

WHAT IS

SPACING?

**“A poorly drawn, well-spaced font
is much more useful than a
well-drawn, badly spaced font.”**

–Paul van der Laan, Bold Monday

minimum

Zeitung Pro, by Underware

minimum

minimum

Good Spacing \neq Evenly-Spaced Strokes

■ ■
minimum

Harmony of volumes, *between and within*



Approximately-equal “Mass”

minimum

minimum

m i n i m u m

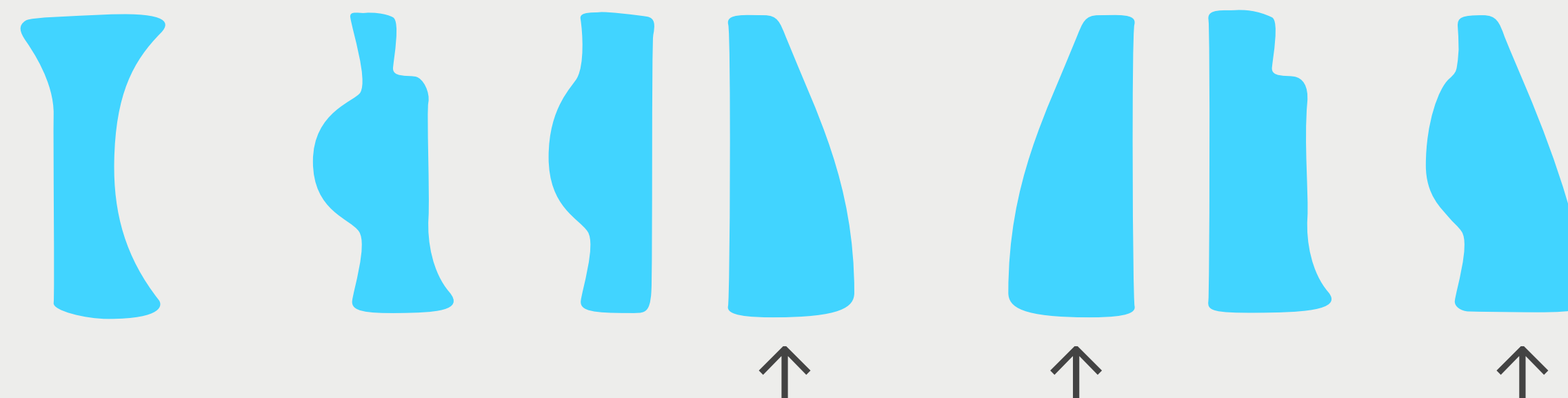
■ ■
minimum

■ ■
minimum

■ ■
minimum

activity

activity



These are a bit big...



This is whitespace is more even, volume-wise. Question: is it better?

activity

Answer: no, because proximity matters, too.

activity

Looking at each trio, does the middle glyph look centered?
(“Three at a time” Test, from OHno Type)

activity

Looking at each trio, does the middle glyph look centered?
(“Three at a time” Test, from OHno Type)

activity

Looking at each trio, does the middle glyph look centered?
(“Three at a time” Test, from OHno Type)

activity

(Original)

activity

(Original)

