Abridged Tutorial
on typesetting for fanbindings
In Scribus

Look, I know. I know. I already have 30,000 words of scribus tutorials on the internet. This was intended as a more concise & less overwhelming tutorial on how to typeset an entire (simple) book in Scribus from ao3 to pdf export.

This tutorial will not explain every menu in depth. It will start assuming you have downloaded Scribus and the linked **templates** and **scripts**. If you want more depth please consult my main tutorial & Getting Oriented guides. This tutorial will work for Scribus 1.58+

Written by Lynn notwhelmedyet in January 2026

Links

My main Scribus tutorial document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/
1vqWwJQAV0tCK3mK5w6qzjuS8zM8KDVGDaAE5nhjshh0/

My 'Getting Oriented in Scribus' document:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/
1BT6b7fl1bt4qaVQxZLxWOlPIazYfUAe4KZUnYr3Q2Yk

The github repo where I share scripts, templates and this tutorial:

https://github.com/notwhelmedyet/ScribusTypesetting/

The Scribus homepage:

https://www.scribus.net/
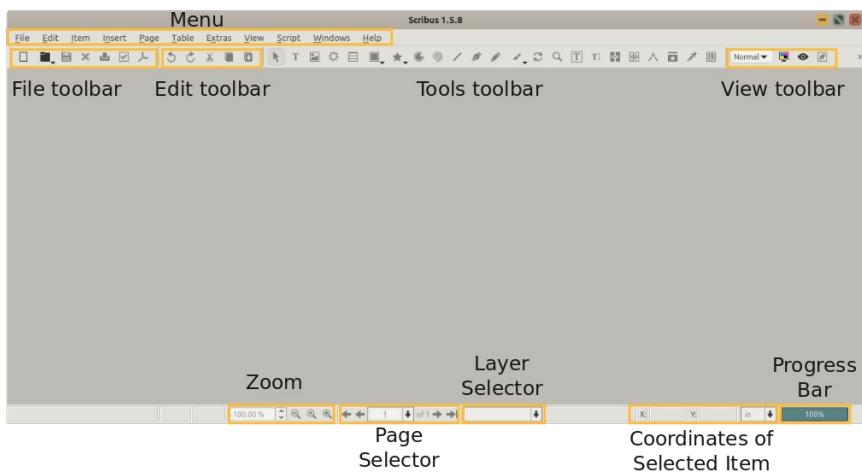
CONTENTS

Scribus Basics

Here's a screenshot of the (almost) default program layout in version 1.5.8. I hid the PDF tools toolbar to make it all fit in the screen; this is a screenshot with no files open.

Parts of the page:
- Menu: All commands for Scribus are accessible through the main menu.
- Toolbars: There are by default 5 toolbars. You can toggle visible toolbars by right clicking beside them and using the check boxes. The 'tools' toolbar is the most important.
- Zoom
- Page Selector
- Layer Selector
- Coordinates: not very important, shows coordinates of selected item
- Progress Bar: not very important. Shows Scribus's progress on the most recently requested operation.

And here is a screenshot with an open blank document, showing several types of menus that can be opened:

- The **Page** is outlined in red - all content placed on pages will be exported into your eventual PDF document. The grey space around pages is called the scratch space; anything placed in the scratch space won't be exported
- **Margins** are outlined in blue - margins are visual guides for where you plan to place content
- I have placed a **Text Frame** on the page - all text and image content in Scribus is placed in frames. The edges of the text frame appear red in the screenshot because I've selected it
- When you right click on an object/parts of the Scribus interface, you can open **context menus**. In the screenshot I've opened the text frame context menu. Context menus provide shortcuts to commands that are applicable to the object.
- I also have two **palettes** open. Palettes are windows that you can keep open while working that allow you to change settings / access tools. The two palettes open in this screenshot are the two most important:

- the **Properties** palette, which controls basic universal features of objects, such as their shape, location, color, whether they have an border etc.
- the **Content Properties** palette, which controls features specific to the selected object. In this case I have a text frame selected so it is showing the text properties palette.

Palettes can float and be freely placed on a page, as the text properties palette is in this image. They can also be docked by dragging the palette to the side of the screen and holding it there until it attaches to the "dock" area. This is what I've done with the properties palette. You can dock multiple palettes in the same location, creating a tabbed view.

OBJECTS
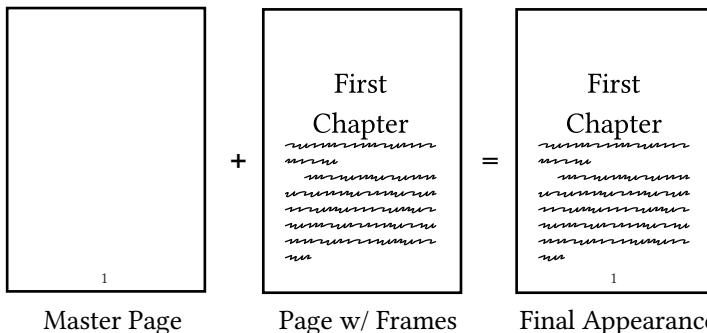
Everything on the page in Scribus is an object or within an object. For the most basic typeset, you don't have to create any objects - the templates have **Automatic Text Frames** enabled, so every page you create will have a margin-sized text frame. These text frames as chained together, so the text flows from one page to another with no extra work from you. When you want a deliberate break between frames (such as for a new chapter), you'll use *Insert > Break > Frame Break* to jump to the next frame.

In a more elaborate design you may need to insert other objects. Objects can be inserted from the **tools toolbar** (see below) or the **Insert menu.**

Objects you are most likely to need are highlighted, from left to right: text frames, image frames, shapes (click and hold to change from default rectangle), regular polygons, straight lines and curved lines (paths).

HOW PAGES & TEXT ARE STYLED

Master Page   Page w/ Frames   Final Appearance

The final appearance of a page is set by the contents of the page background/template, called a '**Master Page**', plus the contents of the page itself. Master pages are used for headers, footers, and images that you want in the background behind text.

