

Laying Out Easy Read Materials



What is Easy-Read

- Easy-Read is a format designed to make information accessible to people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD).
- You can use Easy-Read for all sorts of projects!
- We don't have time to talk in-depth about writing Easy-Read right now
 - Writing Easy-Read presentation
 - One Idea Per Line guide

Getting to Know InDesign, Illustrator, and Bridge

InDesign

The screenshot displays the Adobe InDesign workspace. At the top, the menu bar includes File, Edit, Layout, Type, Object, Table, View, Window, and Help. The top toolbar shows various tools and settings, including a font size of 0 pt and a zoom level of 100%. The document window is titled "Untitled-2 @ 58% x" and features a horizontal ruler at the top and a vertical ruler on the left. The main content area contains a white rectangular frame with a blue border. Inside the frame, the ASAN logo (Autistic Self Advocacy Network) is positioned at the top. Below the logo, the text "Easy Read Edition" is displayed in a blue, italicized font. The main title "Easy Read, Made Easy:" is in a large, bold, blue font, followed by the subtitle "An Easy Read Template Showing You How ER Works" in a smaller, bold, orange font. Below the subtitle, the text "Part 1: To Start" is centered in a black font, and a blue hash symbol (#) is centered at the bottom. The bottom status bar shows the zoom level at 16.31%, the current page as "[Basic] (working)", and a "No errors" message.

File Edit Layout Type Object Table View Window Help

Advanced Adobe Stock

X: 18p2.4 W: Y: 54p0 H:

0 pt 100%

Untitled-2 @ 58% x

0 6 12 18 24 30 36 42 48 54 60 66 72 78 84 90 96 102 108 114 120 126 132 138 144 150

ASAN
AUTISTIC SELF ADVOCACY NETWORK

Easy Read Edition

Easy Read, Made Easy:
An Easy Read Template
Showing You How ER Works

Part 1: To Start

#

16.31% [Basic] (working) No errors

Illustrator

other lawyer.ai @ 19.32 % (RGB/Preview) | prosecutor.ai @ 55.02 % (RGB/Preview) | workspace 1.ai* @ 27.42 % (CMYK/Preview)

The workspace contains several illustrations: a scroll with the word 'RIGHTS' and a green checkmark; a brown briefcase; a hand holding a person; and a hand. A blue dashed box highlights an artboard labeled '03 - Artboard 15' containing a hand holding a person. A blue dashed box with an 'X' is also visible in the lower-left area.

Properties | Layers | Libraries

Artboard Exit

Transform

| | | | |
|----|------------|----|-----------|
| X: | 2740.94 pt | W: | 573.31 pt |
| Y: | 408.83 pt | H: | 466.44 pt |