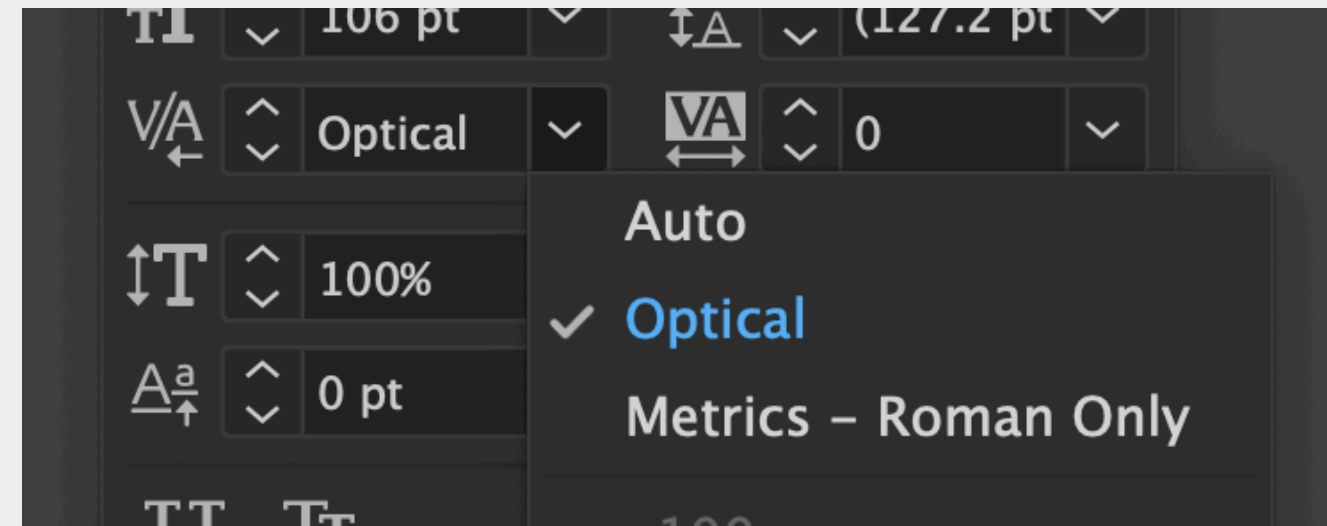
Sidenote: Kerning

SAVANNA

Kerning OFF

SAVANNA

Kerning ON



SAVANNA

“Optical Kerning” ≠ Intended Kerning

DISPLAY

Tomorrow

HEADINGS

Tomorrow

TEXT

Tomorrow

The right spacing & kerning depends on font size & graphic style!