The default template document offers a number of master page styles with different header/footer arrangements. You can edit the master pages or create new ones from *Edit > Master Pages*. You can apply master pages to page ranges from *Page > Apply Master Page* or the right click context menu on the page. Apply left page templates to even numbered pages and right page templates to odd numbered pages.

The appearance of text is set by a combination of character styles, paragraph styles and custom formatting.

Both **character styles** and **paragraph styles** can be used to set the font, size and color of text. New character styles should be used if you want to consistently style individual letters but not the whole paragraph, such as having differently colored initial capitals. Paragraph styles should be used for almost everything else: setting the justification, the line spacing, hyphenation and justification adjustments, indentation, and effects like bulleted lists or drop capitals. It is fine to set your font and size in the paragraph style.
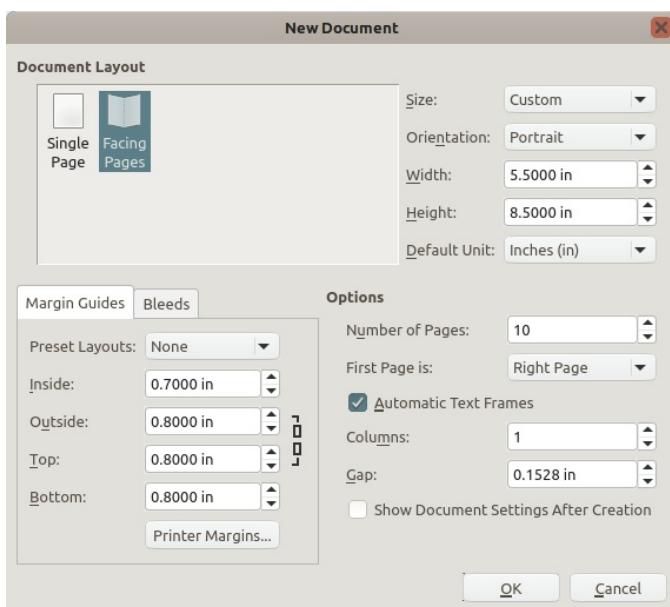
Custom formatting is when you highlight individual words or paragraphs and apply formatting via the text palette. Use this only for mockups or to make adjustments you won't need repeated elsewhere.

Starting Your Document

I highly recommend starting from a template. Pick the template with your chosen page size, for your first typeset ignore the "Extras" versions, which have more styles. Save a copy of the template file for your new project and you're good to go.

However, if you really want to make your own from scratch:

- Facing Pages
- Custom size
  - For half (folio) letter enter 5.5 x 8.5 inches
  - For quarto letter enter 4.25 x 5.5 inches
  - For half A4 use the size drop-down to select A5
  - For quarto A4 use the size drop-down to select A6
- Select your preferred units
- Select first page right
- Click the checkbox for automatic text frames
- Set whatever margins you like. I recommend a minimum of 0.5 inches on all sides, but pick whatever looks good to you aesthetically.

MY RECOMMENDED WORKFLOW

In traditional book design, there were/are three major steps in taking a book from manuscript to printer.

- The book designer sets up the design and layout for the book (based on the specifications of the editor)
- The editor(s) gets the book ready for typesetting
- The typesetter is handed the finished design and text and combines them into the print-ready book.

I find that Scribus works best with a workflow that mimics this. First you set up the design for the book based on a mockup. You do print tests and make sure you like the design. Then you prep your text for import. *Then* you import the text and do typesetting: applying your styles, master pages and any custom formatting to the text from beginning to end.

Anything you do to the text will possibly shift the flow of the linked text frames after it. What you don't want to do is spend a lot of time finalizing where frame breaks are, fixing justification, places images and then make some page that misaligns all those carefully placed elements.

SCRIPTS

This tutorial will make use of several python scripts I and others have written to automate things in Scribus. You don't have to use scripts, but they are a huge time-saver and one of the main benefits of Scribus IMO.

When the tutorial says to use a script, go to *Script > Execute Script* and select the right script file. it's probably easiest to download all the scripts in the github repo and place them in a single folder.
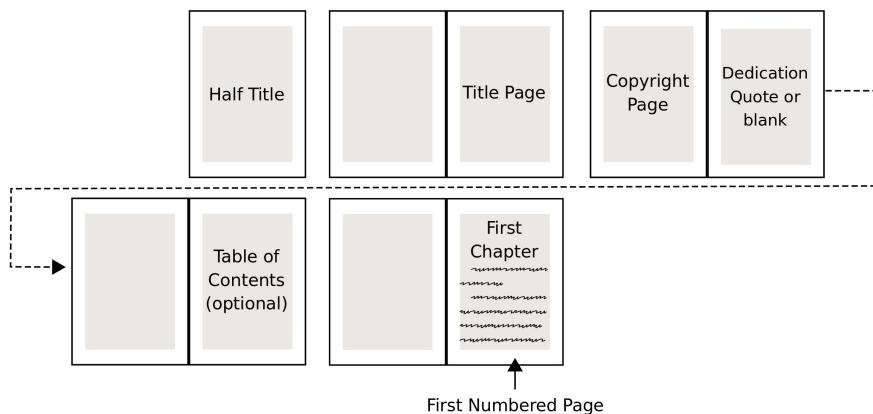
You can tell Scribus where to look for all scripts by going to *File > Preferences > Paths* and setting the default script path.

My scripts will give prompts to guide you through their settings.

Make the Mockup

Front Matter

Books don't start page 1 on Chapter 1. Instead, there's a expected sequence of "front matter" prior to the start of the first chapter. The typical sequence goes like this:

First Numbered Page

- The half title shows only the work title
- The title page is more decorated. It may be a two page spread. Either way, it shows the work title, the author name(s) and possibly the binder's logo.
- The copyright page is the only front matter page on the left. It describes the source of the work, when this copy was published, and you might include typesetting information (called a colophon) or original work tags etc.
- The following page can be blank or have a dedication or relevant quotation.
- If a table of contents is included, that will generally be next. I only include a table of contents for anthologies and collections but ymmv
- The first chapter starts on the next right hand page.