0 pt

Artboards

Name: Artboard 15 + -

Preset: Custom ▾ + -

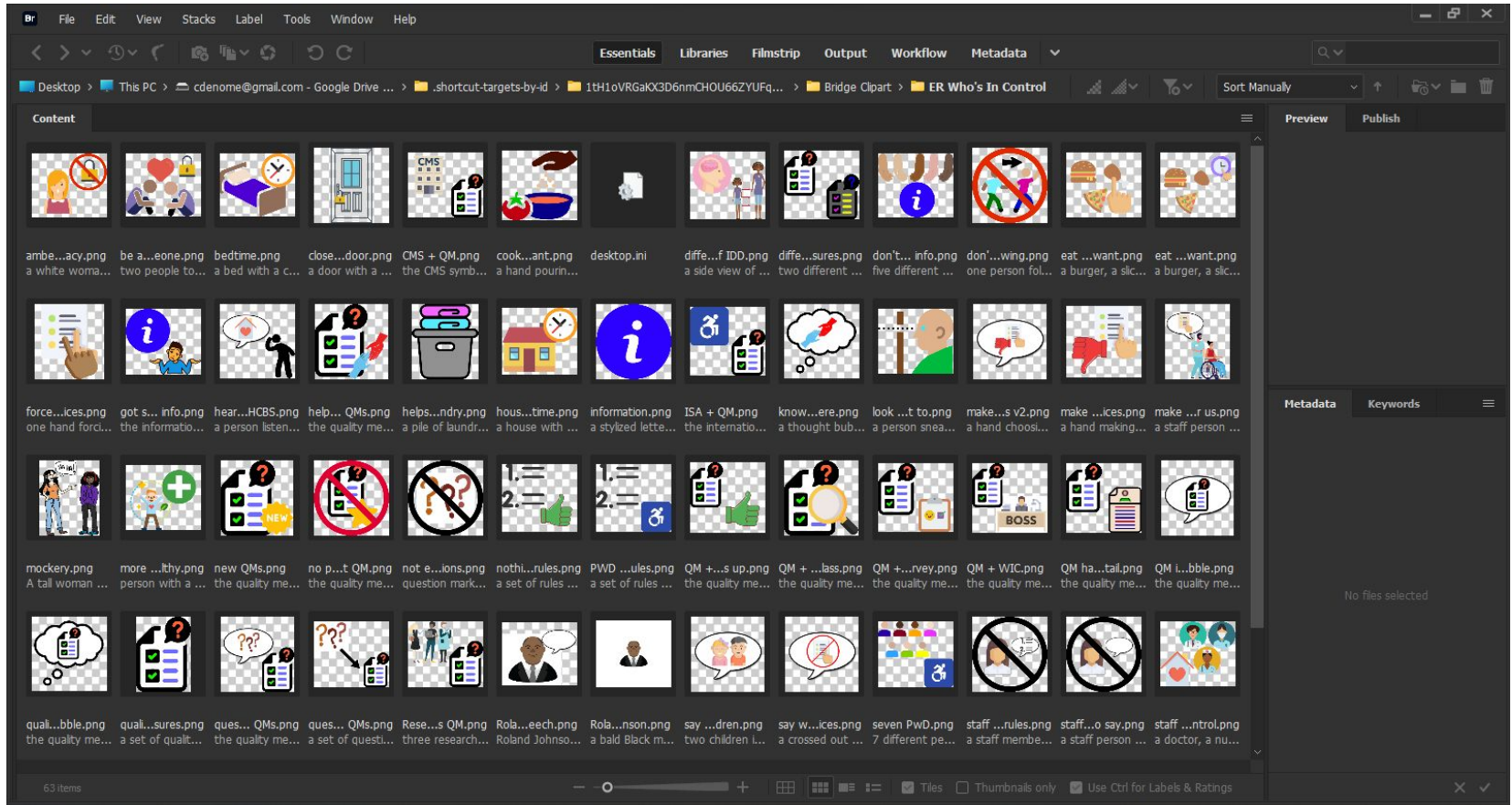
Move artwork with Artboard

Quick Actions

Artboard Options

Rearrange All

Bridge



InDesign, Illustrator, and Bridge can look really complex!

- That's okay!
- You don't have to use all the features.
- We will talk about the different parts in this presentation.
- We will cover the different features you need to know to do Easy-Read layout

Layout Basics

Materials need to *look like* Easy-Read as well

- Your text and icons should be laid out in Easy-Read as well as written in Easy-Read
- Many people who need Easy-Read/plain language writing also have disabilities that mean they need Easy-Read layout as well
 - For example, Blind/low vision, dyslexia, intellectual disabilities
- Easy-Read is a way of laying things out as well as writing. Things need to be laid out correctly in order to be Easy-Read.

Layout Software to use

- We use Adobe Creative Cloud products (InDesign and Illustrator)
- Adobe products are really expensive! You can use other (free or paid) publishing software
 - For example, Affinity Designer, VivaDesigner, Scribus, etc.
- You may be able to get discounts on Adobe products if you are a student or are part of a non-profit organization
- If you can't afford Adobe products (they're expensive) or have other products you use, you can use those.
- Our presentation will talk a lot about Adobe layouts and shortcuts
- But you should be able to do most of the things we describe here in other software.
- We think you should use publishing/layout software. You shouldn't use just Word or another word processor software

Fonts

- Large font sizes help make Easy Read resources more accessible to people who are Blind/low vision, have dyslexia, or have other disabilities.

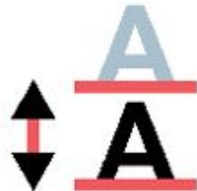
Header 1

Header 2

Header 3

Header 4

Aa



This is the body text. It is 18pt Open Sans Regular with a 28pt leading.

“Leading” is the word for how much space is between each line of a paragraph.

The fonts we use

Here are the specifications for our headings and text:

- Heading 1: Open Sans Bold, 29pt; space before, 1p8; space after, 0p6
- Heading 2: Open Sans Bold, 25pt; space before, 1p8; space after, 3p3
- Heading 3: Open Sans Bold, 22pt; space before, 0p0; space after, 4p0
- Heading 4: Open Sans Bold Italic, 18pt; space before, 0p0; space after, 2p4
- Body text: Open Sans Regular, 18pt; space before, 0p0; space after, minimum of 5p8

What's a pica?

- We use picas as our unit of measurement.
- A unit of measurement is something you can use to measure length, like inches or feet.
- There are 6 picas in an inch and 12 points in a pica.
 - For example: 1p8 is read as “one pica eight points”
- You can use other units of measurement if you like.
- There are many calculators available online that will convert picas to other units of measurement.

Use sans-serif fonts

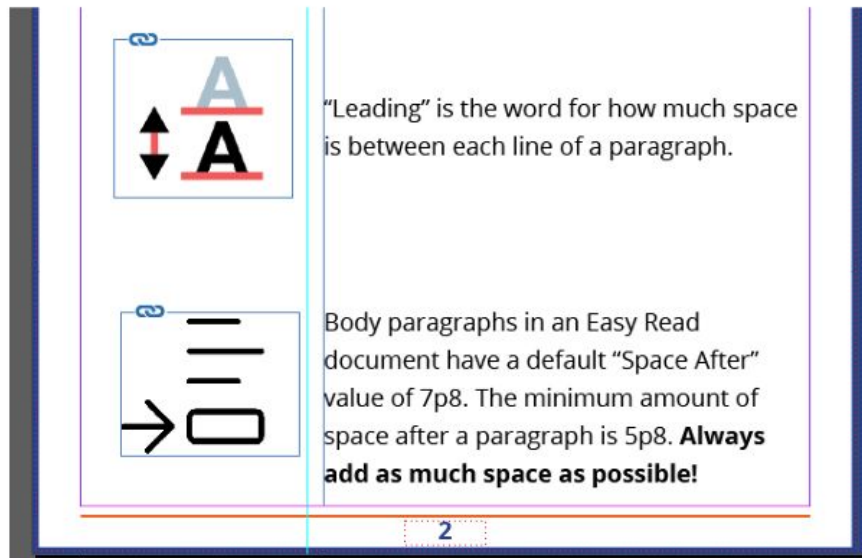
- We use sans-serif fonts because serifs can make letter shapes harder to read.
- Serifs are the “feet” on the strokes of letters.
- Serifs can make your text harder to read, so we think you should avoid them.

