

Australian Braille Authority (ABA)

Formatting Workshop

10.30am—12.30pm

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Presented by
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Foreword

Over the past few years a small working group has been producing a document to outline recommended formatting practices for braille in Australia. This working group consists of Leona Holloway (editor), Christine Simpson, Josie Howse, Colleen Flood, Shirley Henderson and Kathy Riessen. We also acknowledge the contribution of the late Linda Triasmono until ill health prevented her continued involvement.

The Australian Braille Authority are pleased to announce the completion of the *Australian Braille Authority Rules and Guidelines for Formatting Braille (2016)* (Formatting Guidelines) in both print and braille. They are now available for download from the brailleaustralia.org website.

We would like to acknowledge the Round Table, for their ongoing support and covering the cost of our regular teleconferences.

Kathy Riessen

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Introduction

There are two aspects of braille transcription, the correct use of the braille code and formatting. Good formatting is vital to creating a document which can be easily navigated using such features as page numbers, running headers, heading structure, contents pages etc. The *Australian Braille Authority Rules and Guidelines for Formatting Braille* (2016) (Formatting Guidelines) should now be considered as the reference for use in Australia. It is available for download in both print and braille from the ABA website, brailleaustralia.org.

Where relevant, section numbers in the Formatting Guidelines are given in parentheses. For users of DBT, the *English (UEB) – Australian Formatting* template as included with DBT 11.3 sr1 has been developed in conjunction with the Formatting Guidelines.

Within a consistent structure of headings, a variety of formats have been used in the body of this document. Print readers should read this document in conjunction with its equivalent braille document to fully appreciate how various aspects of the Formatting Guidelines discussed below are applied.

Rules and Guidelines

As its full title suggests the *Australian Braille Authority Rules and Guidelines for Formatting Braille* (2016), contains both RULES and GUIDELINES for formatting braille.

There is a limited number of rules shown in bold font throughout the document. Braille documents must adhere to these rules to be compliant with the ABA standards for braille formatting. The formatting component for Australians sitting the Trans-Tasman Braille proficiency test will be assessed according to these rules.

By following the rules, a consistent approach can be assured with regard to the navigation features of a document. This gives a strong framework on which to base other formatting decisions.

All other advice takes the form of guidelines. The guidelines should be followed in the majority of cases, however, some guidelines may be deemed unnecessary for very short or ephemeral braille materials. Sometimes a variety of options is provided to enable a considered choice depending on context and the potential reader.

Rules

Section numbers refer to the relevant sections in the Formatting Guidelines. This information can also be found in Appendix 1 of the Formatting Guidelines. Some additional information has been added in square brackets.

1 Navigation

1.1 Navigation line

1.1.1 Line 1 is reserved for the navigation line on every page in a braille document except a title page. [The top line of a braille page does not contain document text.]

1.1.2 The navigation line typically includes the print page reference (on the left), the running title (in the centre) and the braille page number (on the right).

1.1.3 There must be at least one blank cell between the running title and the print and braille page numbers.

1.2 Running title

1.2.1 The running title occupies the centre of the navigation line.

1.2.2 A running title must never exceed one braille line.

1.3 Braille page number

1.3.1 The braille page number must be placed in the top right corner of each braille page.

1.4 Print page reference

1.4.1 Print page numbers must be included in braille if they are given in the print.

1.4.2 The print page reference reflects the print page number at the top of the page. It must be placed in the top left corner of each braille page.

1.4.3 Prefixes before the print page reference indicate continuation of the print page over more than one braille page.

1.4.4 Retain roman numerals [i, ii, iii, et cetera] where they are used for print page numbers.

1.5 Print page turnover

1.5.1 Print page turnovers must be placed in the exact position where a new print page occurs in the text.

1.5.2 Use a row of hyphens to indicate a print page turnover. The hyphens must begin in cell 1 and extend to the new print page number, aligned to the right margin.