If you're using my templates, a base sequence of front matter is already included! Simply replace the filler text with your desired text, and then edit the relevant styles to suit your preferences. If you don't want a TOC, erase the text on those pages and click "delete" till the first chapter moves up to the first blank right hand page. Feel free to go fancy for the title page - the title page and chapter page designs should feel complementary.

You don't have to style the front matter first. It's fine to leave it to last if you prefer, just leave the placeholder pages so you know how much space it needs.

If you're starting from scratch, I recommend starting with the sequence listed above. You can set individual page frames to be centered using the Text properties palette. Go to *Columns & Text Distances > Vertical Alignment*. Remember to insert frame breaks between these pages.

STYLES

To style your front matter & the rest of the document, You'll need styles. Again, I highly recommend pulling the starting styles from my template. Even if you used your own document, you can import styles. Go to Styles > Import (bottom left) and select a template document. By default it will import all styles, click okay.

Once we have the styles, we can customize them to your preferences & the design for this work.

If you really really want to create all your styles from scratch, you'll at a minimum want to make:

- Use Default Paragraph Style for your normal indented paragraphs
- Scene Start - inherit from default, but without the indent
- Chapter Start - inherit from default but with no indent. You might add some "space before" to automatically add whitespace between the chapter title and the text or use the Paragraph Effects to add a drop cap.

- Ornaments - Centered, no-indent ornamental breaks. Might be set in a ornament font (or not, if you plan to use a * or other special character as your break). Pick what glyph codes to your chosen ornament.
- Page numbers/headers - generally a bit smaller than the default, not indented. Could be centered or right/left align. It's fine to style these by hand if you're not using scripts to generate headers. This is the only style I don't align to the baseline grid.
- Title - Fancy font. Big. Often, but not exclusively, centered
- Chapter Title - Probably a fancy font. Smaller than title, bigger than default
- Copyright Page - I generally go much smaller than my body text..

## (A Quick Sidebar on Typographic Norms)
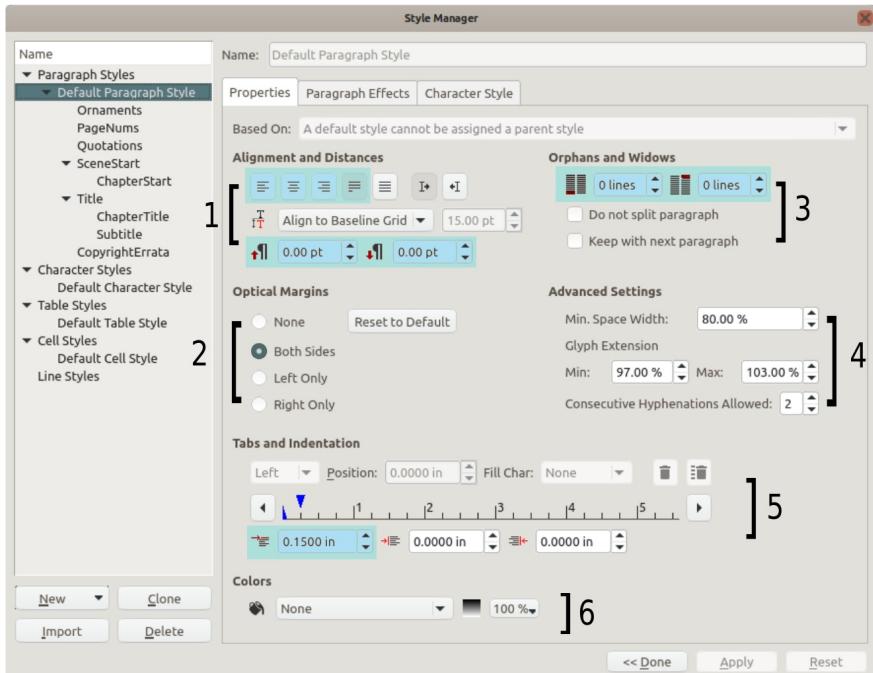
You don't have to follow typographic norms. They are guidelines, not laws. The most important thing is that you like your book and can read it.

However, following certain norms will make a book look more "bookish". I followed all of these norms while making the default styles and you might want to keep them in mind:

- Body text justified left with a small indent at start of paragraph
- No extra spaces between body paragraphs
- The first line of chapter & scene are not indented
- Keep # of characters per line between 45 to 75
- Whitespace between lines is generally 1.2-1.5x the size of the body font. Using the baseline grid for alignment is best practice.
- Using a small number of fonts will make the work look more "classic". Usually I recommend no more than 3: A title font (which can be used for headers, chapter titles, page numbers), a main body font and a ornament font for scene breaks.
- You might add another font for decorated drop capitals.
- Don't hyphenate more than 2 lines in a row and don't split words smaller than 6 characters with hyphenation.

USING THE STYLES MENU

I've highlighted the most important parts of the styles menu for a beginner to edit below. I'll describe settings used for the default style first:

1. Justified left (standard for books), align to baseline grid, no space above or below
2. Optical margins: both sides (allows punctuation to rest in the margins)
3. No automatic widow/orphan control
4. Min space width: 80%, glyph extension 97-103% (this gives the program flexibility to keep the spacing of justified text normal looking), max of 2 consecutive hyphens
5. First line indent, 0.15-0.25 inches
6. Color: black
• Set the font & size in the "character style" tab.
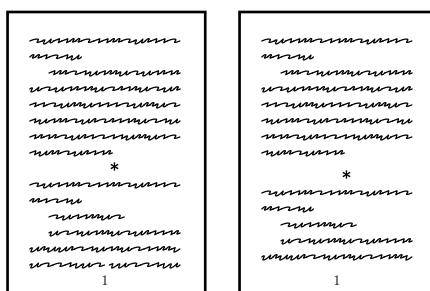
For styles like the ChapterStart, ChapterTitle, Title etc. you may use

the "space above" or "space below" to set how much whitespace there is on the page. this saves you resizing text frames to make the text start where you want it, or having to manually add lots of newlines.

