

The PC is not a Typewriter

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

Axiom	Explanation	Example
<p>Spacing. 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 monospaced; 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>Quotation Marks. 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>Dashes. 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>Accent Marks. 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>Underlining. 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>All Caps. 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>Tabs and Indents. 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>Justifying Text. 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>Readability. 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>Combining Typefaces. 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>Combining Typefaces Never combine more than two typefaces on the same page.</p> <p>But using Myriad Roman and Palatino Linotype provide enough contrast.</p> <p>Combining Typefaces Never combine more than two typefaces on the same page.</p>