DISPLAY

Tomorrow

HEADINGS

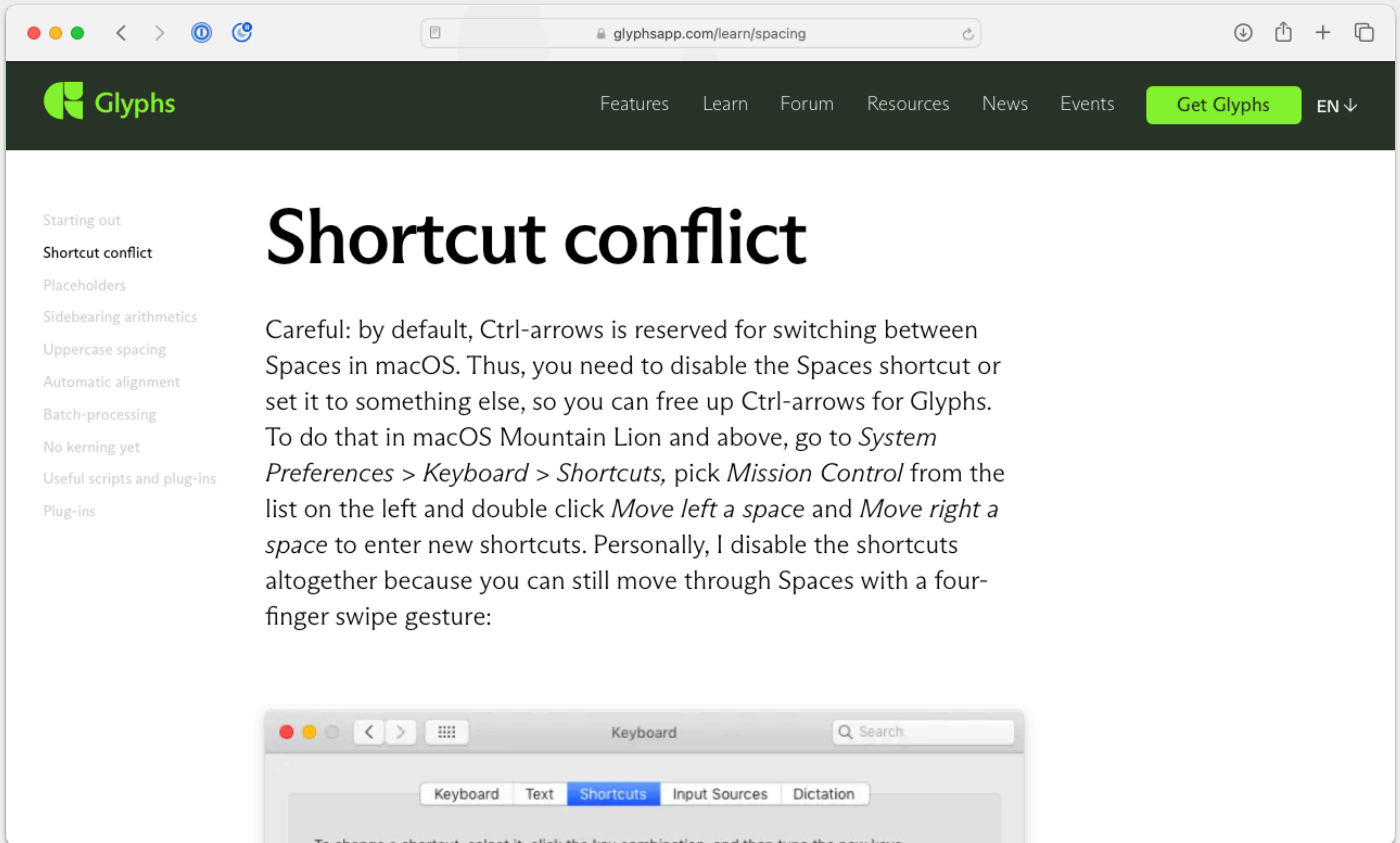
Tomorrow

TEXT

Tomorrow

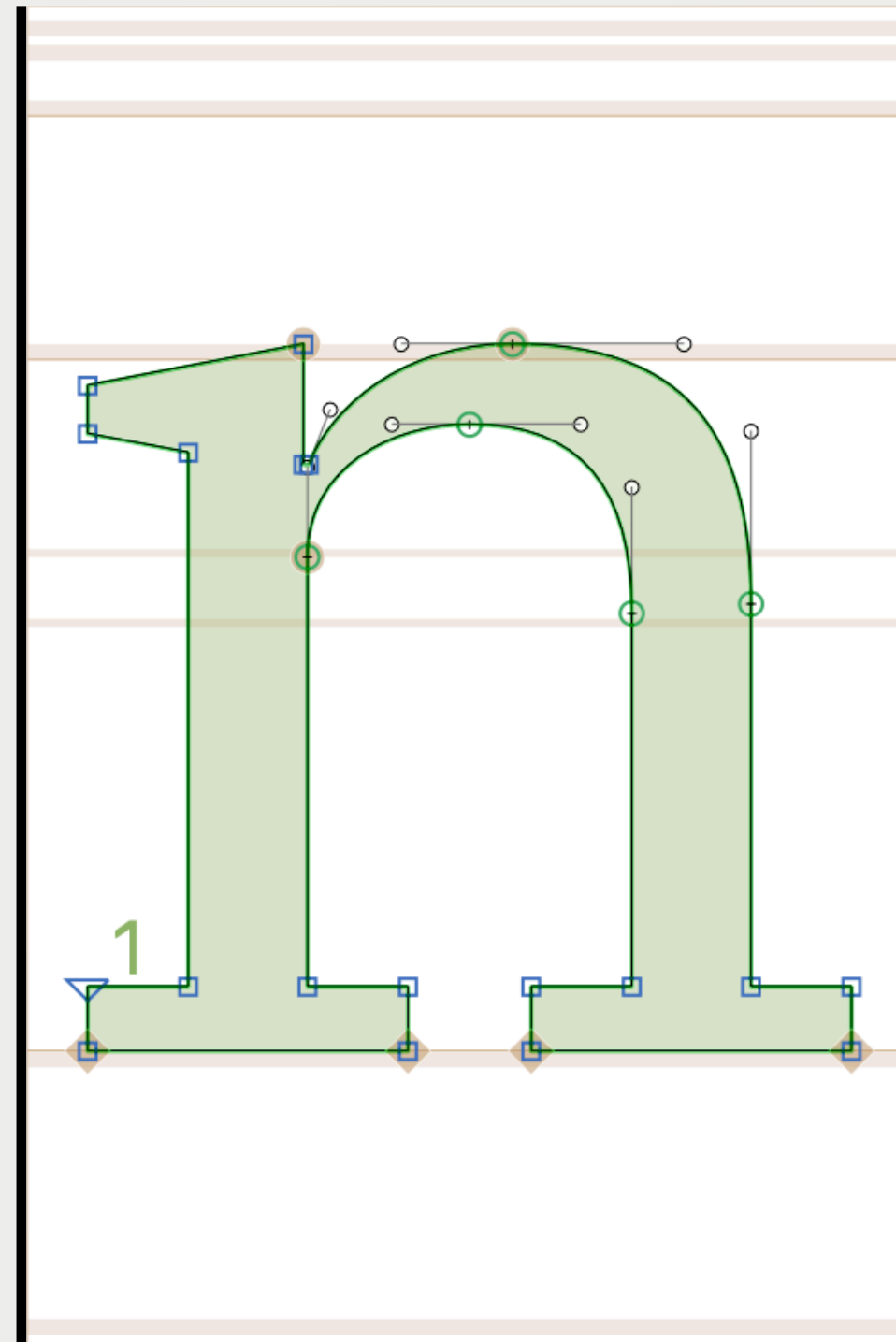
The right spacing & kerning depends on font size & graphic style!

