



by Jenifer Juris

Secrets of Terrific Type

Lesson 04-02: Justification—Photoshop Elements

Now that we've covered alignment, it's time to move on to text justification.

Last time, we discussed that Alignment is how text lies between a set of margins.

This is not to be confused with Justification. Justification is when text is flush with BOTH margins, not just one.

Here is an example of a paragraph of text where one is center aligned and one is fully justified. The difference is clear and there will be times when using justified text is more advantageous.

Center

This paragraph is center aligned. Every line in this paragraph is centered between the margins.

Justified

This paragraph is fully justified. Every single line in this paragraph reaches to both margins.

Let's quickly cover the four types of Justification.

1. Justify Last Left

This has all lines of a paragraph, except the last one, fully justified. The last line will be Left Aligned.

#1. Justify Last Left

This paragraph is set to Justify Last Left. Every line in this paragraph will fully justify except for the last line. The last line will be left aligned.

2. Justify Last Centered.

Again, this has all lines of the paragraph, except the last one, fully justified. The last line is Center Aligned.

#2. Justify Last Centered

This paragraph is set to Justify Last Centered. Every line in this paragraph will fully justify except for the last line. The last line will be center aligned.

3. Justify Last Right

Just like the other two, this has all lines of the paragraph fully justified except for the last one. The last one is Right Aligned.

#3. Justify Last Right

This paragraph is set to Justify Last Right. Every line in this paragraph will fully justify except for the last line. The last line will be right aligned.

4. Justify All

With this option, all lines are fully justified.

But before we get into examples of when to use justification, let's go to PSE and take a quick look at how to justify text there.

#4. Justify All

This paragraph is set to Justify All. Every line in this paragraph will fully justify, including the last line.

Step One: Prepare the Workspace

I've already created a new document that is 12 inches by 12 inches at 300ppi with a white background.

Press the letter D to reset the Color Chips.

Get the Horizontal Type tool. In the Tool Options, click on the Tool Options Menu icon and choose Reset Tool.

Step Two: Add Type

Now, in the Tool Options, set the Font to Bodoni XT, the Size to 36 pts, and use Left Alignment.

On the document, click and drag to create a text box.

Type in a paragraph of words. To save time, I'm going to paste in words I've already typed. Don't click the checkmark just yet.

Step Three: Justify Type

Press Ctrl Shift J (Mac: Cmd Shift J) to Justify the type. Click the checkmark to commit.

Winter, spring, summer, or fall. Do you have a favorite season? Mine used to always be fall but as I get older, I find that spring and summer are becoming my two favorite seasons instead. The cold days and long nights make winter harder to enjoy. And since fall is the precursor to winter, I find I have less desire to see it arrive than before.

As you can see, when doing this, this will fully justify each line of type except for the last one. The last line of type will be Left Aligned.

This is the only built-in option we have for justifying type in PSE.

However, there are three more kinds of justification that the full version of PS gives us. And, in a way, I can share them with you.

In the downloads, I've included four templates for you to save and keep handy for future use.

Each template is named for the justification type it has. I've been able to open these documents, duplicate the type layer to a new document and have the justification settings remain in tact, even after changing the font and the size.

Let's take one quick look at how I do that.

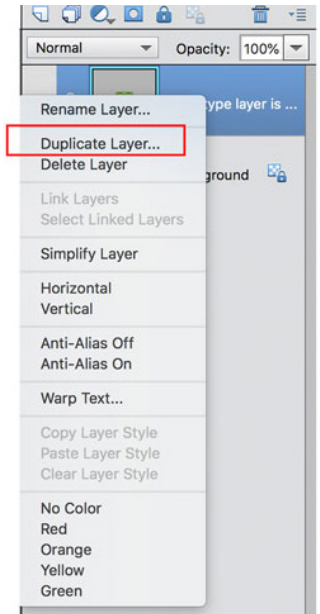
Step Four: Open Template

I've already opened the STT6B-Justification-PSE-Justify-All-Template.

This type layer is set to Justify All. Every line will be fully justified. Duplicate this layer to your current document and then change the font, size, and text box size to your needs. Don't change the alignment or it will reset the justification. There is no keyboard shortcut for Justify All.

Step Five: Duplicate Type

In the Layers panel, Right click (Mac: Ctrl click) and choose Duplicate Layer.



In the Duplicate Layer dialog box, click to open the Destination Document Drop-down box and choose the document you are working on.