This is a serif font.

This is a sans-serif font.

Empty Space

- White space is really important to easy to read design.
- It helps to visually group related content together as well as reduce how crowded together things are.
- You may have heard people say it's hard for them to read a “wall of text”, referring to long blocks of text with not enough spacing.
- For many people, visual clutter and densely-packed pages mean they can't read what's on the page



The diagram is contained within a blue-bordered frame. It is divided into two vertical sections by a light blue line. The top section shows a box with a blue 'S' icon in the top-left corner. Inside the box, there are two capital letters 'A'. The top 'A' is light blue and has a red horizontal line below it. The bottom 'A' is black and also has a red horizontal line below it. A vertical double-headed arrow is positioned to the left of the two 'A's, indicating the vertical distance between the two lines of text. The bottom section shows a box with a blue 'S' icon in the top-left corner. Inside the box, there are three vertical lines of varying lengths, with a right-pointing arrow to their left. Below these lines is a large, bold, black '0'. To the right of the diagram, there is text explaining the terms. The top text defines 'Leading' as the space between lines of a paragraph. The bottom text explains that Easy Read documents have a default 'Space After' value of 7p8, with a minimum of 5p8, and emphasizes that more space should be added whenever possible.

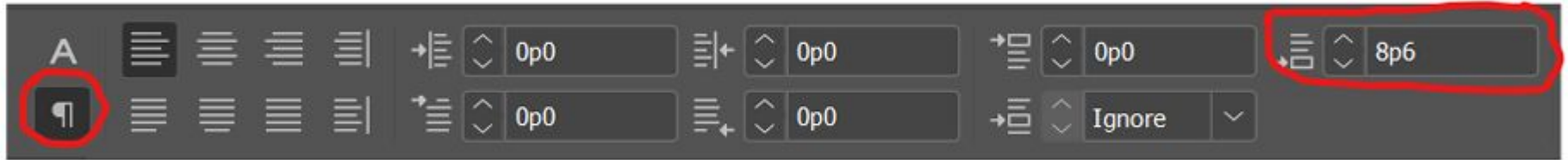
“Leading” is the word for how much space is between each line of a paragraph.

Body paragraphs in an Easy Read document have a default “Space After” value of 7p8. The minimum amount of space after a paragraph is 5p8. **Always add as much space as possible!**

2

Adding Empty Space

Here's where to set space after in InDesign:



- Our text boxes are 30p0 wide by 60p0 tall in most cases.
 - There is a 1p0 gutter (space) between the text box and the clipart column.
 - Note that clipart doesn't have to touch the line. But that is the closest the edge of an image can come to the text box.
 - It is much more cramped if you scrunch the images right up to the line.

Paragraphs

- It's important to have a lot of white space between paragraphs
 - Don't have a "wall of text"
 - No icons piled on top of each other.
- Remember, in Easy Read, a paragraph is only one or two sentences, usually one
- We use an absolute minimum of 5p8 space after each paragraph; the default is 7p8.

More on Paragraphs

- Any time you find you still have space available at the bottom of the page, consider spacing out your paragraphs even more.
- You should always use “space after” instead of hitting the enter key.
- In order to keep pages reasonably spaced, we have at most 5 paragraphs per page.
 - The only exception is for bulleted lists, as the first paragraph won't have a clipart image.

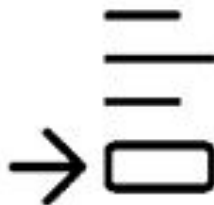
Illustrating Paragraphs

A large yellow capital letter 'A' and a red lowercase letter 'a' are positioned to the left of the first text block.

This is the body text. It is 18pt Open Sans Regular with a 28pt leading.



“Leading” is the word for how much space is between each line of a paragraph.



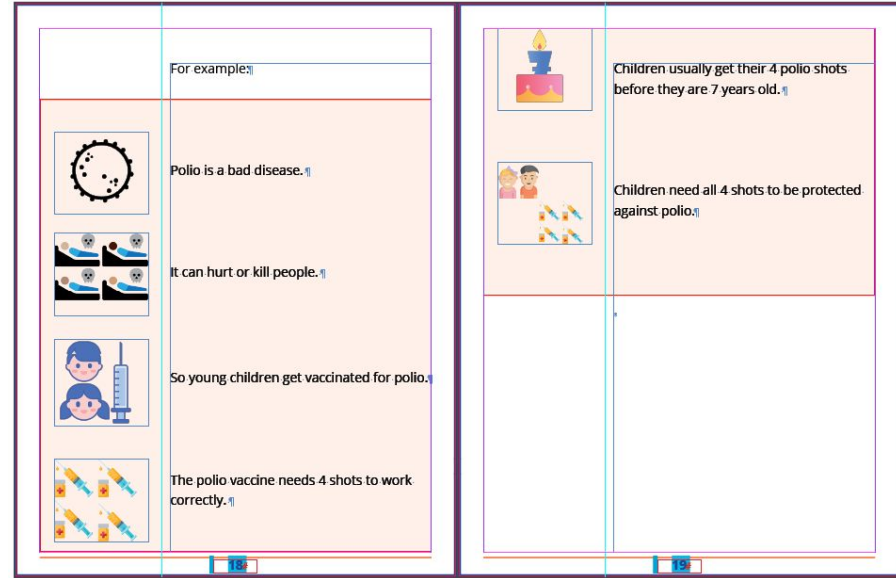
Body paragraphs in an Easy Read document have a default “Space After” value of 7p8. The minimum amount of space after a paragraph is 5p8. **Always add as much space as possible!**

Changing Topics

- Each topic should start on its own page, even if there's plenty of space at the bottom of the page for the topic before it.
- This helps keep the ideas about a topic visually linked.
- It also makes it easier for the reader to tell when a new topic is being talked about.
- If it helps, think of Easy Read pages as slides
 - One topic can take multiple slides
 - But you shouldn't put multiple topics on one slide

Example Boxes

- Example boxes are orange-tinted boxes with red outlines.
- They are used in the Easy-Read template to highlight examples given in the text.
- The example box should surround all of the example text and images
- The example box should have a couple of picas of box space above and below the beginning and end of the text.
- When an example box lasts more than one page (and they usually do), use the C - Lower Height template (see next slide) for each continuing page.