How to work on spacing



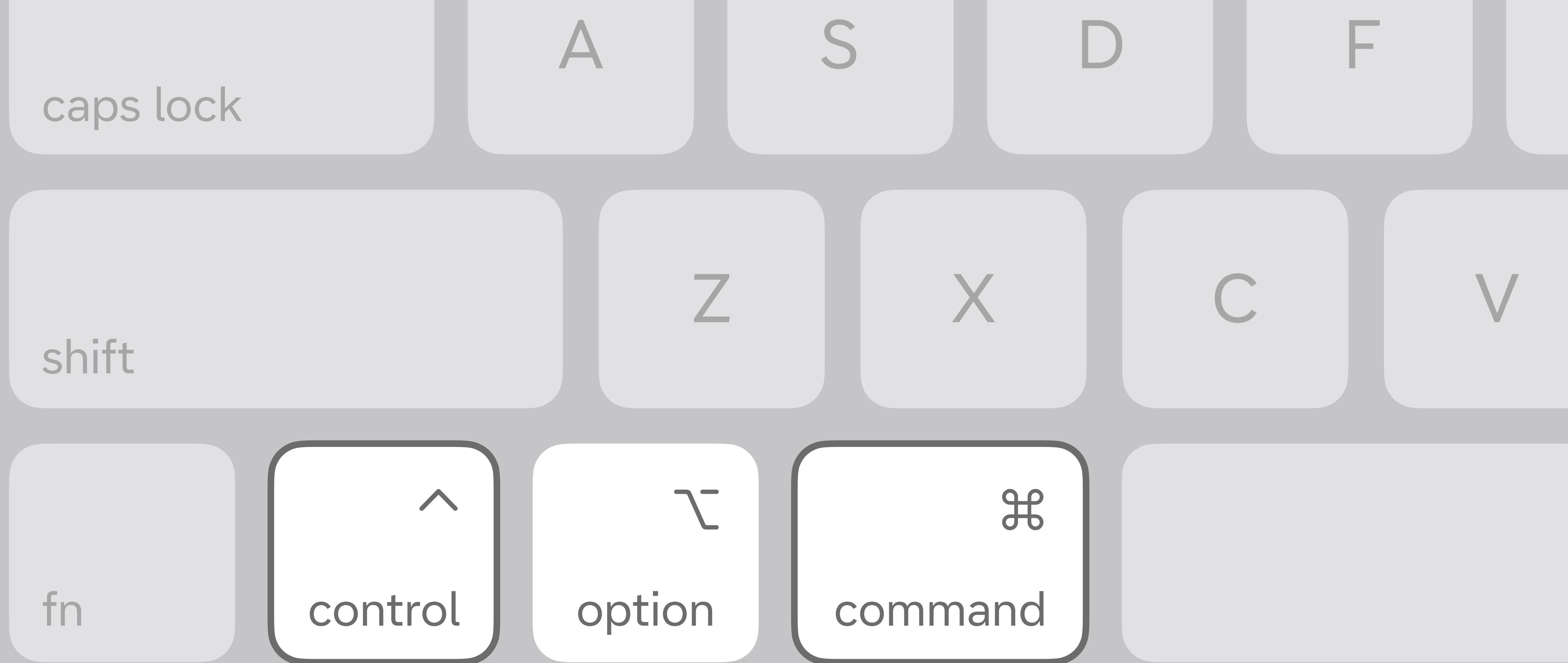
Know your shortcuts!

