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\finalhyphendemerits $[\langle number \rangle]$ parameter

This parameter specifies additional demerits that TEX attaches to a breakpoint that causes the next to last line of a paragraph to end with a hyphen. Such a hyphen is generally considered to be unaesthetic because of the possible blank space from a short last line beneath it. Increasing the value of this parameter has the effect of discouraging TEX from ending the next to the last line with a hyphen. Demerits are in units of badness squared, so you need to assign a rather large value to this parameter (in the thousands) for it to have any effect. Plain TEX sets \finalhyphendemerits to 5000.