When to use which template page, part 1

- **A - Title Page:** Only use this for the title pages of each part.
- **B - Full Height:** Use this for most of your pages. It has space for five images on it. You do not have to use all five images.
- **C - Lower Height:** Use this for example pages. The lower height means you can put an example box around the whole page.
- **D - Full Height Landscape:** Use this when you need two columns of images/text per page. For example, if you are making a chart to compare two things. You can also use this if you need a page that is laid out in landscape (horizontal) mode.

When to use which template page, part 2

- **G - Glossary Terms:** Only use this for Words to Know pages where you are defining terms. Depending on how long your definitions are, you can probably fit 2-4 words + definitions per page.
- **G - Words to Know:** Only use this for the introductory page at the beginning of the Words to Know section of each part (and the Words to Know part at the end itself).

A - Title Page



Easy Read Edition

Sharing Your Story For A Political Purpose

Part 2: Town Halls

B - Full Height



Town Hall meetings can have different people at them.



Sometimes, you will get to speak to your member of government.



Other times, you will speak to one of their staff.



They will report back to your member of government.

C - Lower Height



For example, Sally went to a Town Hall Meeting with Representative Smith.

Here is what she said at the meeting:



Hi, I'm Sally Jones, and I'm from Normaltown, California.



I'm a member of the Stop the Bees Community Group.

D - Full Height Landscape

Working in groups: Pros and cons

Pro



It's good to have more people attend meetings like a Town Hall. It shows elected officials that lots of people care about a problem.



Doing certain things may be too hard for one person. But other people in a group can help them.

Con



Group members might disagree about things. It could take longer to decide what to do.



Group members might fight with each other. That can make everyone want to work less.

G - Words to Know

**Words to
Know in
Part 2**

G - Glossary Terms



Town Hall Meeting

A meeting that is open to everyone. People can come and ask questions about a problem or policy.



General Meeting

A Town Hall where you can ask about anything.

Multiple Parts

- We divide our Easy Read publications into parts. Each part can stand on its own, as a different file with its own Words to Know section at the beginning.
- This helps break up often very long documents. It makes it easier for readers to jump right to the parts they want to read.
- We use InDesign “book” files to keep multi-part documents in order.

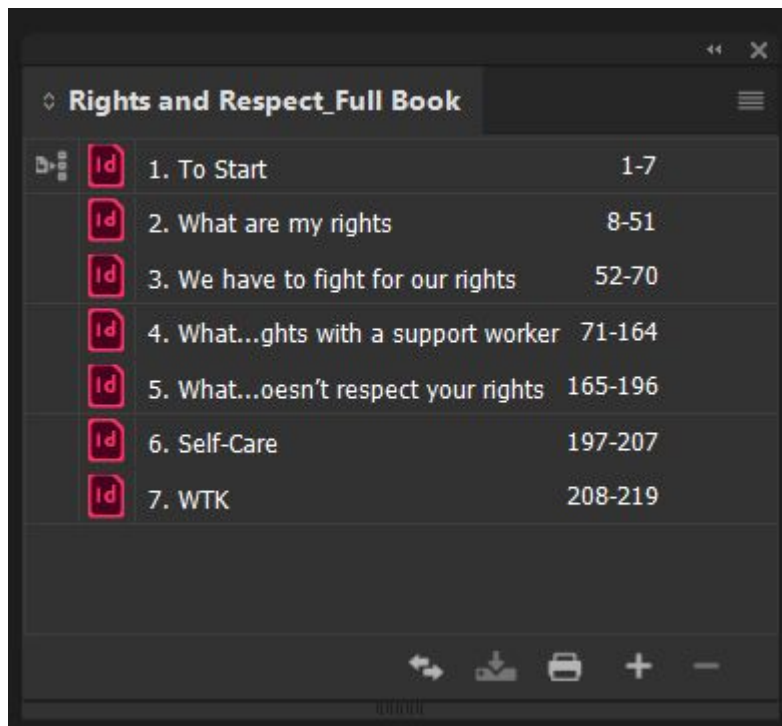
Easy Read Edition

The **Easy Read Edition** is split into parts. Each part has its own glossary, and there is also a separate glossary with all of the terms from every section. Click on the title of any of the parts below to download it:

- [Part 1: Introduction](#)
- [Part 2: Before the Meeting](#)
- [Part 3: During the Meeting](#)
- [Part 4: After the Meeting](#)
- [Part 5: Words to Know](#)

Or, click here to [download all five parts of the Easy Read Inclusive Meetings toolkit as one document.](#)

What a book file looks like



The image shows a screenshot of a PDF viewer window titled "Rights and Respect_Full Book". The window displays a table of contents with seven entries, each preceded by a red icon with the letters "Id". The entries are numbered 1 through 7, with corresponding page ranges. At the bottom of the window, there is a toolbar with icons for navigation, search, and printing.

| 1. | To Start | 1-7 |
|----|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 2. | What are my rights | 8-51 |
| 3. | We have to fight for our rights | 52-70 |
| 4. | What...ghts with a support worker | 71-164 |
| 5. | What...oesn't respect your rights | 165-196 |
| 6. | Self-Care | 197-207 |
| 7. | WTK | 208-219 |

Glossaries: Part 1

- Glossaries, which we call “Words to Know” sections, are always put at the very beginning of each part, right after the title page.
- This helps readers get to know important words before seeing them again in the part.
- The first time a term from Words to Know is used in each part, the term should be **bolded**.