cntl ←/→
adjust
left side



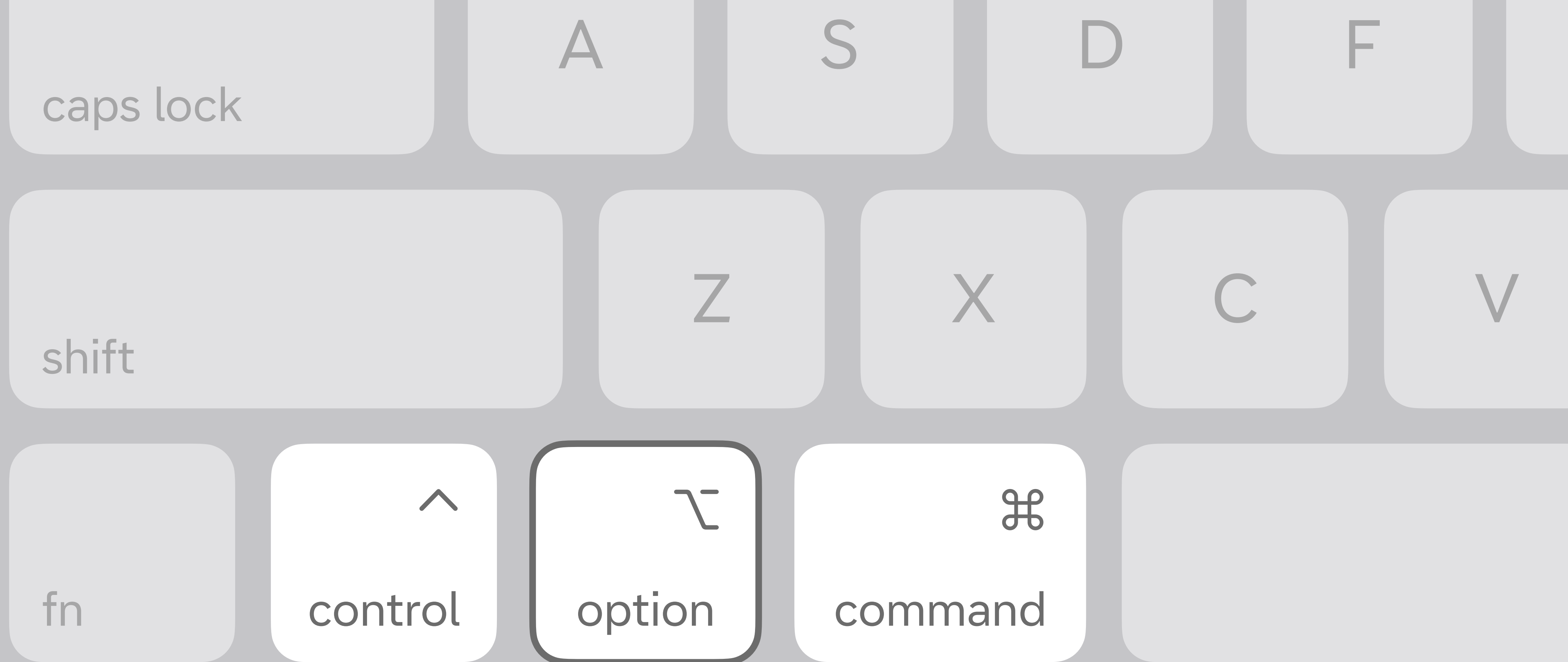
cmd ←/→
adjust
right side

ctrl+cmd ←/→
move letter



cntl ←/→