Styles can be "based on" other styles. Those styles will then inherit all the settings from the parent style except where you override them. I use this to give the ChapterStart the same no-indent as the SceneStart style, but then add the drop capital to the ChapterStart. Settings you've overridden won't be changed when you alter them in the parent style.

(A Quick Sidebar on The Baseline Grid)

Text set on the baseline grid is like text written on lined paper - all text goes to the next line. Compare the two examples below, one set on the baseline grid, and the other with set fixed linespacing:

Because the example on the left uses a baseline grid, the text keeps the same spacing after the ornament. The other style gets out of sync after the ornament. This can also happen after titles, headers, images etc.

To set your baseline grid spacing, go to *File > Document Setup > Guides*. You want to set your baseline grid spacing to your text size multiplied by 1.2-1.5. You can type literal math in that and any size selector. (ex: try 1.2x11 pt and hit tab to calculate)
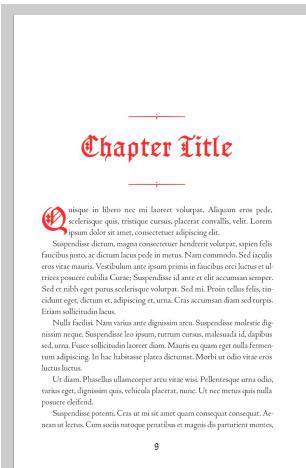
For the offset, it's nice to start at the top of the page. Set the offset to be your top margin (ex: 0.5 in). Include the units and hit tab.

Chapter Page Design
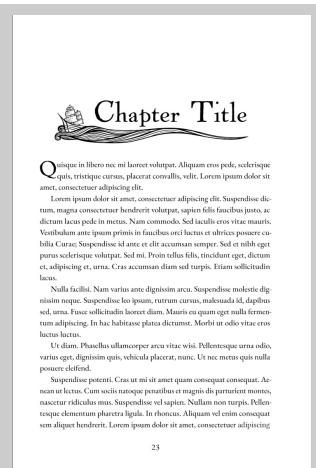
After styling the front matter, you want to think about your chapter page design. I've made a secondary guide on chapter page designs - it's the most decorative page you're likely to repeat many times, so you want to make it as efficiently as possible to apply while typesetting.

I've identified a few classes of chapter page designs, in order of increasing complexity. For your first book, I recommend a Type A or Type B design.

A
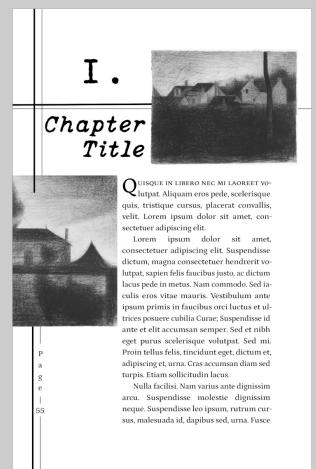
B

C

D, E, F

The types are:

- **Type A:** Pure typography - set everything (including colors and spacing) via character and paragraph styles. The only extra work you do while iterating through your chapters is inserting the frame breaks (and maybe applying a master page. It's traditional to not have a header on chapter start pages)
- **Type B:** Typography with graphic elements on the master page. You can put pictures on the master page and they'll go in the background. As long as they don't interrupt the text flow, it's just as easy to implement as Type A
- **Type C:** Images on the page that text flows around. These images are positioned on the mockup page. Temporarily move your main text frame off the page. Copy all the images. Use the **scrapbook** to place them on each chapter page as you iterate through the text.
- **Type D, E, F:** Text elements (titles, numbers, etc) moved to their own frames, in addition to potential images with text wrapping and or/ fiddly things you need to style per chapter. The text frames/graphical elements are placed via the scrapbook, then text is moved to the frames using my **TextToFrames.py** script.

You can make Type B look plenty fancy! I won't cover the details of implementing type C, D, E, and F in this guide.

(A Quick Sidebar on Planning Your Design)

You'll want to take into account a number of things about the work itself when you plan your design:

- Does the story have chapter titles? How long are they?
- Do you want the design to have chapter numbers?
- What is the tone of the story? Are there any recurring visual elements you can pull from?
- What is the era of the story? Can you find fonts that match that era/ tone?

You might also need to think about certain practicalities:

- Your printer 's capabilities! Your printer probably can't print to the edge of the page, so you'd need to trim to get "full bleed graphics"
- Is your printer capable of printing color? Do you want the cost of color printing? I often print the black and white text with a laser printer and reprint only the colored elements on a inkjet. This is the most annoying method of printing known to man and I don't recommend you do it for your first book (but it's cost efficient!).
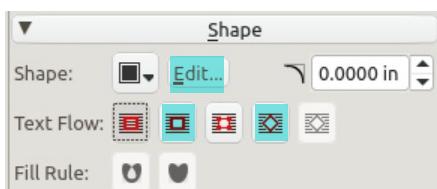
Image Basics

Placing an image: To place an image frame on a page or master page, use the image tool in the toolbar, *Insert > Image* in the main menu or the keyboard shortcut I. You can double click the image frame or right click and select *Content > Get Image* to select your image.

Resizing an image: Select the image frame and open the Content Properties Palette. Under Scaling, you can select either "free scaling" to set the size or use "scale to frame" to have the image adjust to fit the frame size.

If you right click on the image, you can use *Image > Adjust Frame to Image* or *Image > Adjust Image to Frame* to quickly size the frame to the current image size or the image to the current frame size.