Glossaries: Part 2

- Because people can read each part of an Easy Read document on its own, the Words to Know sections must show that.
- If a term is in both Part 1 and Part 2, it must also be in both Words to Know sections.
- This both makes sure that someone reading can start anywhere and still get the information they need. It also helps reinforce terms between sections.

Text

Text alignment

Text alignment is how text flows on the page.

This text is left aligned. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

This text is right aligned. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

This text is center aligned. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

This text is justified. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus.

Left-align your text

- Left-aligned text is the easiest to follow.
- The shapes created along the right edge by differing word lengths help to make lines clearer. The shapes help make lines stand out from each other.
- You read English (and many other languages) from left to right. Your text should follow that.

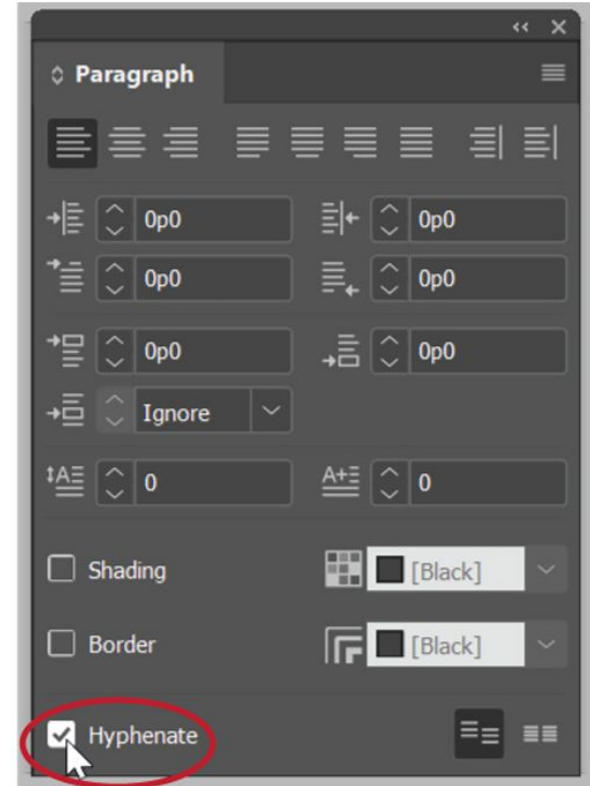
More on text alignment

- Justified text might look the neatest. But it often produces strange gaps between words. These gaps can form “rivers” of white space. Those “rivers” can distract the reader.
- InDesign’s default setting is to left-align text. If your text isn’t left-aligned, select some text, click on the Paragraph (¶) button in the top toolbar, and then choose the first option in the alignment section.



No hyphens

- This is a hyphen: - (for example: good-looking)
- Words are broken across two lines break up the flow of text. This can make it hard to read.
- To turn off hyphenation in InDesign, first press Ctrl+Alt+T/Cmd+Opt+T to bring up the Paragraph window.
 - Next, click the three lines in the upper right corner of the window.
 - Next, click “Show Options” on the menu that pops up.
 - Select your text and then uncheck the Hyphenate checkbox at the bottom of the options.



Runts, Widows, and Orphans: Definitions

runt

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Aenean commodo ligula eget dolor. Aenean massa. Cum sociis natoque penatibus et magnis dis parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus. Donec quam felis, ultricies nec, pellentesque eu, pretium quis,

sem.

Nulla consequat massa quis enim. Donec pede justo, fringilla vel, aliquet nec, vulputate eget, arcu. In enim justo, rhoncus ut, imperdiet a, venenatis vitae, justo. Nullam dictum felis eu

widow

pede mollis pretium.

Integer tincidunt. Cras dapibus. Vivamus elementum semper nisi. Aenean vulputate eleifend tellus. Aenean leo ligula, porttitor eu, consequat vitae, eleifend ac, enim. Aliquam lorem ante, dapibus in, viverra quis, feugiat a, tellus. Phasellus viverra nulla ut metus varius laoreet. Quisque rutrum. Aenean imperdiet. Etiam ultricies nisi vel augue. Curabitur ullamcorper ultricies nisi. Nam eget dui.

Etiam rhoncus, maecenas tempus, tellus eget

orphan

Runts, Widows, and Orphans: Interruptions

Each of these three interrupts the normal flow of reading.