adjusts
left side

cmd ←/→
adjusts
right side

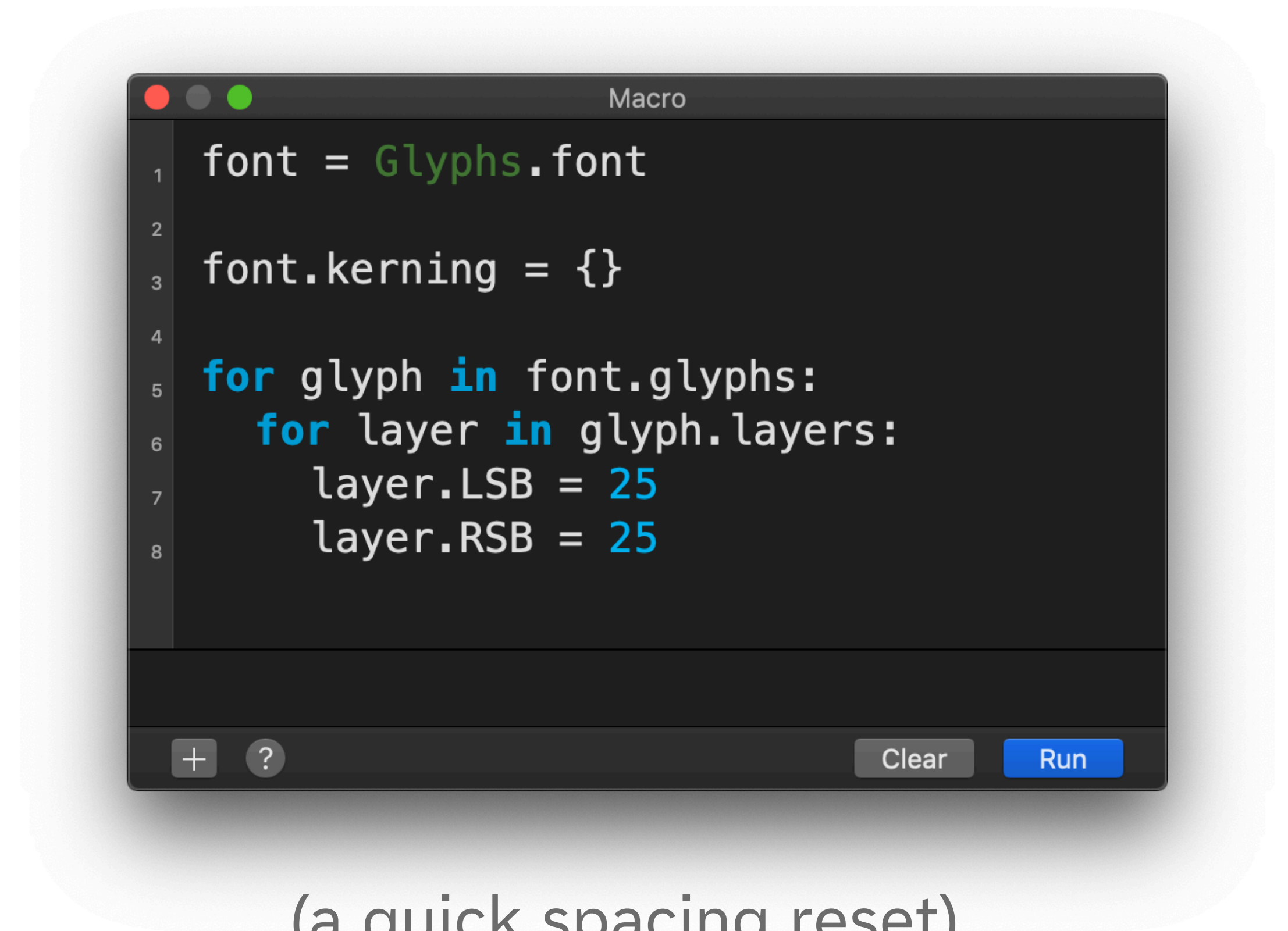
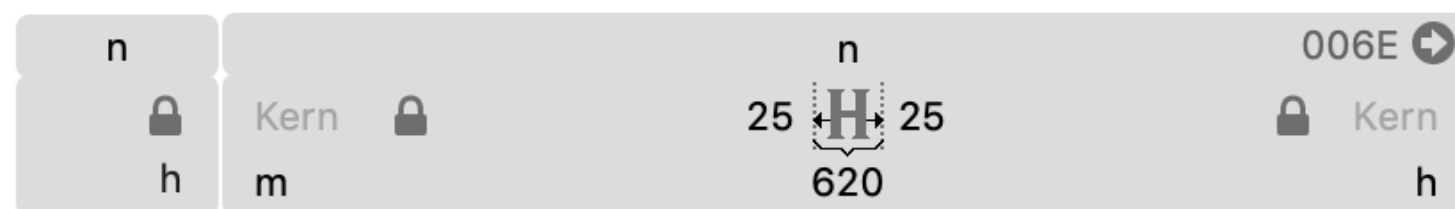


