

# The PC is not a Typewriter

Source: Williams, Robin. (1992). *The PC is not a Typewriter*. Berkeley, CA: Peachpit Press.

Axiom	Explanation	Example
<p><b>Spacing.</b> Use only one space after periods, colons, exclamation points, question marks, quotation marks—any punctuation that separates two sentences.</p>	<p>On a typewriter, all the characters are <b>monospaced</b>; that is they each take up the same amount of space—the letter “i” takes up as much space as the letter “m.” On a computer, most typefaces use proportional characters; that is, each character takes up a proportional amount of space—the letter “i” takes up about one-fifth the space of the letter “m.”</p>	<p>This is an example of a monospaced typeface.</p> <p>This is an example of a proportionally spaced typeface.</p>
<p><b>Quotation Marks.</b> Use real quotation marks—never those grotesque generic marks.</p> <p>Use real apostrophes, not foot marks.</p>	<p>Most word processing programs allow you to automatically format curly quotes. You can also insert curly quotes from the Insert Menu → Symbol.</p>	<p>“ (single quotation curly quotes)</p> <p>” (double quotation curly quotes)</p> <p>' (foot symbol)</p> <p>" (inches symbol)</p>
<p><b>Dashes.</b> Never use two hyphens instead of a dash. Use hyphens, en dashes, and em dashes appropriately</p>	<p>Use hyphens for hyphenating words Sue en dashes to indicate duration (e.g., 1999–2004). Use em dashes to indicate an abrupt change of thought or a longer pause.</p>	<p>- (hyphen)</p> <p>– (en dash)</p> <p>— (em dash)</p>
<p><b>Accent Marks.</b> Where an accent mark is appropriate, use it.</p>	<p>Accent marks are hidden. To enter an accent mark: From the Insert Menu, select → Symbol. In the Symbol window, locate the desired symbol.)</p>	<p>é</p>
<p><b>Underlining.</b> Don't underline. Underlining is for typewriters; italic is for professional text.</p>	<p>Underlining tends to be too heavy, is too close to the type, and bumps into the “descenders” of the letters (e.g., “g,” “y”).</p>	<p>Not <u>Huckleberry Finn</u>, but <i>Huckleberry Finn</i></p>
<p><b>All Caps.</b> Very rarely use all capital letters.</p>	<p>When a word is in all caps, you have to read it letter by letter.</p>	<p>Use bold or italics for emphasis, but use emphasis sparingly.</p>

<p><b>Tabs and Indents.</b> Use tabs and first-line indents regularly. Never use the space bar to align text.</p>	<p>Using the space bar for alignment worked on typewriters because every letter takes up the same amount of space, so five spaces is always five spaces. A computer, however, uses proportional space, so, five spaces is not always the equivalent of five spaces.</p>	<p>Spacing in five spaces for a paragraph indention does not guarantee the same amount of space.</p> <p>→ Tabbing the equivalent amount of space will ensure uniformity.</p>
<p><b>Justifying Text.</b> Justify text only if the line is long enough to prevent awkward and inconsistent word spacing.</p>	<p>Justifying text—aligning it on both margins—should be resisted.</p>	<p>This text is justified, creating awkward spaces between words.</p> <p>This text is left justified (what is sometimes called ragged right), creating easier reading.</p>
<p><b>Readability.</b> Serif type is more readable and is best for body text; sans serif is more legible and is best used for headlines.</p>	<p>Serif type is more readable because each letter contains serifs that lead the eye along the horizontal line. Generally, serif type is used for body text.</p> <p>San serif (literally without serif) is often applied when the purpose is to attract attention. Generally, san serif typefaces are used for titles and headings.</p>	<p>Times New Roman, Palatino Linotype, and Cheltenham are serif typefaces.</p> <p>Myriad Roman, Arial and Futura are san serif typefaces.</p>
<p><b>Combining Typefaces.</b> Never combine more than two typefaces on the same page. Never combine two serif fonts on the same page and never combine two san serif fonts on the same page.</p>	<p>When using typefaces that are similar (e.g., two san serif typefaces), there is not enough contrast between the two—a subtle conflict is set up.</p>	<p>Myriad Roman and Futura together conflict because they are too similar.</p> <p><b>Combining Typefaces</b> Never combine more than two typefaces on the same page.</p> <p>But using Myriad Roman and Palatino Linotype provide enough contrast.</p> <p><b>Combining Typefaces</b> Never combine more than two typefaces on the same page.</p>