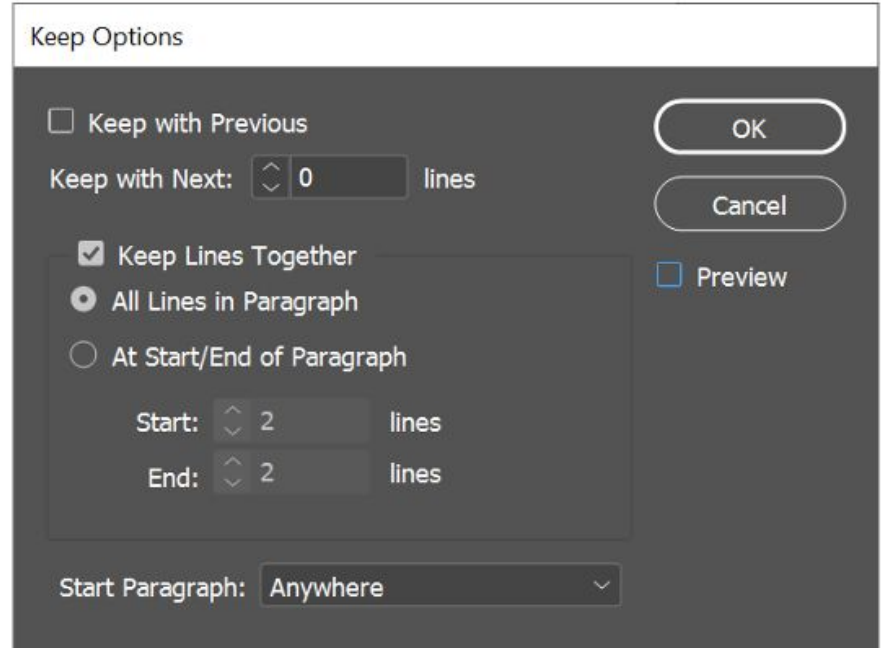
- Runts come before a large piece of white space not usually found in text. It can break the reader's focus by drawing unnecessary attention to the final word in a paragraph.
- Widows and orphans each mean that the reader has to remember a sentence across two pages. The reader can't read the sentence all together.

For our purposes, we completely avoid ever splitting paragraphs or sentences across pages.

Getting rid of widows and orphans in your layout

- First, select your text.
- Next, press Ctrl+Alt+K/Cmd+Opt+K to bring up the Keep Options window.
- Click on “Keep Lines Together” and “All Lines in Paragraph”.
- Click OK.

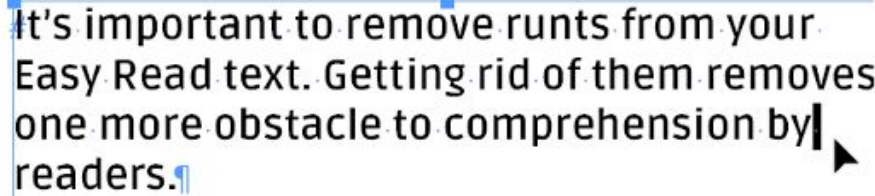
This takes care of both orphans and widows.



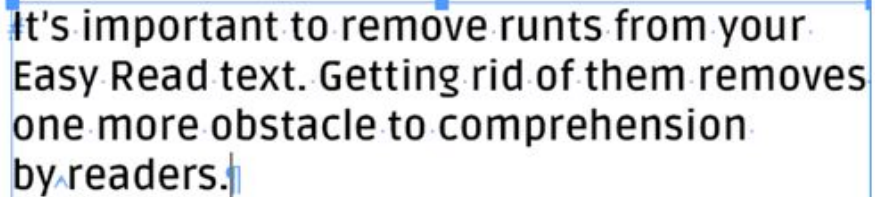
Getting rid of runts in your layout

Dealing with runts is a little bit trickier.

- First, select the space before the runt.
- You can turn on “Show Hidden Characters” by pressing Ctrl+Alt+I/Cmd+Opt+I. This makes it easier to see where the spaces are located.
- With the space highlighted, press Ctrl+Alt+X/Cmd+Opt+X.
 - This will replace the normal space character with a nonbreaking space. That’s a space that keeps the words surrounding it together.



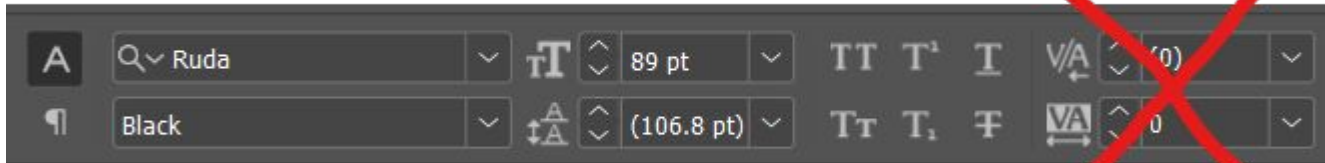
It's important to remove runts from your Easy Read text. Getting rid of them removes one more obstacle to comprehension by readers.



It's important to remove runts from your Easy Read text. Getting rid of them removes one more obstacle to comprehension by readers.

Don't “crunch” or “squish” text

- With runts, you might want to “crunch” or “squish” the text together so that the runt fits onto the last full line of the paragraph. You can do this using the the “tracking” tool under “character formatting controls.”
- *Don't do this.*
- If you squish the letters too closely together, it can be hard to read.
- Leave tracking set to 0 (don't set it to above 0, either) and use other tools to deal with runts.



You should lay out all the text before starting on icons

- One of our rules about icons is that the same image cannot be used twice on a page
- You won't be able to tell where you might need to use a different icon if you haven't laid out the text yet.