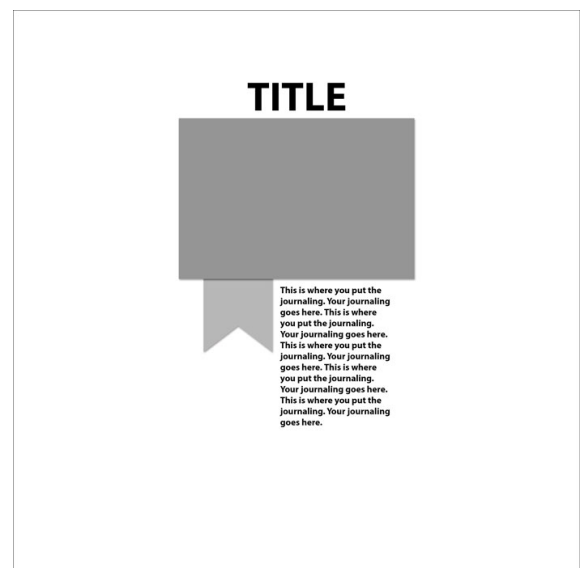
Now go to the new document and change the font, font size, and text box size to your needs.

This type layer is set to Justify All. Every line will be fully justified. Duplicate this layer to your current document and then change the font, size, and text box size to your needs. Don't change the alignment or it will reset the justification. There is no keyboard shortcut for Justify All.

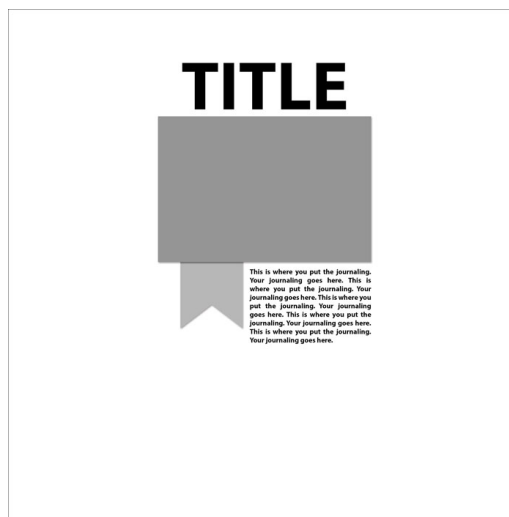
But keep in mind, this is another reason why I always recommend resetting the Type tool before you start your next project. Sometimes these settings can remain sticky and you won't be able to figure out why your text is justifying on its own.

So now that we've seen HOW to use the Justify options in PSE, let's cover a few reasons why we might want to Justify our type.

Do you remember this template from the last video? In this first version, I've used my banner shape as my implied margin on the left side of my type. But, what if I want my type to have a straight implied margin on the right side as well? Well, we can use the Justify Last Left option to do this.



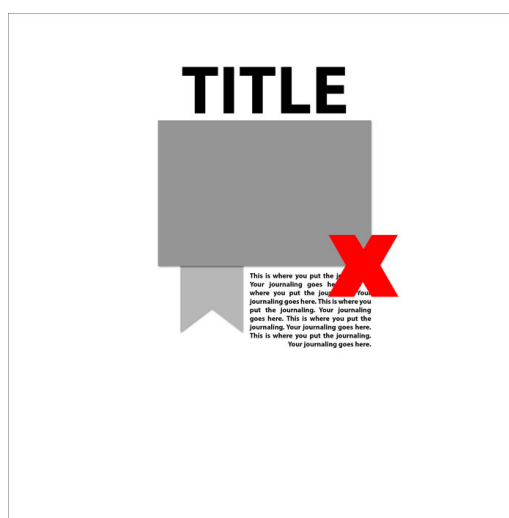
So here I've changed the text box to use Justified Last Left. My implied margin on the left is the banner, and my implied margin on the right is the right edge of the photo. I just LOVE the way this gives my design crisp, clean edges.



Let's cover a few do's and don'ts when it comes to Justifying type.

#1. Do keep Alignment rules in mind when it comes to your last line of type.

In the example we just looked at, if I had used Justify Last Right, the last line would look like it was wrong. Think about it this way, if you wouldn't have used Right Alignment here, you shouldn't use Justify Last Right either.



#2. Do be careful when using Justify All.

When using Justify All, the last line of your type can end up looking very weird if it is much shorter in length compared to the rest of the paragraph. Don't use Justify All if your last line looks like this. Change it to one of the other 3 Justify options. OR if you need to keep it Justify All, change the font size or paragraph size so that your last line has more words in it.



This paragraph is set to Justify All. This means that all lines of type will be fully justified to both margins.



This paragraph is set to Justify All. This means that all lines of type will be fully justified to both margins.

#3. Don't leave one word alone in the last line of any paragraph if it can be helped.

While this is good advice for any paragraph, whether you're justifying the type or not, it especially stands out when you have justified the type. So, if possible, change the font size or paragraph width to prevent this from happening.



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In the next video, we will take a look at our next project! We're going to create a Grid Style Postcard where we use text justification to make our design look its best!