

KERNING

TIPS TO IMPROVE YOUR

Typography

1

FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF FONTS YOU'LL BE USING

Different fonts have different widths and styles. You can't kern until you know what font you're dealing with.

Note: Your headline, subhead, and text will probably all have different fonts.



2

FIX LEADING AND TRACKING BEFORE KERNING

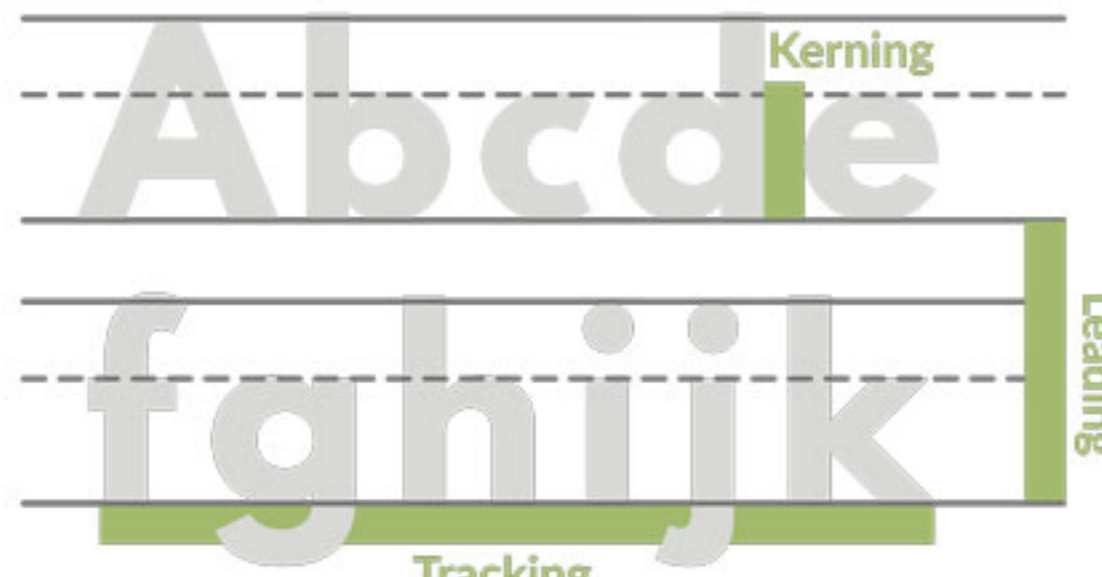
Leading – Vertical space between lines.

Tracking – Uniform space between all letters.

Kerning – Space between individual letters.

All three aspects fit together to make the design of your lettering whole.

Kerning should be your final consideration.



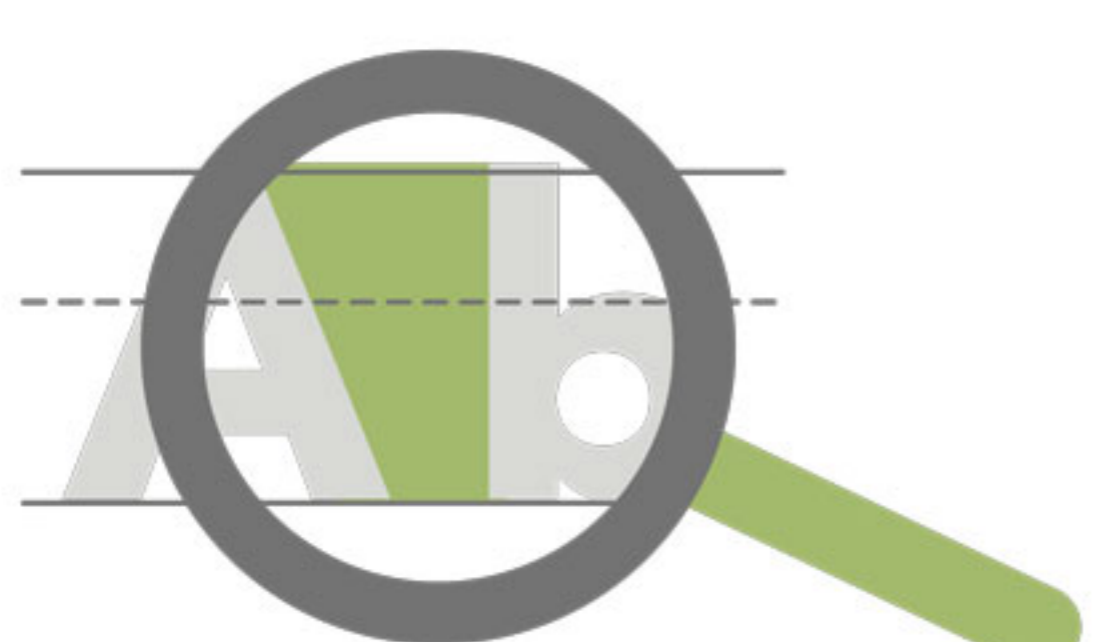
3

KERN EACH LETTER INDIVIDUALLY (SERIOUSLY)

Automatic kerning features is easy to find. Everyone wants a shortcut.