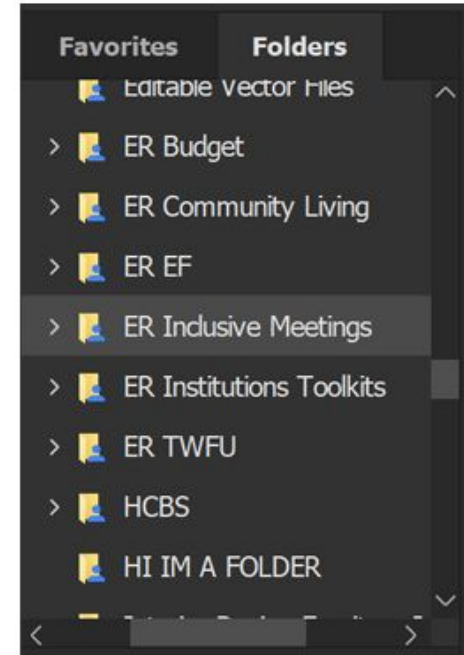
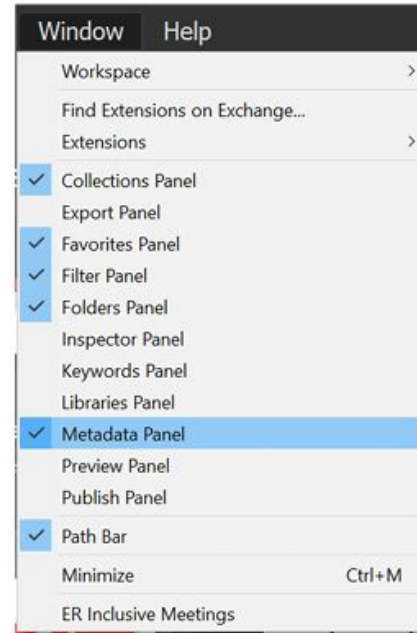
The Icon Process

Placing Icons

- First, you want to add a placeholder frame for the icons next to every paragraph.
- Start by clicking on the Rectangle Frame button (or press F). Create one frame. A frame is a box.
- You're going to be copy-and-pasting this frame next to every paragraph. But first, we have to change some settings on the frame. Right-click on the frame and choose "Object export options."
- A box will pop up. Change "Alt Text Source:" to "From XMP:Description." We'll explain what this means in the next section. For now, click "Done" and then copy-and-paste the frame next to every paragraph. (If you're working off our Easy-Read template, this has already been done in the template pages for you.)

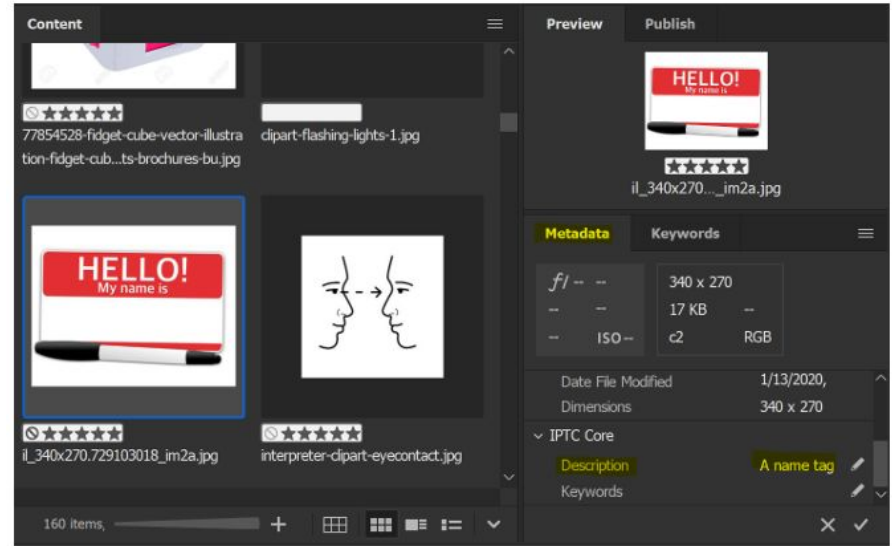
Alt Text: Part 1

- We use Adobe Bridge to add alt text to our icons. You can find basic tutorials on using Bridge in other places, so we'll just cover what you need to know to add alt text.
- First, make sure that the Metadata panel is visible.
- You can turn different panels on or off by clicking "Window" on the top bar and then clicking on each panel.
- If the Folders Panel isn't visible, turn that one on as well.
- In the Folders Panel, you can navigate to the folder that contains your clipart.



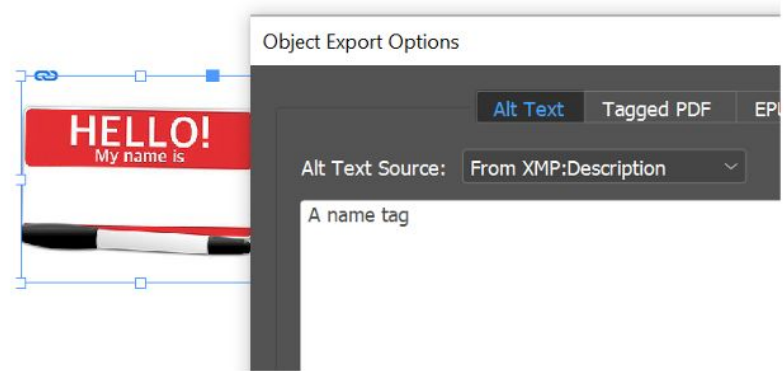
Alt Text: Part 2

- Once you've found the folder, click on one of your images.
- Then, scroll down in the Metadata panel until you see the section called IPTC Core - Description.
- Click on the little pencil icon to the right of the Description field.
 - This is where you enter in your alt text for that image.
 - Remember how we set the Object Export Options to find alt text from "XMP:Description"? This description field is what it's referencing.