**adjusts
kerning**

IBM Plex Serif, by IBM & Bold Monday

AVATAR

nnnooo

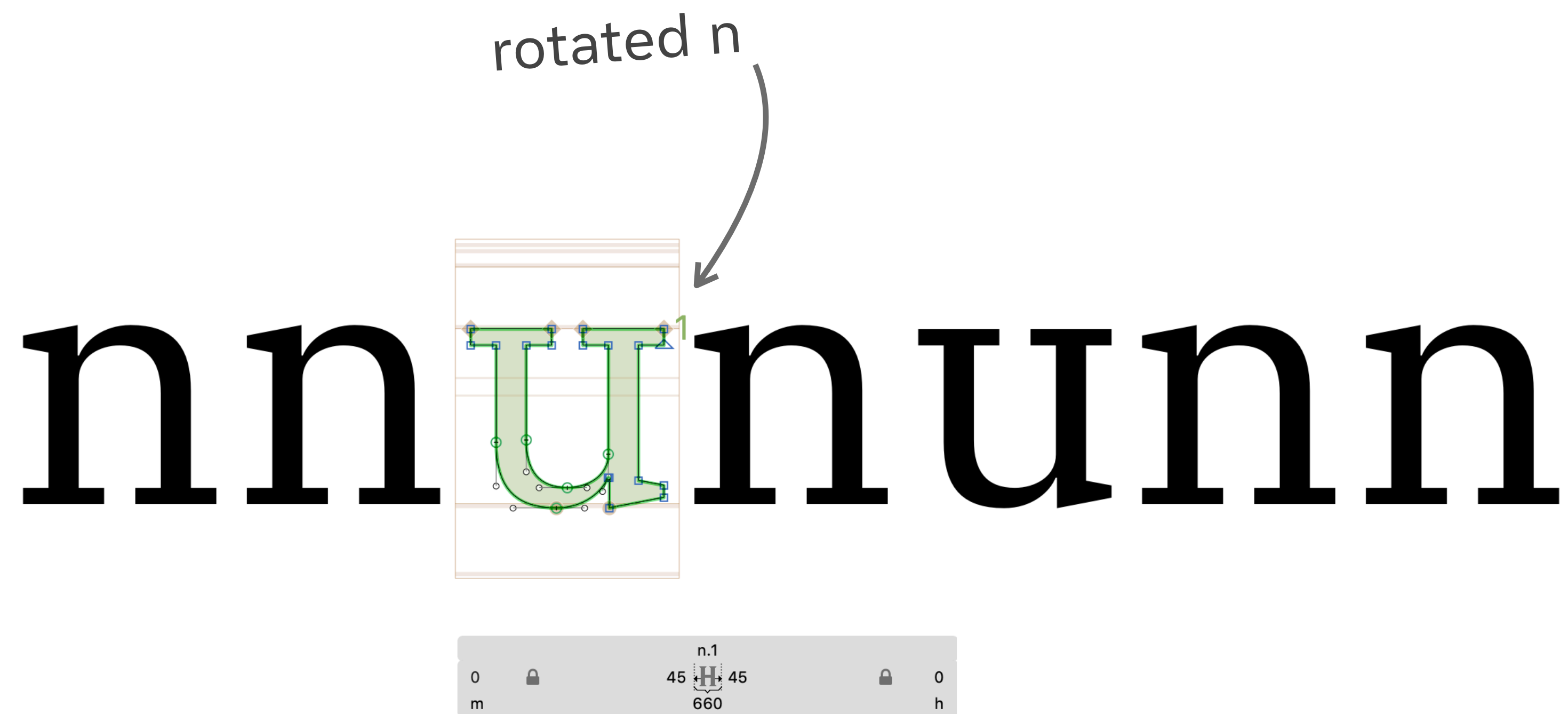


nnnnnnnn

nnnnnnnn

nnnnnnnn

Goal 1: space the /n generally



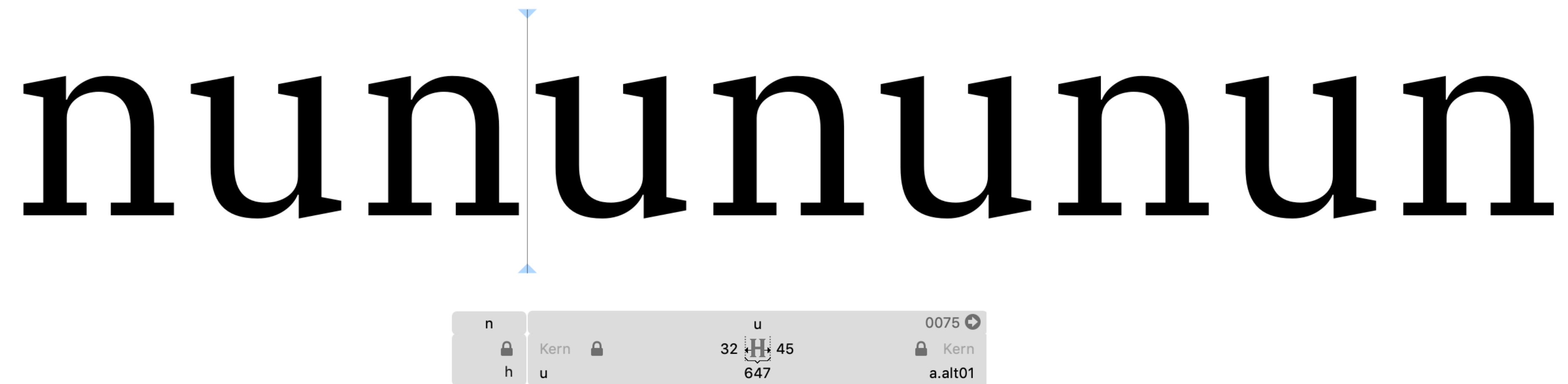
Goal 1b: offset the /n

Keep these in sync!

