it to push your text onto the next page while leaving its heading languishing on the one before.

Choosing this parameter bonds the two together like a pair of swans, and makes sure there are no red faces when the work gets printed.

START AT TOP OF PAGE

If you have really major headings, like chapter titles, you'll want them to lead off on a page of their own, and probably to start on a right hand page as well. These requirements can be set into the paragraph tag.

OTHER ATTRIBUTES

These are normally applied to single characters, words or phrases: Underline, Overline, Strikethrough (for legal work), Superscript, Subscript.

ORPHAN

A solitary line abandoned by the others in its paragraph ...

... while a widow stands alone, bereft, at the top of a page

WIDOWS AND ORPHANS

You can set the minimum number of lines before and after a page or column break, so avoiding the single line at the head or foot of a page. *Ventura*, *PageMaker* and *1st Press* have used the correct interpretation, as shown above. *FrameMaker 3* has them the other way round (4 doesn't say

Notwithstanding, all these programs will give you the opportunity of defining a number of widow or orphan lines greater than one (whereupon they aren't widows or orphans any more, but you can see what they mean!).

[Here we are, discussing a moderately sophisticated area of typography, yet in many newspapers and magazines you'll find pages and columns breaking on a hyphen. Not good.:

Text formatting

Text formatting is a way of applying local changes to your copy, such as putting a word into italics. If, for example, your paragraph is set in Garamond Condensed 11pt and you change one of its words to italic, then that word will be put into Garamond Condensed 11pt Italic. Not Helvetica 10pt Italic or Bookman 14pt Italic, but Garamond's own condensed italic. We take that sort of thing for granted, but it's clever stuff.

Special cases

FrameMaker and *PageMaker* allow you to combine the advantages of paragraph and text formatting. You create your paragraph tags in the usual way, but when you come to a special case, such as a tricky bit of copy that defies all attempts to make it fit comfortably, then you can adjust that one paragraph without affecting all the others with the same tag. This saves you from having heaps of very similar tags with slightly different names: Body Text, Body Text Tight, Body Text Loose etc.

You have to be a bit careful how you use this facility. If you had different inter-line spacings on the same page, or on facing pages, they would stick out like a sore thumb. You would, however, get away with an isolated caption whose tracking was tighter than its fellows in distant parts of the document.

Text formatting options

In desktop publishing the different characteristics that you can apply to letters, words, phrases, even entire paragraphs, are called 'attributes'. Drag the cursor over the area of copy whose attributes you wish to change, so that it shows on the screen in reverse video, then help yourself from the selection below:

TEXT ATTRIBUTES

roman	italic	bold
bold italic	underline	overline
superscript	strike-through	subscript

KERNING

This subject is covered in some detail in Chapter 7, where we show how to do it in several programs. For now you can take it as a way of varying the space between any two characters.

This pair: AV, has normal kerning; while this one: AV, has been kerned together more tightly. When you come to do a headline in, say, 24pt, you can improve the look of it tremendously by the judicious use of kerning.

TRACKING

Similar to kerning, but applied to a whole word or line of type, even a complete paragraph. You may find yourself with a 'loose line', where a long word in a justified paragraph has gone over to the next line, leaving behind a great deal of air between words and letters. The best way of dealing with this is to re-write the passage, but if the author is not available you might be able to tighten up the tracking and pull that long word back into the previous line to improve the look of it. Another possibility is to hyphenate the troublesome word.

HYPHENATION

You can turn automatic hyphenation on or off, and you can choose how many hyphenated words to allow. Too many and the right hand edge of your page will start to look like a nail brush, making reading unnecessarily difficult.

Words are checked automatically against a built-in hyphenation dictionary to see where they should be broken.

General features

SEARCH AND REPLACE

(Also called Find & Change.) This is a gift from the gods. Suppose you have written a long descriptive piece about a new product that is about to be launched. The parent company suddenly decides to change the product's name from WhizzoMix, which you have sprinkled liberally around the document, to WhirlyBlend. Not a problem.

You just go into the Search & Replace Menu and tell it to search for every occurrence of WhizzoMix and replace it with WhirlyBlend. And that's it done.

The more advanced Search & Replace utilities can find a dozen or more different features: paragraph tags, markers, cross-references, and let you decide whether or not to change the one currently found and displayed in context.

SPELL CHECKING

We all need to have our spelling checked; even the most erudite can make typing errors or have 'blind spots' with 'le' and 'ei'. There used only to be 'American English' spell-checkers which would want to change 'colour' to 'color', but now most programs have 'English English'.

As with Search & Replace, you are shown the word that the checker has picked up, together with at least a few words on either side. You then have the option of making the recommended change, allowing the word through (it might be someone's surname) or adding it to the built-in dictionary so that it will be accepted next time round.

CHANGING CAPITALISATION

To save retyping a heading or phrase, you can highlight it with the text cursor then choose from a menu whether to have it all in capitals, all in lower case or with initial caps.

AUTOMATIC SAVING

A choice of saving your work to disk at regular intervals, say every five minutes. You may select the time interval and whether or not to use the facility at all. But think hard before you spurn the offer! If your DTP program doesn't have this facility you should develop the 'Control S Twitch'. This cause the little finger to hold down the Ctrl Key while the forefinger presses the S. It's a popular short-cut way to save.

HEADERS & FOOTERS

(Sometimes called 'Running Headers & Footers'.) For this book we are using three variable (or 'running') headers, two variable footers and a fixed one. Headers and Footers can derive their information from many sources, but we have chosen the paragraph tag called 'Head 2' (the heading with a box rule around it) to display at the top left of all left hand pages and at the top right of all right hand pages.

At the top right of the left hand page the header is the chapter number, while the chapter title appears at the top left of the facing page.

The footers show the page numbers on the outside edges, the book's title bottom right of the left hand page and the current main heading (Head 1) bottom left of the right hand page.

All of this is set up in different ways according to the program you're using, but it is perfectly straightforward. The idea, of course, is to make it easy to find things.

CROSS-REFERENCE MARKERS

It is useful to be able to say "see page 86" with the confidence that the subject will still be on that page when the document is finished. With DTP's ability to move chunks of text about, it's quite possible that you should have said "see page 93".

However, you can attach an invisible marker to the item currently on page 86, so that its presence will be known, wherever it ends up. Now you say "see page " and the program adds a cross-reference code so that it will always point to the correct place.

INDEX MARKERS

Indexing is pure magic. You put invisible (non-printing) markers against the words, tell the program how you want each word to appear in the index, press the metaphorical button and you have an alphabetical index. You can create an index across a single chapter or a complete document.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Table of Contents is usually based on selected paragraph tags, in a similar way to Headers & Footers. You specify which tags are to be used, and the order of priority. The program displays the text using those tags in the form of a contents list.