TYPOGRAPHY BASICS

cap height
height of flat capital letters

x-height
height of lowercase x

x Typography

ascender
upward stroke above the x-height

descender
downward stroke below the x-height

tracking
spacing between all characters in the group

kerning
spacing between two particular characters

Font Types

serif
with strokes (serifs) on the ends of characters
classic, readable, delicate

sans-serif
without serifs
modern, clean, simple

display & handwriting
unique and decorative
appropriate only in specific cases

Font Tips

► Pick two fonts for one design—one serif, one sans-serif.

► Try to use well-developed typefaces (many weights available).

► Use display and handwriting fonts carefully and sparingly.

margin
space between content and the page edge

leading
spacing between lines, 120-145% of point size for best readability

baseline grid
horizontal grid based on leading to keep text lined up across columns and pages

alignment
text flow relative to container left, right, justified, centered

hierarchy
order of importance established visually through variation in **weight**, color, and SIZE

Line Tips

Keep line length short (45-90 characters).

Avoid **orphans** and **widows** (lines alone on a new page or single words alone on a new line.)

When placing text boxes side-by-side horizontally, align them to a **baseline grid**.

Alignment Tips

Don't use center aligned text for everything unless you're making a wedding invitation.

Eliminate **rivers** (gaps between words) in justified text: tweak size, kerning, and hyphenation.

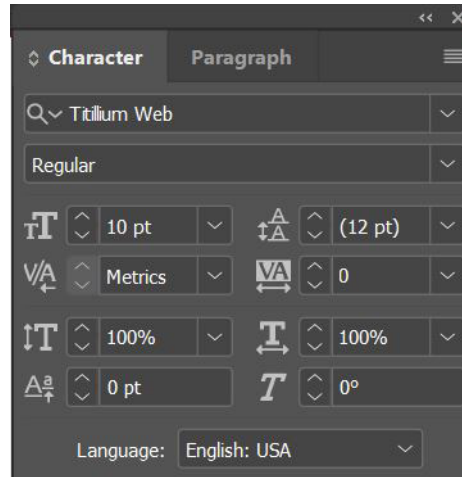Make the **rag** (uneven edge) of left or right aligned text look balanced (no large gaps).

Some tips have been referenced from *Practical Typography* by Matthew Butterick.

TYPOGRAPHY BASICS

POWER USER

► CHEAT CODES

InDesign Type Tools

MAC
CMD + T

WINDOWS
CTRL + T

font

weight

point size

kerning

Metrics kerning is decided by the font designer. Optical is applied by InDesign. If the font is designed well, metrics kerning is better.

leading

tracking

Don't use false italics. Use the italics that come with your font by selecting them from the weight dropdown above.

◇ Character — Paragraph

Titillium Web

Regular

TT 10 pt — ‡A (12 pt)

V/A Metrics — VA 0

↕T 100% — T 100%

Aa 0 pt — T 0°

Language: English: USA
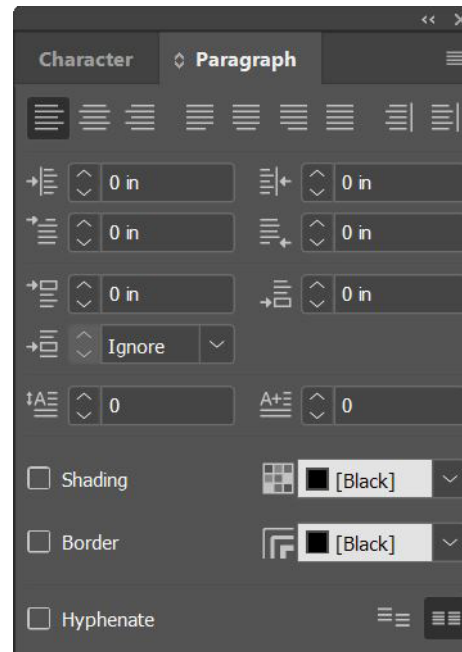
MAC
CMD + OPTION + T

WINDOWS
CTRL + ALT + T

alignment

space between paragraphs

If you want extra room between paragraphs, use this instead of pressing Enter multiple times.

Generally keep automatic hyphenation off. Hyphenation can be useful for avoiding rivers and unbalanced rags, but hyphenate intentionally. Don't hyphenate proper nouns.

Character — ◇ Paragraph

→≣ 0 in — ≣← 0 in

→≣ 0 in — ≣← 0 in

→≣ 0 in — ≣← 0 in

→≣ Ignore

‡A≣ 0 — A+≣ 0

☐ Shading — ▦ ■ [Black]

☐ Border — ⊡ ■ [Black]

☐ Hyphenate

Baseline Grid Tips

To change the size of your baseline grid, go to **Edit > Preferences > Grids**. Under Baseline Grid, change the **Increment Every** value. Typically this should match your leading or half your leading.
To view your baseline grid, make sure you're in Normal screen mode (**W** key to switch) and use **CTRL + ALT + '** (WIN) or **CMD + OPTION + '** (MAC) to show the baseline grid (or **View > Grids & Guides > Show Baseline Grid**).

align to baseline grid