1. Insert only a single space after all punctuation

Inserting two spaces after a period was common when using a typewriter. Monospace typefaces were designed to occupy the same amount of space no matter the width of the character. Therefore, two spaces were needed to identify the end of a sentence and the beginning of another sentence. With the introduction of the Mac and digital type, characters are designed proportionately, which allows for the correct practice of using one space after all punctuation.

2. Use proper 'em' dashes, 'en' dashes, and hyphens

An em is a unit of measure equal to the point size that you are using. An em dash is a type of punctuation used to offset clauses in a sentence or to indicate an abrupt change in thought. An en dash is equal to half the length of an em dash. En dashes are used to denote duration (time.)

3. Use proper quote and apostrophe marks

     " " – correct
     " " – incorrect

Use true quotation marks and apostrophes instead of using inch marks and feet marks. Place all punctuations inside the quotation marks.

4. Use True Small Caps

When setting text that contains acronyms, select a typeface with small caps as a family. Selecting small caps from the style menus is a poor choice because the compute reduces the overall size of the type by 80%. This changes the stroke weight and the feel of the font. Expert sets in the Adobe Type Library have small caps options.

5. Add letter spacing to capitalized text and small caps

Letterspacing is the amount of space between characters in a word. Some software programs caller letterspacing tracking. Use positive number values (to about 2 or 3) to open up letterspacing to capitalized text and small caps, except when periods are used between characters.

6. Use old style figures when appropriate

Old style figures, also known as non-lining figures do not line up on the baseline as regular or lining numerals do. They can be found in various fonts. If the body text has a significant amount of numbers, research a font family where they are included. If non-lining numerals are not available, use a slightly smaller point size for the lining numbers. Think of lining numbers as upper case numbers and non-lining numbers as lower case numbers.

7. Use caps properly

With options given to you by almost any type family (bold, point size, etc) you will seldom need to use all caps to draw attention to your text. Not all typefaces are legible when set in all caps; esp. true for script and decorative typefaces. Short headlines may be the once exception to this rule.

8. Use bold text properly

9. Use copyright, register, and trademark marks properly

     © - Option + G
     ™ - Option + 2
     ® - Option + R

The copyright, register, and trademark characters need to be reduced to work with body text. At times, depending on the typeface, you may need to reduce the mark between 50% and 70%. The goal is to match the x-height. The copyright mark should be approximately 70% of the surrounding text. Unlike the ™ symbol, the © should NOT be superscripted and should remain on the baseline. ™ is usually superscripted for the chosen font. ™

and ® are normally set higher then other marks. If you choose to superscript ®, reduce it to about 60% of the size.

10. Ellipsis Character

Use the ellipsis character and NOT three periods. You can access the ellipsis by typing Option + : (colon). Allow a small amount of space before and after. However if it is not crowding the text, leave no space at all.

11. Avoid underlined text

This was useful back in the days of the typewriter to draw attention to the text. With digital type and their families, you should not need to use underlined text.

12. Increase line spacing to improve readability in body text

Line spacing (aka leading) refers to the space between lines of text. It is important for readability and appearance. Leading is measured from baseline to baseline. As a rule of thumb, allow leading that is 120% of the point size. For sans serif, you may need 130% or more. When setting headlines, solid leading (leading = point size, 12/12) or negative leading (leading =< point size, 12/10) may be appropriate.

13. Body copy size

Body text is set anywhere from 9-12 points. When you print text, it is usually larger than what it looked like on the screen. So, print out your text before finalizing your layout. Type studies will help you determine the proper size before you proceed with your layout.

14. Altering fonts

Don't alter the original typeface by stretching or condensing the letters improperly. Certain type families provide you with a lot of flexibility, so you should not need to destroy/alter text.

15. Legibility of fonts

Sans serif typefaces work well for headlines and to set text that is aligned to vertical/horizontal lines. Certain sans serif typefaces which are not very geometrical work well for body copy (i.e. Gill Sans, Optima, Goudy Sans, etc.)

16. Decrease line length and increase margins

Line length is a measure of text on one line. Any measure between 45 and 75 characters is comfortable for single column widths. The ideal measure for body text length is 66 characters (counting both letters, punctuation, and spaces.) For multiple columns, a measure between 40 and 50 characters is ideal.

17. Avoid letterspacing lowercase body copy

Don't letterspace body copy as it really hampers legibility. Use letterspacing when working with caps. small caps, numbers and display text where looser type spacing may increase legibility.

18. Word spacing should be fairly close

For text meant for extended reading, the amount of space between words in a paragraph should be fairly close–about the width of a lowercase "i." If the word spacing is too close, it appears as one giant word and legibility is decreased. Keep the spaces between words fairly thin, consistent and even!

19. Ideal column width

For single-column pages, 4.25 inches is ideal. For two-column width, columns can be as narrow as 2 inches. Turning on the hyphenation feature can improve word spacing.

20. Justification of text

Justification can be appropriate in certain places. However, it can create certain problems such as rivers and word spacing. Adjust-

ing size of margins, decreasing body copy size, turning on auto-hyphenate and manually hyphenating the text are all examples of possible solutions. (For instance, if the guidelines of the design requires 2 margins and no other solutions work, change text to different alignment.)

21. Choose the alignment that fits

Make sure the alignment chosen for all areas of text are legible and consistent with the design and guidelines. Left-aligned text is easier to read and set. Justified text is harder to set w/o inevitable word spacing problems. Right-aligned and centered are generally not used for body copy.

22. Rules of hyphenation

Don't rely on the software to judge where hyphens should be placed. At the end of lines, leave at least two characters behind and take at least three forward. For example, "ele-gantly" is acceptable, but "elegant-ly" is not because it takes too little of the word to the next line. Avoid leaving the stub end of a hyphenated word or any word shorter then four letters as the last line of a paragraph. Avoid more then 3 consecutive hyphenated lines. Avoid hyphenating or breaking proper names and titles. Creating a non-breaking space before and after the name will ensure that the name will not break.

23. Avoid beginning three consecutive lines with the same word

Since software programs deal with line breaks automatically based upon a number of variables, it is possible to have paragraphs with consecutive lines beginning with the same word. When this happens simply adjust the text to avoid/fix the problem.

24. Always spell check!

Once you are finished with your design, spell check the text using **both** of the following:
a. Use spell=check option that comes with the software you are using for the project.
b. Print the document and read it. The monitor and design of the document will make text look perfect when it may not be. Even if text is given to you by a client, check it. Never ever assume that it is correct. Keep a dictionary close as well.

25. Avoid widows and orphans

Widows are either single words alone on a line or single sentences alone on a new page. Orphans are single lines of copy alone at the end of a page.

26. Hierarchy

Decide what to emphasize. Whine elements receive the most attention, and which one or two messages to you want to command most of the viewer's attention? Play up these elements. Everything else is secondary.

27. Kerning in headlines

Adjust the space between two particular letters to allow for more consistent negative space.

28. Indents

In continuous text, mark all paragraphs after the first with an indent of at least one "em" (3 spaces). Do NOT use three spaces but rather use the tabs or indents option in your software.

29. Items in a series

Items in a series do not use a comma before the word "and." (i.e., 'peaches, apples and oranges.')