The fact is, the human eye is still the best tool for judging design.

Make the extra effort to make your design of a premium quality.

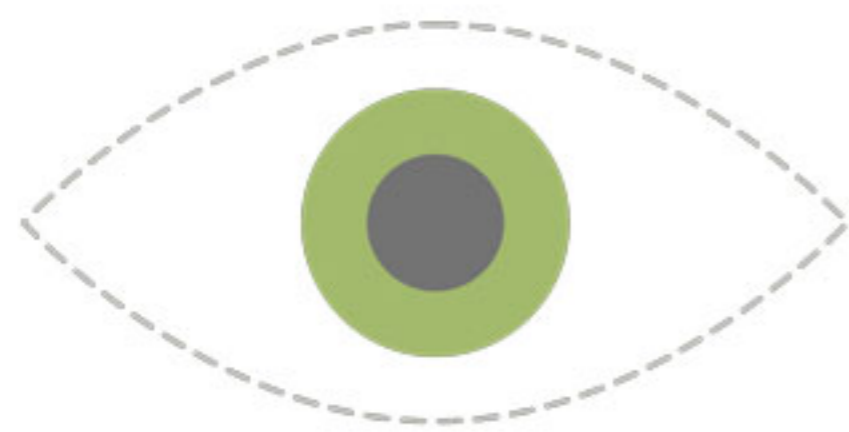


4

IT'S ABOUT VISUAL SPACE, NOT ACTUAL SPACE

OCD doesn't help in kerning. Your letters will only look perfect with varying distances. People will not approach your design with rulers.

All that matters is whether your lettering is easy and enjoyable to read.

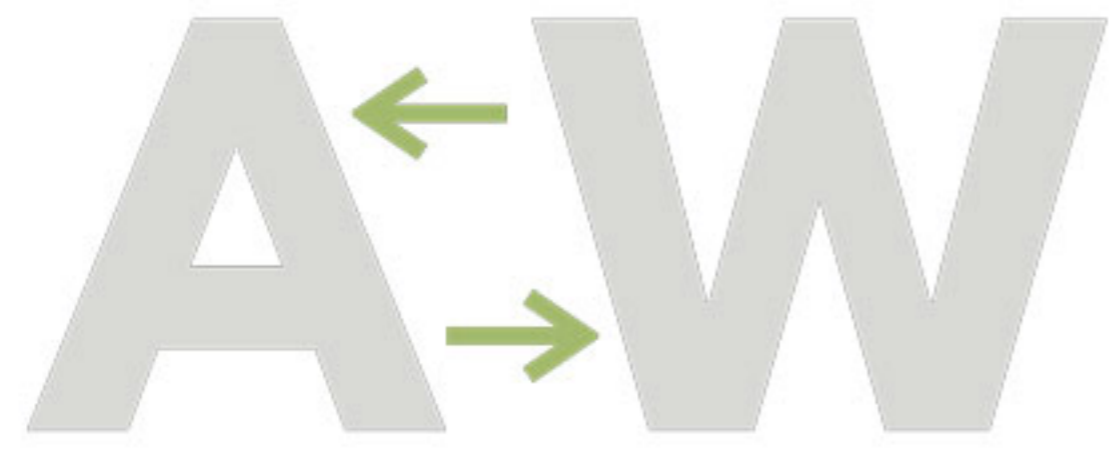


5

FIND OUT WHAT KIND OF FONTS YOU'LL BE USING

Letters with slanted sides have a ton of negative space (A, V, Y, W)

You can lessen that negative space when next to letters that can slip into it.



6

DO YOUR KERNING IN GROUPS OF THREE

If you look at a word as one whole, it's easy to miss details.

Take letter in groups of three and kern one trio at a time.



7

LESS IS ALWAYS MORE

Don't over-kern!

Excessively tight letters can become unattractive and difficult to read.

Rule of Thumb: If it looks fine to you visually, leave it.



8

DON'T NEGLECT THE SPACING BETWEEN WORDS

Letter spacing is important, but so is word spacing. Make sure there's enough space between words to easily distinguish one from another.



9

TRY FLIPPING THE TYPEFACE UPSIDE DOWN

This ninja brain-hack short circuits your familiarity with words. Our familiarity with a word can affect us subconsciously.

e.g: "Thin" might influence you to kern it tighter than other words.



10

ALWAYS HAVE AT LEAST TWO VERSIONS OF THE DESIGN.

At least have one small and one big. This helps clients see how your work will look in different contexts.

Use this to identify any kerning changes that might be required in the future.



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