

## Type on a Curve

**S**ETTING TYPE ALONG A CURVE is a task most designers encounter at one time or another. If you think our state-of-the-art digital typesetting tools make this as simple as placing type on a horizontal baseline, think again! Setting type on a

curve creates spacing and kerning issues that need to be addressed on line-by-line basis – sometimes letter by letter.

Placing curved baseline alters relationship between characters in unpredictable ways. Most often, overall spacing of your type may become too open when placed on a curve. If this happens, reduce the tracking of the whole piece of text as needed until the desired spacing and readability are achieved.

Another common problem with curved text is that the spacing between certain letter combinations will become unbalanced in relationship to the rest of type. To fix

this, adjust the kerning between the combinations in question until the spacing is correct.

Sometimes, even tweaking the tracking and kerning won't be enough to give you exactly the right result. In these cases it's worth it to set the problematic characters separately from the rest of the text, allowing for more flexibility in placement.

Setting type along a curve makes a strong graphic statement. By paying careful attention to these seemingly minor details, your curved type will remain even in color, attractive and readable.



1. This type is correctly spaced, as long as it stays on a straight horizontal baseline. 2. When the same type is placed on a curve, the spacing becomes too open and uneven. 3. Reducing the tracking improves the overall spacing, but there are still some uneven letter combinations. 4. Consistent spacing is finally achieved by adjusting the kerning between problematic letter pairs. Spacing has been reduced between the EW, IT and TY and increased between the YO.

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