Essential Solutions for Page Design Problems
# Script Letters that Don't Connect
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In this lesson, we're going to take a look at a design problem that is easy to miss or overlook.

In the hobby of digital scrapbooking, we have so many fun ways we can dress up a scrapbook page. From the plethora of digital papers we can pick from, to the boat loads of elements we can use, we have so many ways we can be creative with our designs.

Another area we can have a lot of fun with is fonts. There are so many different kinds of fonts we can choose to use on our pages.

Better Castile  Abril Fatface  CAFERUS NORMAL  Dear Jane  ELOISIE
Josefin Sans  Israquella  HANDLER  Girl Friday  Fairwater Script
KG Always a Good Time  Limon Script  KADISOKA SANS
Nunito  Nickainley  Little Dinosaur  KILN SERIF  Money Penny Script
Kingbirds  Cambridge  Esmeralda Script
Beloved Script  SO MANY FONTS  Aleo Regular
Forever Grateful  Chunk Five
Alana  Beautiful Day  Hougbon Script  Glamour Brush  BETTERFLY
Road Crew  Questa Grande  Baleno Handi  Outfitter Script
GarageGothic  Harietta  MOTHER BURGER  KADISOKA HAND  Grad Regular  Omnes
Friday Vibes  EUPHORIA SANS  Anglice  CAFERUS SLIM  BEBAS NEUE  Adelicia Script

Fonts can be broken down into many different categories. You've probably heard of terms like serif, sans serif, handwritten, script, and monospaced, just to name a few. But, there are two basic categories I want to focus on: fonts with letters that aren't supposed to connect, and fonts with letters that are.

Here's a visual example of fonts with letters that aren't supposed to connect. These letters don't have the tails or the connectors that would tie one letter to the next. These are **not** the fonts we are concerned with.

Questa Grande          CALIGOR SANS

KADISOKA SANS          Big Caslon

CREAM PEACH          MANDATORY

Here's a visual example of fonts with letters that should connect. These letters have the connecting tails that bring one letter right into the next. These are the kinds of fonts we are going to focus on for this lesson.

*Adelicia Script*

*Limon Script*

*Beautiful Day Script*

*Outfitter Script*

*Cutting Regular*

*Charcuterie Cursive*

Fonts with letters that should connect are not all created equal. Font designers use their own processes and software to create the fonts they sell. This can lead us to our design problem.

## Design Problem:

The design problem we can face is that some fonts, even though they were designed to have connecting letters, the letters don't connect even though they should.

DESIGN PROBLEM:

FONTS WITH LETTERS THAT SHOULD CONNECT ARE SPACED APART

*Tracking*

## There are two reasons why this can happen:

#1. The Tracking setting is not set to 0.

Sometimes, we need to decrease or increase the Tracking setting for a previous project. Many times, in both PS and PSE, the Tracking setting will remain sticky. This means that unless you reset the Tracking setting to 0, the previous Tracking setting you used will still be in effect.

#2. Somewhere between the font design and the font installation on your computer, the letters that were designed to connect together, for unknown reasons, now don't. The font doesn't work properly.

I'm not a font design expert, so I have no idea what can cause this, but I've seen it happen on my own computer more than a few times. Now that we know why this can happen, let's talk about why this is a design problem.

## Why it's a design problem:

When you use a font that has letters that are supposed to connect but don't, the font now looks messy and disorganized. You have all of these extra tails or connectors showing without anything connecting to them and in many ways, this makes one word look like it's broken up into one letter words.

Tracking

Those spaces that shouldn't be there cause our minds to read each letter separately, instead of seeing one word. And the bigger the space between each letter, the worse this is.