Text Flow around images & other objects: Select the object, then go to Shape under the Properties Palette. Select *text flow around object* or *text flow around contour line*. The "contour line" option allows you to set a flow that doesn't match the object shape. Set the contour line by clicking "Edit" next to Shape, then "edit contour line" at the bottom of the edit window. You can move the nodes to change the contour shape.
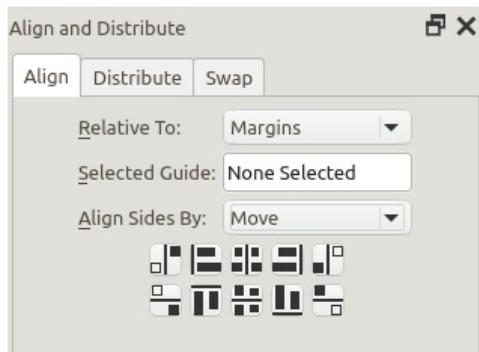
Text only flows around objects on top of the text. Use the 'Level'

arrows at the top of the properties palette to move your image or object above your text. Images on master pages will always be beneath the page text.

Align & Distribute

The **Align & Distribute palette**e can be used to set the location of objects relative to the page margins or other objects. Open it via *Windows > Align & Distribute* or using the right click context menu next to the toolbars. Hover over the options to see a tooltip that explains what each one does.

Colors

You can set the background and outline color of an object under the Colors tab of the Properties palette.

You can set the color of text by setting a color in the paragraph or character style.

There are a limited set of colors available by default. You can add colors to your color set under *Edit > Colors and Fills*. Use the Add option to add a individual color or the *Merge Color Sets* option to add a set.

To add a color from an image, use the eyedropper in the tools toolbar and click on the place in the image where the color appears.

PRINTING TESTS & FINAL EXPORT

Before finalizing any design, you want to print a test if at all possible. It is hard to guess what margins & text sizes will look like just staring at a screen and it's really annoying to print 200 pages of a book and *then* realize you dislike the font.

First, export a PDF of the file:

- Go to *File > Export > Save as PDF*
- The **Preflight Verifier** will pop up with anything it thinks might export poorly, like low resolution images, cut off text, missing characters etc. Scroll through this window for any flagged errors & see if they're fixable/worth fixing. Otherwise you can click Ignore Errors to continue.
- In the **Save as PDF** window:
    - Make sure all pages are being exported & name your file
    - Unless you're having issues you don't really have to change any other settings for home printing.
- If you are having issues (quality/fonts not rendering correctly):
- Check the image compression settings under General. I leave it at maximum quality.
- Switch to the Fonts tab & check your fonts. There are a few different modes for including fonts. The options are to embed, subset or outline your fonts.
    - *Embed* includes a full copy of the font with the PDF
    - *Subset* includes only the information on the glyphs you actually used. Scribus will do this by default for any fonts with huge numbers of glyphs.
    - *Outlining* will turn all your text into pictures; if the font is in some way incompatible with your printer and won't print right, outlining is usually the solution.

Exporting will give you the pages in sequential order (1,2,3 etc.) on your chosen page size. You can print test like that (they'll fill only part of a normal printer page) or you can test imposing the text →

Imposition

Imposing is the process of taking pages in sequential order and reordering them into signatures that can be folded and sewn into a book. Scribus does not offer imposition & that's fine. Good imposition is done in a standalone program.

I recommend using either:

https://momijizukamori.github.io/bookbinder-js/

or

https://sithel.github.io/vip/

to impose your document. Both programs are written by Renegade community members; see which user interface you find more appealing and follow the provided instructions.

Preparing the Text

Now that your design is finalized and you've print tested, it's time to prepare the text for import. This workflow is specifically for ao3 html downloads. If you're using anything else, I recommend importing your text as rtf formatted and applying all the styles manually. Or writing a script of your own to preprocess the text!

First download the source document from ao3 as html. Next, look through the document and see what the author used for scene breaks. If they used something besides a horizontal rule, you'll need to pop the html file open in Notepad or a similar text editor and find one of the scene break lines. Copy the whole line, like <p align="center">*</p>

Now open Scribus and use *Script > Execute Script > ImportCleanerScribus.py*

The script will walk you through setting some settings. First it will ask what character you're using as your replacement scene break. Look through the ornament font you're using and write down what letter/character the ornament you want is coded to.

Next, the script will ask you whether you want to use the default settings or set your own. By default the script will:

- look for horizontal rules as the fic's scene breaks to swap for our break ornament
- Not change any dashes
- treat consecutive multiple paragraph breaks as a scene break (but not insert an ornament)
- Not change any straight quotes to typographic quotes
- keep tags and metadata at top

You can enter the advanced settings to change any of these options. If you customize settings, it will ask you:

- Enter the html code for the breaks used in this fic
- Whether it should change dashes/spaced hyphens, and if so, to what
- Whether/how to handle double paragraph breaks (should those have ornaments, no ornament, or ignored completely because the fic was double spaced)
- Whether to swap quotes to typographic quotes
- Whether you want to keep the fic tags and metadata

After you've made your selections, you will have to choose the source html file and the script will run.

It saves a processed copy of the file, along with a log file. The log file will have notes about any potential issues you might need to clean up by hand.

Script Settings

Settings selected:
scenebreak:
breakcharacter: @
ficDoubleSpaced: False
ornamentAllBreaks: False
LeaveDashesAlone: True
LeaveQuotesAlone: True
KeepTags: True

The output will be saved as ProcessedInput.html. Processing notes will be logged in ScribusInputLog.txt.
These files will be overwritten when you next run this script!
Please check your file before importing into Scribus & save a copy if needed

OK

Chapter Numbers

By default, AO3 names chapters without author-provided names "Chapter One", "Chapter Two" etc. If you want to list the chapter numbers in a different format or you want to display both chapter numbers and chapter names, I've written a second script you can run on the output of the previous script. Run **chapNumScribus.py**

The script will ask:

- whether you want to replace the current chapter titles with chapter numbers or add them in addition to the chapter titles
- What format you want chapter numbers in
- Whether you want to insert an ornament character between or after your chapter number and title

Run this script on the output of the ImportCleaner script. This script is poorly optimized. It may break on very large files (sorry). and will take a minute or three to run. Please be patient.

Check the Text

If you want to do spellcheck or a grammar check on the file before importing it, you can open a copy of your processed file in Libreoffice or another word processor and do a spellcheck at this point. Also check the log from the import script for any potential issues.

