

The Baseline Grid

Art & Design

Locking every line of text to one rhythm across columns, pages and spreads.

A horizontal grid spaced at the body leading, which every baseline snaps to. Headings, captions and images are then sized in whole multiples of that unit.

GRID UNIT

= the body leading

EVERYTHING

in whole multiples

- Text lines up across columns and across a spread.
- Space above and below a heading sums to a multiple.
- Captions at a smaller size take half-line steps.
- Images are sized so their edges land on a line.
- Back-up: type on both sides of a leaf aligns.
- It is a discipline, not an automatic improvement.

LOOK FOR IT

Body set 10/13 gives a 13-point grid, so a heading occupies 26 or 39 points including its space.

The grid exists to be broken deliberately. A full-bleed image or a display opening owes the baseline nothing.