Tracking

When we see words as individual letters, this causes our brains to pause, and it creates a moment of confusion or visual disconnect. Any time there is something that causes our brains to pause and think, or be confused, it detracts from the design of our pages.
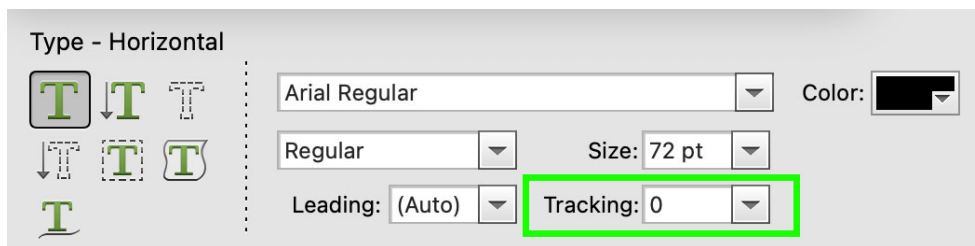
## Design Problem Solutions:

#1. Reset the Tracking to 0.

As we previously discussed, oftentimes, the reason the letters aren't connecting like they should is because our Tracking setting is set to something other than 0. So try resetting the Tracking first.
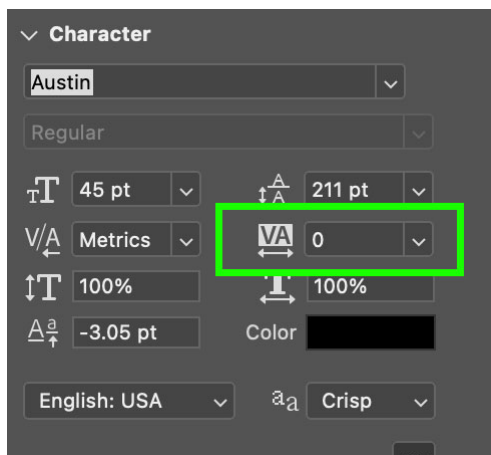
## Photoshop Elements Tracking Location:

Get the Horizontal Type tool and open the Tool Options.



## Adobe Photoshop Tracking Location:

Get the Horizontal Type tool. In the Menu Bar, choose Window > Character to open the



Character panel.

#2. If the Tracking is already set to 0, you need to reduce the Tracking until the letters connect properly.

Solution number two can come in handy when we have a font that doesn't work how it's supposed to. But getting the Tracking set correctly can sometimes be tricky. Let's look at a visual example of different Tracking scenarios.

Tracking is very important when you're dealing with fonts that have connecting letters. The Tracking needs to be just right, like you see in the good example here, where the letters connect, but don't overlap like the bad example on the right. So when you reduce the Tracking, just make sure not to take things too far so that the connections don't meet in the right place.



#3. Sometimes, a font just needs to be deleted.

If resetting the Tracking doesn't work, and if reducing the Tracking still doesn't have the letters connecting properly, the font isn't worth your time to mess with it. Just delete it from your system and find a better font to use. I've done this myself when I've come across fonts that don't work right. There are so many good fonts out there, it's ok to leave one behind.

Now that we're all on the same page about this design problem, let's look at a visual example.

**Bad Visual Example:**

Here's a page where I've used a font that has letters that should connect, but don't.

This page is very cute, but the only thing I can keep looking at is the wrong spacing between the letters of the word horizontal. My brain keeps reading the word as individual letters, and I can't look away from the word to soak up the rest of the page.

## Good Visual Example:

Here's the visual example now that I've fixed the tracking between the letters of the word horizontal. It looks MUCH better. My eyes aren't stopped by the weird spacing, so I'm able to visually enjoy the page without any confusion or distraction.

So to recap, the design problem is using a font that should have connecting letters, but the letters are too spaced apart.



**DESIGN PROBLEM:**

USING A FONT THAT SHOULD HAVE CONNECTING LETTERS, BUT THEY ARE SPACED APART

In order, the solutions to try are to reset the Tracking to 0, reduce the Tracking to connect the letters, or delete the font.



**SOLUTIONS (IN ORDER):**

1. RESET TRACKING TO ZERO
2. REDUCE THE TRACKING
3. DELETE THE FONT

Credits:
Page & Photo: Jenifer Juris
Kit: Not Today by Just Jaimee
Extras: Edge Element from Sweater Weather by Simple Pleasure Designs
Fonts: Austin, Euphoria Sans