And that's it! It took a few pages to explain, but the script can process your text really fast! If you're doing an anthology, you can also use the **AnthologyCleaner.py** script to process them all at once into one file. Unfortunately I don't have a chapter numbering script that works with anthologies (yet).

Typesetting

Now that you've finalized your design and cleaned up your source document, we're almost ready to typeset. There's two more quick things to do first.

- Save a copy of your design. Delete any dummy chapter text.
- Set our "substitute fonts". Scribus will use this to set all the italic, bold and bold italics in our document to the right font on import.
  - Go to *File > Document Setup > Fonts*. There will be four subtabs. Click the Font Substitutions tab.
  - If there are entries for Bold, Italic and Bold Italic, set them to the body font you're using. If not, don't worry, Scribus will prompt you to set them when you import the file.

Import the Text

Click into the text frame where the chapter header used to be till you see the blinking cursor. Then right click and use *Content -> Append Text*.

Append text will insert our text at the end without deleting the nicely formatted front matter.

Find your formatted input HTML document. Scribus should automatically switch the Importer to HTML files when you select the HTML document, but if not, select it in the drop-down. The encoding should be UTF-8. Make sure Import Text Only is **not** toggled, or it won't store our styles.

Save your file and close it. Then reopen. (The Styles window doesn't show correctly immediately after importing for me and needs to be restarted so you can see the new HTML import styles).

Now open the styles window. We're going to swap the imported HTML styles for your existing styles. It's very easy. Select a html style and hit delete. Scribus will ask what style you want to substitute.

Use these substitutions:

> HTML_h2 -> Chapter Titles
> HTML_h3 -> Chapter Start
> HTML_h4 -> Scene Start
> HTML_h5 -> Ornament
> HTML_default -> Default Paragraph Style
> HTML_p -> Default Paragraph Style
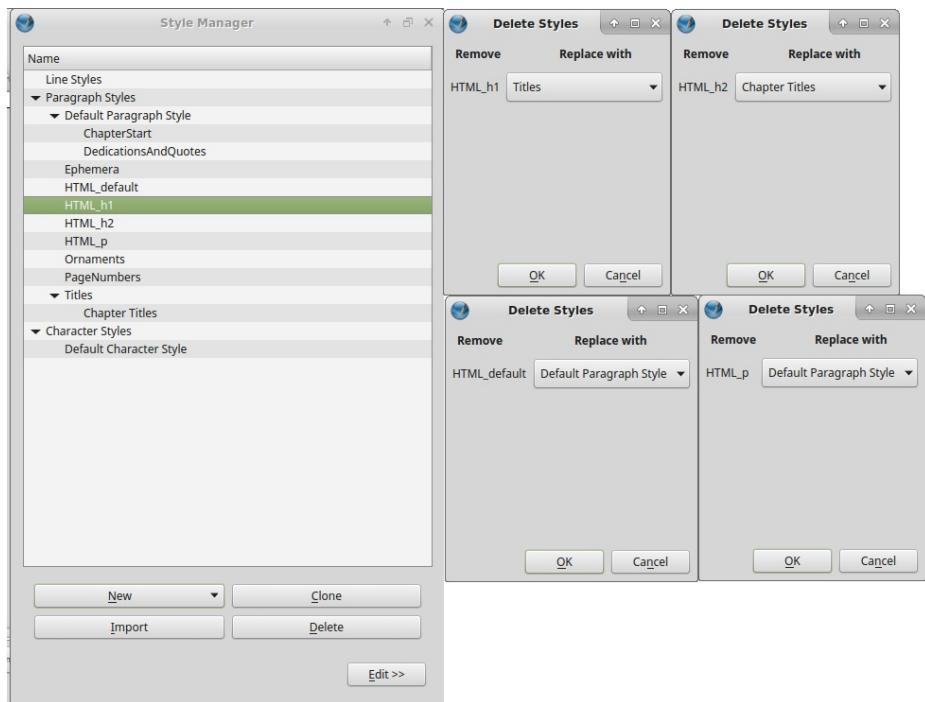
if you used the Chapter Numbers script, also convert

> HTML_h6 -> Chapter Numbers
> HTML_h1 -> Chapter Title Ornaments
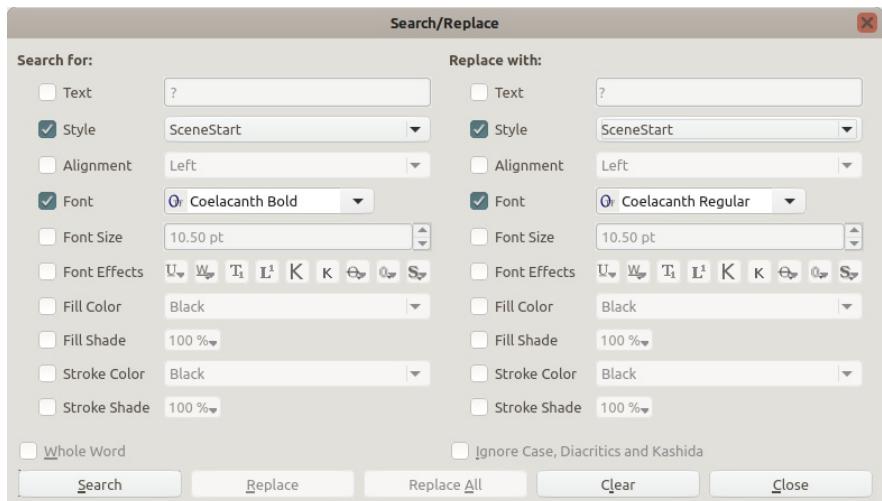
(if you didn't use the Chapter Numbers script, convert h1 to the Title style) You may have to select *Extras > Update Document* to see the new styles properly.

Fixing Excess Bold Text

Sometimes, when importing from HTML, Scribus will "helpfully" add bold to all the headers. That would be great if they were actual headers and not our non-header coding. If your chapter starts and scene starts are unecessarily bolded, we can fix this using Search/Replace.

