Lines of twelve words are considered optimum for easy reading. These lines contain only ten at best but because of the nature and brevity of the text, readability is not compromised.

Very short
lines are tire-
some to read,
especially if
justified (see 6
on page 136).

Longer lines can be made more readable by using more generous leading (but see page 135).

While the line length, which in today's software is often specified as the width of the text box, is the most obvious use of horizontal space within a page, the subtle relationships between letters and between words should also be considered here. At a basic level these are part of each typeface's design (see Chapter IV) but there are often good reasons for wanting to adjust either or both of these and software programs allow this. Altering the space between pairs of characters is known as kerning while an adjustment to whole words or paragraphs is tracking; often the terms are used interchangeably.

The inter-character spacing can be tightened, or opened out. This should only be used subtly to improve the readability and look of text rather than to make it fill a pre-determined space. Small type (eg below 9pt) can sometimes be improved by positive tracking; headings or large type are sometimes better with negative tracking.