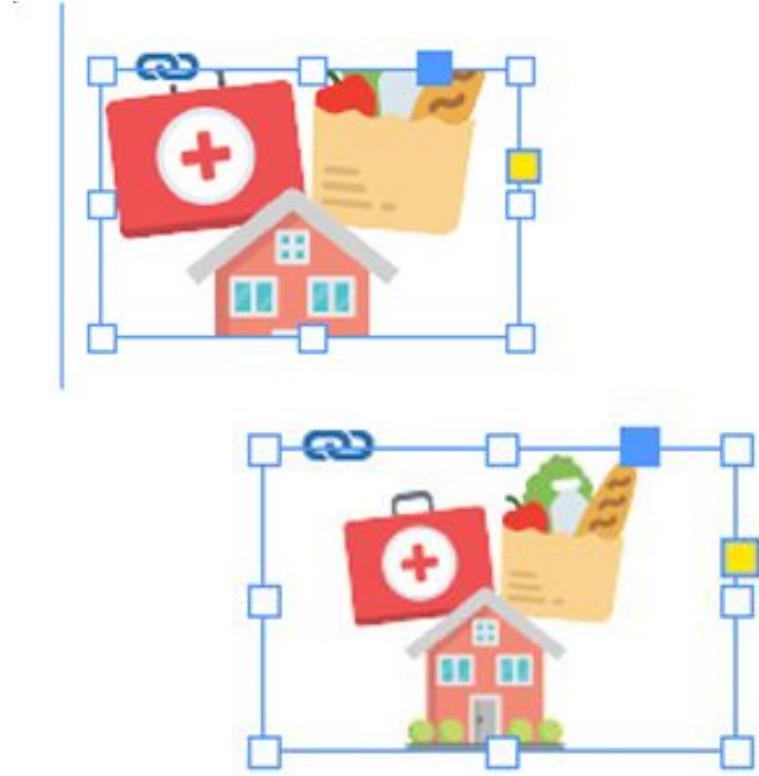
Alt Text: Part 3

- Now, if you drag in your clipart from Bridge, it'll automatically assign the alt text you entered.
 - You can drag clipart from Adobe Bridge straight into one of the empty rectangles you created.
 - You can also add images by clicking on the empty frame and pressing Ctrl+D/Cmd+D and then selecting the image you want to place in the frame.



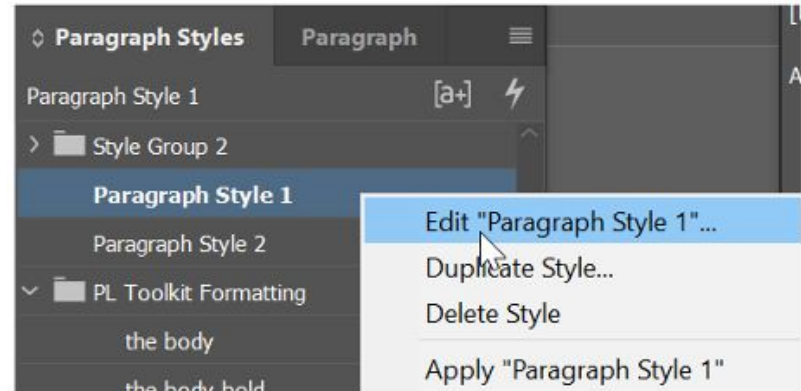
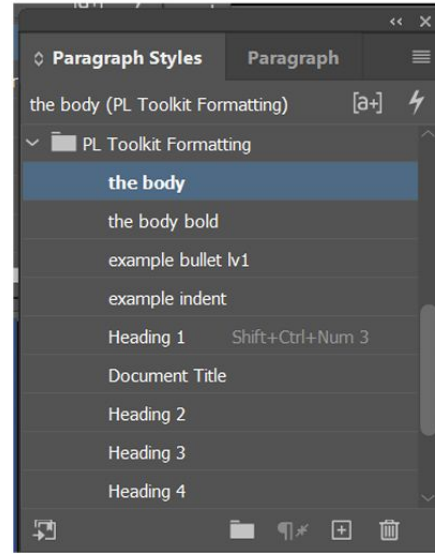
Fit Content to Frame

- Sometimes when you drag in an image, it might be cut off at the edges.
- There's an easy way to fix that! Select the frame and then press `Ctrl+Alt+Shift+E`/`Cmd+Opt+Shift+E`
- This will resize the image to fit perfectly in the frame.



Paragraph Styles

- Easy Read formatting can be really time intensive! One way you can speed up the process is by saving Styles. First, open up the Paragraph Styles window by pressing F11.
- Next, select some of your text that's in a style you want to save. For example, one of your headers.
- Next, go over to to your Paragraph Styles window and click on the + symbol at the bottom



ASAN's style library

- ASAN has also put together an Easy Read Formatting Style Library that you can use as the basis for your own projects, changing the fonts and colors to suit your own organizational brand or preferences. You can access this library on the web here (<https://assets.adobe.com/public/e9f33f6a-690a-4692-58ef-4a4f92448279>), where you can copy it to your own Adobe libraries.
- You can also import the library straight into InDesign. First, visit this link to download the Library file:
<http://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Easy%20Read%20Formatting%20Library.cclibs>
- Next, open the CC Libraries panel by clicking on Window > CC Libraries in the top menu of InDesign:
- Click on the three horizontal lines in the upper right corner of the CC Libraries panel and then select “Import library”:
- Click on “Select library” to find the .CCLIBS file you just downloaded and then click “Import.” You should now be able to access our Easy Read Formatting Library from inside InDesign.