- Open *Edit > Search/Replace*
- In Search, select your SceneStart style and replace it with the same style but the no-bold version of your body font
- Do the same thing for ChapterStart and any other unwanted bold styles.

This is very annoying. If there was supposed to be italics in the first paragraph of your scene/chapter you could lose it via search/replace and would have to add it back manually.

I'm looking into a replacement for HTML importing to avoid this problem but I haven't found anything more generally convenient yet.

Iterate Through Document

Now it's time to skim through the body text and make any necessary changes. There are three things I'm generally doing here: applying Chapter Page Designs, looking at justification and widow/orphan control.

Applying Chapter Page Designs

Beginning with the first page of the first chapter, every time you reach a new chapter you will want to:

- Insert one or two frame breaks. Click on the end of the last paragraph of the previous chapter. Hit enter. Then hit ctrl-enter to insert a frame break. (does not apply to first chapter)
- Unlink the text frames and cut text. This speeds up the program and stops any changes you make from applying to the previously finalized chapters by accident. Go to *Item > Text Frame Links >Unlink Text Frames and Cut Text*
  - I've set a keyboard shortcut for Unlink Frames and Cut Text because I use it a lot. You can set custom keyboard shortcuts via *File > Preferences > Keyboard Shortcuts*
- Apply your chapter start master page, if applicable
- Insert items from the scrapbook, if applicable (only for chapter styles C-F)
- Use the **TextToFrames.py** script to move text to text frames, if applicable (only for chapter styles D-F)
- Do any fiddly bits, like adjusting the text flow around a drop cap or coloring text (style F only)
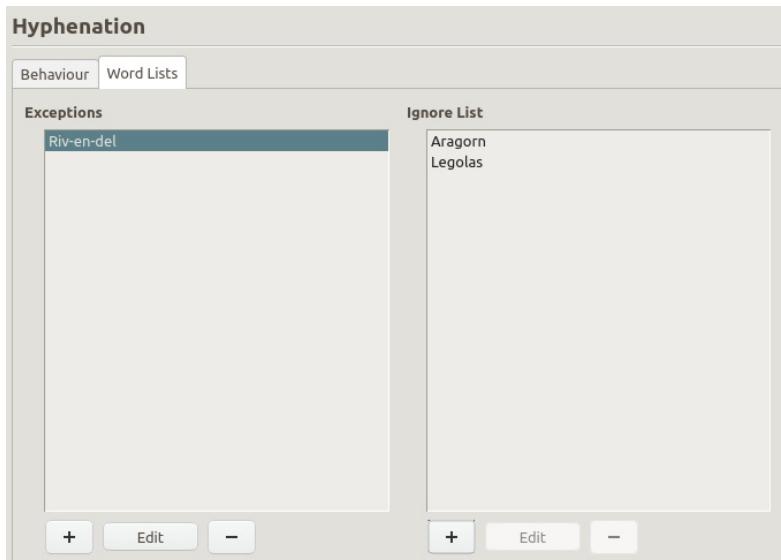
Justification/Hyphenation

Scribus is pretty good at justifying text, especially since we gave it some

generous settings to stretch/shrink word spacing and glyph sizes a tiny amount to equalize space. But if you have a big font, a tiny page or really big words, you may see some uncomfortable gaps. The best option to deal with whitespace is hyphenation:
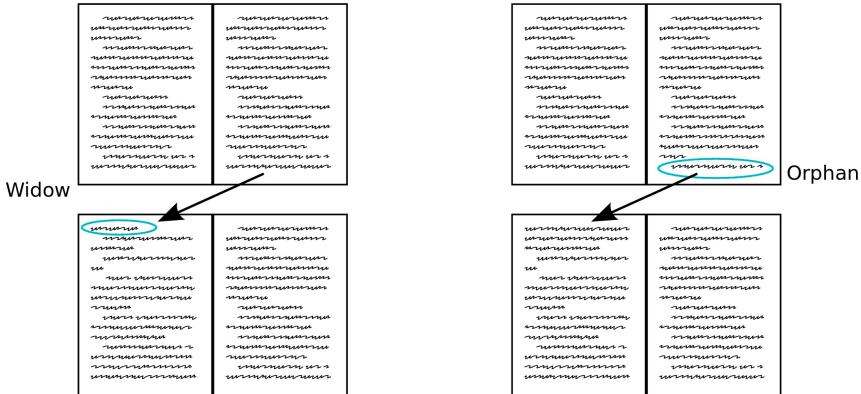
- You can apply hyphenation to the entire chapter by clicking the first frame of the chapter and selecting *Extras > Hyphenate Text*
- You can dehyphenate any word or paragraph that looks bad hyphenated by selecting that word/paragraph and then using *Extras > Dehyphenate* text.
- Scribus can be very annoying about this. There's no way to undo dehyphenating so if you thought you had a single word selected but you triple clicked by accident, it will dehyphenate the entire chapter. I recommend saving frequently.

It looks best if you don't hyphenate proper nouns. You can tell Scribus not to do that by adding common names in your fic to the Hyphenation Exception list. Go to *File > Preferences > Hyphenator* and click the *Word Lists* tab. You can insert items into the Ignore List using the plus button at the bottom.

Widow/Orphan Control

Widows and orphans are the typography terms for when a little bit of text from a longer paragraph gets stuck on one side of a page turn. They look like this:

Widow

Orphan

The advice I've seen is that orphans are acceptable (you can have the first line of a paragraph before a page turn) but widows are not (try very hard not to have the last line of a long paragraph all alone after a page turn.

Opinions vary. Some people avoid all widows and orphans. Some people don't care. Some people try to avoid split paragraphs even on the same spread.

There are 3 ways to get rid of widows and orphans:

• **Automatic widow and orphan control**. This "Keep Together" setting will make Scribus move the whole paragraph as a unit rather than let it be split. I hate the way this looks, because it can leave a ton of white space at the bottom of the page. YMMV! You might be fine with this.

