

# AMA Manual of Style

You are looking at 1-4 of 4 items for: **med-9780195176339-div1-236**

## Spacing

Annette Flanagin

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Item type: section

Readability of type depends on the spacing between letters, words, and lines; none of these is independent of the others. | Letterspacing refers to the space between letters and other characters. Ideally, the spaces between letters should be balanced. There are no absolute values for optimal letterspacing, but type size and column width are interdependent in design and may affect reading comprehension. Kerning (adjusting the space between characters) is often used to modify spacing between pairs of characters to bring letters closer together or further apart in an attempt to fit words into a defined space (ie, in text that

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## Word Spacing

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Typefaces have predetermined spacing between words that is dictated by the point size and width of a typestyle, the darkness or density of the typeface, and the openness or tightness of the letterspacing. For text set ragged right (unjustified), word spacing may be fixed and

unchanging. However, for text that is set flush left and flush right (justified), the spacing may need to be more flexible. For justified text, an average word space of a fourth of an em is ideal, with a minimum and maximum range of a fifth of an em to half an em. |

## Line Spacing

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Line spacing refers to the vertical distance between the base of 1 line of text and the base of the next line of text. Line spacing is traditionally known as leading for the strips of lead once used between lines of printer type. The space between lines of type is measured in points. Generally, leading is 20% larger than the copy size. For example, 10-point copy would be set on 12 points of leading or line spacing (10/12), as is shown for the body copy in Figure . Optimal line spacing requires consideration of the type size, layout density, and