n n u n u n n

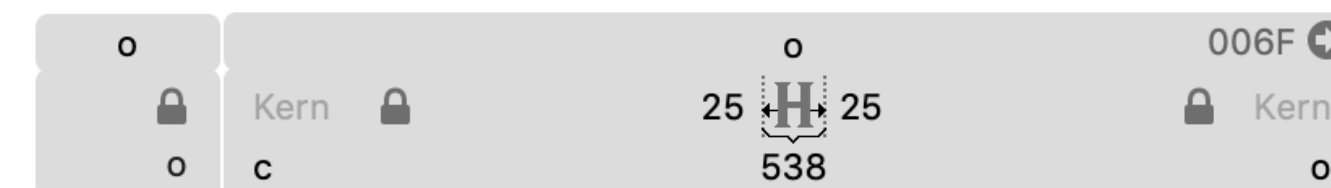
n		n	006E ➡
h	0	58 32	0
m		660	h

Goal 1b: offset the /n



Then copy to the real /u

nnnoooo



Goal 2: space the /o

nnnoooo



Goal 2: space the /o

H H H H O O O

55 787 55+55 787 55+55 787 55+50 716 50+50 716 50+50 716 50+

n n n o o o

50 639 35+50 639 35+50 639 35+45 564 45+45 564 45+45 564 45

Goal 3: space the uppercase controls (H & O)

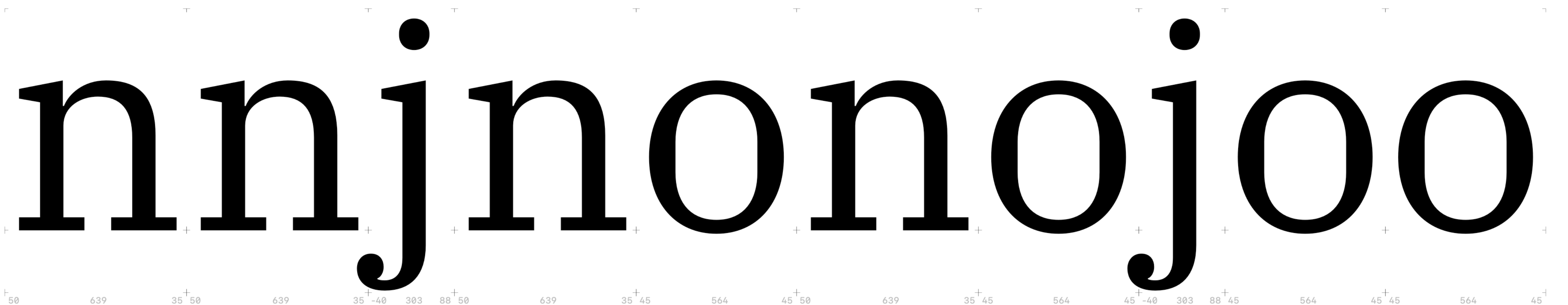
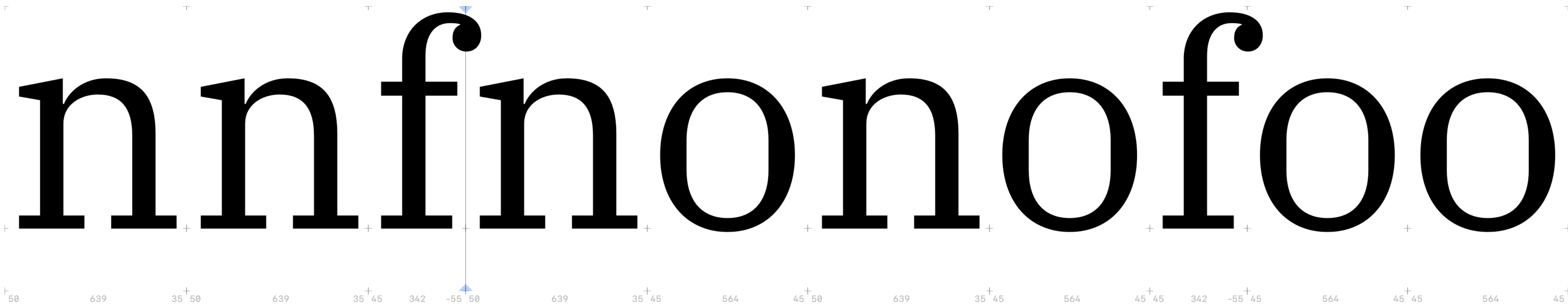
nnanonoaoo

nnbnonoboo

nncnocoo

nnndnonodoo

Goal 4: space the rest!



Note: a few margins are negative

Spacing takes time!

More resources at
github.com/arrowtype/spacing