• Small **changes to the kerning, word spacing or glyph extension** of the two page spread before the widow/orphan to either pull

everything back onto the previous page or stretch it out so there's at least 2 lines on each side of the split. To make this easier, I've made styles called AStretchDefault and AShrinkDefault that inherit the default paragraph style but with more/less stretching. They're included in my Extras templates and you can import them into your document using *Styles > Import.*

- In combination with stretching/shrinking, you might hyphenate or dehyphenate just the two page spread to pull the text in or stretch it.
- You can **shrink the text frames** for both pages of the spread by one line. The templates by default have a guideline at the bottom of the page 1 line up from the bottom. If you have *Page > Snap to Guides* turned on, it is quick and easy to drag the text frame one line shorter.
  - This sounds like it would be very noticeable, but especially if you don't have bottom page numbers, it's pretty subtle. This is a common choice in commercial bindings.

You might not be able to get rid of all widows/orphans. Especially if the author loves 1 and 2 line paragraphs there may simply be too many 2 line paragraphs in a row to fix them all. My condolences. It will be fine.

Set Sections/Page Numbers

You want the first numbered page of your document to be the first page of the first chapter. You can set this up in Sections.

- Find the document page number of the start of the first chapter.
- Go to *Document Setup > Sections*
- Change *From* from 1 to the document page number of your first chapter.

You can also use sections to set lettered or roman numeral page numbers on any appendices, prefaces, etc.

Table of Contents

If you want a table of contents for your document, you will generate that after all the body text is finalized & the page numbers are corrected as described above. If you're using my templates, I've already done everything prior to the setUpTOC script.

- Right click on the text frame you want to use for your TOC change the text frame name in the Properties palette. Pick something memorable, like TOC.
- Set up the TOC in *Document Setup*
- First go to the *Document Item Attributes* tab. Create a new entry with the name TOC. You can leave all the fields blank except the name.
- Go to the *Table of Contents* tab. Click "Add" to create a new TOC.
- Set the Item Attribute name to the one we just made, the destination frame to the one you renamed, and the paragraph style to your TOC style. Select whether you want the page numbers before or after the chapter name.
- Use the script **setUpTOC.py** to create TOC entries for all your chapter names (or work titles)
- Select *Extras > Generate Table of Contents* to generate the table of contents.

The Table of Contents is just plain text that's been generated. You can style or edit it any way you like. However, if you have to regenerate the table, all your custom formatting will be overwritten.

TOC styles rely on tabulators to set the spacing where the TOC inserted a tab. I find tabulators very confusing. If you do too, you can view some example TOC styles in my TOCStyles file. You can import any of those styles into your file using the Styles import window.

If you want to style either the chapter number of chapter title differently (a different font, a different color, etc.) or you picked a style from the TOCStyles document that relies on having an initial tab at the start of each line, you can run my **StyleTOC.py** script to set that up.

You'll need to first create your character style that will be applied to part of the line.

Running Headers

If your design calls for content in the header(s) of the book that changes per work or per title (chapter title, work name, work author, etc.) you can use the **runningHeadersScribus.py** to set that up at the end.

First, make sure all the pages where you want a running header have a master page applied that has a text frame for that header.

The text frame for the headers must be renamed something including the word "Header". The template master pages already have this. The script will walk you through the following options:

- Whether it should delete previously made headers on this run. This is an option so that you can delete extra headers if you make a mistake in generating them, but still have the option to create headers on the left & rerun the script to create headers on the right.
- What paragraph style to look for as the source of the headers
- What paragraph style to use to style the headers
- What side page you want to put the headers on

Whether you should append this new header text to whatever is in the text frame on the master page, or ignore that text. This option is mostly useful if you want a header of the format: *Page Number | Author Name*, which is what I've used for this tutorial.

After you have generated your headers and you're happy with them, you should open the master page templates the headers came from and delete those text boxes.

The script makes an instance of the text box copied onto each applicable page, so the ones on the master pages are no longer needed (and are annoying if they contained text).

Splitting & Merging Large Documents

If your source document is very large, you may find Scribus lags a lot and is annoying. This will depend on your computer specs.

You can plan ahead for this by splitting big html source files into 2 or 3 sections. Make copies of your finished design files and import the text separately into each of them.

If you didn't notice the lag until after you've loaded the document, that's okay too. Save one or more copies of your file, depending on how many splits you want to make. Say you want to split it in thirds. First figure out how many chapters you want in each split.

- Open the first document and right click on the chapter text frame.
- Go to *Content > Edit with Story Editor*.
- Delete all chapters after your first split point. Save a copy.
- Repeat with the other files, deleting the chapters you don't want in each file.

When you iterate through your files, make sure your pages keep their left/right/left alternating between files. If File 1 ends on a left page, File 2 must start on a right page.

Set your sections for the first document as described on page 26. You can set the sections for the other documents manually, or you can use the **renumberSplitPages.py** script to do it automatically.

After you export your files (see page 16 for export instructions), merge the PDFs together using a PDF merge tool before imposing.

That's It!

You've finished your first Scribus typeset. Export the file & use an imposer to get it ready to print.

Bonus: Keyboard Shortcuts

I love keyboard shortcuts! In Scribus you can customize any of the keyboard shortcuts, or add shortcuts for (almost) any task you can get to from the menu.

There is a guide to the default shortcuts on the Scribus wiki:

https://wiki.scribus.net/canvas/Keyboard_Shortcuts_by_Function

To set your own shortcuts, go to *Preferences > Keyboard Shortcuts*. To add or change a shortcut, click on the action in the list then click the *Set Key* button. Type your desired shortcut.

I add the following shortcuts:

- Unlink text frame and cut text (**ctrl-U**)
- Manage Master Pages (**ctrl-T**)
- Apply Master Page (**ctrl-M**)
- Hyphenate text (**ctrl-H**)
- Edit Styles (**ctrl-P**) - I first delete the shortcut for Print
- Dehyphenate Text (**ctrl-D**) - I first delete the shortcut for Duplicate