

Cheat Sheet InDesign's typographic tools



A quick-and-dirty guide to the multitude of type options in Adobe's DTP application.

CONTROL PALETTE

The Control Palette has two status options depending on which button is selected.

InDesign has a wide range of functions for controlling and manipulating text, but as the application has such a huge number of features, it can be hard to remember where a specific function is. So here's our guide to helping you find your way around InDesign's powerful set of typographic tools, whether it's leading, glyphs or non-breaking white spaces, we've got it covered.

INSERT SPECIAL CHARACTER

Found under Type > Insert Special Character, this brings up a submenu listing a variety of special characters, from a copyright symbol, en and em dashes to non-breaking hyphens, page markers and quotation marks.

Symbols
Markers
Hyphens and Dashes
Quotation Marks
Other

INSERT WHITE SPACE

Found under Type > Insert White Space, this gives access to en and em spaces, as well as non-breaking spaces and a variety of spaces in different set widths.

Em Space
En Space
Nonbreaking Space
Nonbreaking Space (Fixed Width)
Hair Space
Sixth Space
Thin Space
Quarter Space
Third Space
Punctuation Space
Figure Space
Flush Space

INSERT BREAK CHARACTER

Found under Type > Insert Break Character, this gives access to different text breaking options from Column, Frame and Page Breaks to Odd and Even Page Breaks.

Column Break
Frame Break
Page Break
Odd Page Break
Even Page Break
Paragraph Return
Forced Line Break
Discretionary Line Break

BULLETS & NUMBERED LISTS

Found under Type > Bullets & Numbered Lists, this offers another way of inserting bullet points into the text.

Remove Bullets
Apply Numbers
Restart/Continue Numbering
Convert Bullets to Text
Define Lists...



GLYPHS

Found under Type > Glyphs, this opens up a palette that features the specific form of a character, such as é, ü or ©. Select a typeface, then double-click on a character to insert at the cursor's position.

CHARACTER FORMATTING

Click on the A symbol and you can control: **A** The typeface, its size and leading. **B** All caps, small caps, superscript, subscript, underscore and strikethrough options. **C** Kerning, where you have the options of Metrics (which uses a font's built-in kerning pairs); Optical (which overrides a font's built-in kerning and allows InDesign to determine the spacing between character pairs); Units; and tracking. **D** Vertical and horizontal scale; below these you have baseline shift and skew, which is a false italic. **E** Character Style, with a submenu to the various styles, and the Dictionary. **F** Text alignment, ranging from centred, align left and right, to align to and away from the spine.

PARAGRAPH FORMATTING

Click on the paragraph symbol and you can control: **01** Text alignment. **02** Left and right indent, and first line left indent and last line right indent. **03** Space before and space after a paragraph; below that you have the tools for setting drop caps. **04** Bulleted and numbered lists. **05** Paragraph Style, with a submenu to the various styles, along with a checkbox for hyphenation. **06** Lock/unlock to baseline grid.

CHARACTER PALETTE

The Character palette replicates the controls found in the Character Formatting palette, with a submenu for those functions not displayed shown.

CHARACTER STYLES

This palette lists the character styles available for the open document. The submenu has a list of options for controlling the styles, such as deleting, duplicating, grouping and importing styles, as well as how the styles are displayed in the palette.

PARAGRAPH PALETTE

The Paragraph palette replicates the controls in the Paragraph Formatting palette, but a submenu reveals some extra functions, including: Paragraph and Single Line Composer, both of which look at where the breaks appear at the end of a line; Only Align First Line to Grid, which places the first line of a paragraph on the grid with the rest using the leading measurement; Balance Ragged Lines, which is useful for preventing unequal line lengths in heading and subheadings; and Justification, which is for precise control of word spacing, letter spacing, and glyph scaling.

Added to those are: Keep Options, which controls how many lines of the following paragraph remain with the current one as it moves between frames; Hyphenation, which has precise controls for breaking words; Drop Cap & Nested Styles, which allows you to set drop caps and nest character and paragraph styles together; Paragraph Rules for setting lines above and below text; three options for controlling Bullets and Numbering, such as bullet points; and Define Lists, which is used to interrupt one bullet list with another.

BASELINE GRID

Found under Preferences > Grids, this allows you to set the starting position, colour and incrementation of the baseline grid.

PARAGRAPH STYLES

This palette lists the Paragraph Styles available. The submenu has a list of options for controlling these styles, such as deleting, duplication, grouping and importing of styles.

