Guidelines for Professional Desktop Publishing
What to do and what not to do when putting together your documents.
Mistakes are in red text.

Overall tips:

❖ Remember that in most situations **image is as important as substance** (if not more important). Pay very close attention to the look of what you write. Getting your documents to look really great may, at first, be as time-consuming as doing the writing itself.

❖ **Don't allow any careless mistakes in grammar, syntax or spelling to survive to the final draft of your documents.** They make it look as if you don't care enough to create work that's free of annoying distractions.

❖ It's always a good idea to **have someone read over what you write**.

❖ **Make sure your page design is consistent** throughout documents (especially font faces, font sizes, line breaks, indentation, justification).

The specifics:

❖ **The indentation at the beginning of a paragraph should be five spaces long.** Try using the tab key (the one with the horizontal arrows pointing both left and right).

❖ **Justify the body of the text to the left of the page**. Don't justify it so that the right margin also seems to be a straight line.

❖ It's also a good idea to **use 2.5 cm (1 inch) margins on all sides of every page.**

❖ **Avoid hyphenating words at the end of a line.** That's mainly for books and magazines.

❖ **Turn off links** before printing so that email addresses and URLs look like normal text (and are not underlined) in the hardcopy. (In MS Word you can right-click the link, then click on "Remove hyperlink.") Only leave links in a document if it's going to be distributed digitally, for example on the web.

❖ In formal, written English non-fiction (especially essays and research papers), **paragraphs must contain at least three sentences**. (An exception is journalism.)

❖ Be careful to **avoid repetition** of words and phrases in your writing. Some words you can't help but repeat (like *the, a*, etc.), but if you repeat less common words, even just twice on the same page, it can be distracting. I'll point out repetition in your text if I see it. Also avoid saying "as I said before," or any other equivalent of "som sagt." If you said it before, why repeat yourself?

❖ Be careful not to use *it, this, that, they, them, their* and *those* ambiguously. Only use these words when it's completely clear what or whom you're referring to.

   Example: Johnny and Bill hadn't gone to see any of the movies, even though they were playing downtown. [What does "they" refer to?]

❖ You can either **italicize or underline titles of major works**, but now that we're in the computer age it's far more common to italicize.

Italicize titles of:

▪ books	▪ magazines
▪ movies	▪ journals
▪ albums	▪ television shows
▪ newspapers	▪ radio shows

Put titles of smaller works—songs, poems, stories and articles—**in quotation marks.** Examples:

- *War and Peace* (novel), *Schindler's List* (film), *Songs of Faith and Devotion* (album), *Newsweek* (magazine)
- "Blunder Buys Time for Killer" (article), "Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds" (song), "A Good Man is Hard to Find" (short story), "Bereft" (poem).

❖ *Only* **italicize**

- titles of major works
- statements and words that you wish to receive special attention
- people's thoughts, things they say only in their head
- foreign words and phrases

❖ **Do not italicize every word in a quotation.** Also, don't italicize words in a quotation that weren't italicized in the original unless you add the phrase [my emphasis], in brackets, at the end of the quote.

❖ Always **capitalize**

- **days** of the week (Monday, Tuesday, etc.)
- **months** (January, February, Ramadan, etc.)
- **holidays** (Christmas, Valentine's Day, Thanksgiving, etc.)
- **languages** (English, Swedish, Fortran, etc.)
- **personal titles** (Dr., Mrs., Mr., Professor, Reverend, etc.)

❖ **In titles, capitalize the first word and all other words *except*:**

- **articles** (*a, an, the*)
- **prepositions** (words describing how a plane can fly in relation to clouds: *to* clouds, *between* clouds, *at* clouds, *with, from, for, among*, etc.) - *under* **five letters long**
- **coordinating conjunctions** (*and, but, for, yet, so, or, nor*)

Examples: The Content of Our Character; *How to Make an American Quilt*; *The Language of the Land: Living Among the Hadzabe in Africa*.

❖ **Be careful not to have more than one space between words.** (I point these extra spaces out to you by circling them and writing *sp.*) These stand out more in printouts than on computer monitors. On the other hand, it's very common—and a good idea—to have two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence (this can make the text clearer).

❖ **Spell out numbers zero through nine.** Always spell out numbers at the beginning of a sentence.

❖ Write **ordinal numbers** like this: **23rd** and **45th**. Don't allow your computer to automatically print the letters in superscript (like this: 45th). If it tries to do it anyway, hit Ctrl+Z (Undo). Spell out ordinal numbers between *first* and *ninth*.

❖ **When referring to landmarks, places, groups, etc. that are always referred to with** *the* (like the White House, or the Factory where Andy Warhol painted)**, don't capitalize** *the* unless it comes at the beginning of the sentence.

❖ Be sure to use tenses (past, present, future) consistently. If you're talking about the past or the future, be sure to use another tense only when you're sure it's appropriate. When writing a literary essay, use the present tense to describe actions in the story.