1.6 Footer

1.6.2 A braille footer must not exceed one braille line.

1.6.3 A braille footer must not duplicate information included in the running title.

2 Text formatting

2.2 Chapters

2.2.2 Chapter headings must be formatted as level 1 headings.

2.2.3 The end of a braille chapter or section must be clearly indicated.

2.3 Headings

[All headings are preceded by a blank line, unless immediately under another heading

Heading 1: Centred with at least 6 blank cells on each side

Heading 2: Blocked in cell 5

Heading 3: Blocked in cell 3

Heading 4: Blocked in cell 1]

2.3.2 Braille heading styles must be based on the overall hierarchy established by the print text.

2.3.3 Always adhere to ABA heading styles.

2.3.9 Headings must not be placed at the bottom of a braille page, unless followed by at least one line of text.

2.4 Paragraphs

2.4.1 A braille paragraph is shown as a block of text, with the first line indented two spaces. Blank lines must not be left between paragraphs.

2.8 Lists

2.8.1 The runover of a list item must be indented in braille.

2.8.2 The hierarchy of list items is distinguished by indentation.

2.8.10 Attention marks and counters used in print must be retained in braille.

2.8.12 If there is no punctuation between a counter and the subsequent text, a full stop must be added.

2.9 Poetry

2.9.2 Use list formatting for lines of poetry.

2.9.3 A blank line must be inserted between stanzas in braille.

2.10 Drama

2.10.5 The name of each speaker must begin in the margin with the runover indented.

2.10.7 Distinction must be made between the end of the speaker's name and the dialogue.

2.13 Blank lines

2.13.1 Blank lines are never used between paragraphs in braille.

2.13.4 Blank lines are used to separate stanzas of a poem.

2.14 Hyphenation

2.14.3 Use a continuation indicator (dot 5) ⠠ instead of a hyphen to divide non-literary material across braille lines.

2.16 Transcriber notes

2.16.6 Transcriber notes within the text must be enclosed within transcriber note indicators ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠

3 Graphic elements

3.3 Breaks in text

[A break in text shows a separation between two blocks of text. Often shown in print as a blank line or centred icons, such as a short line, asterisks or dots.]

3.3.1 A break in text must always be shown in braille.

3.3.3 Do not use the same indicator for a break in text and the end of a chapter or section.

3.11 Typeforms

3.11.10 Where a change of typeface extends over more than one element (for example, several paragraphs), each text element must start with the typeform indicator. The typeform terminator must only be given at the end of the last element.

4 Technical materials

4.2 Computer notation

4.2.5 Levels of indentation used for computer notation must be reflected in braille.

5 Front matter

5.3 Contents

5.3.5 Use list formatting for Contents items. Major items must begin on the left margin with indented runover. The hierarchy of Contents list items is distinguished by indentation.

5.3.6 In formatting the braille Contents, use a row of guide dots (dot 5) ⠠ with a space on each side between the end of a listing and its corresponding print or volume number in the right column.

5.3.7 The six rightmost cells within the Contents list must be reserved for page or volume numbers.

6 End matter

6.4 Bibliography

- 6.4.3 Use braille typeform indicators where particular words in a bibliography are distinguished by print typefaces.

Guidelines

Other than the above mentioned rules, the remaining information is recommended guidelines. Sometimes more than one option is given to enable a considered choice to be made by a transcriber.

Basic principles

The following list some principles on which formatting decisions should be made.

- Braille formatting need not follow the print layout exactly. However, it is important that the transcription enables a reader to access the same information as a printed document including text, formatting and graphical elements. Consider the logical reading order where there is a variety of types of material on the same print page.
- Provide easy navigation.
- Consider the reader.
- Be consistent throughout a document
- Some variation between documents and agencies is ok.

2.8 Lists

- Always start on the margin and indent runover.
- Sub-lists should be indented further.
- There is choice as to the position of the runover
 - a. Indent 2 cells—most common approach (2.8.6)
 - b. Indent according to the length of the counter—gives greatest clarity but can lead to short lines and requires more manual intervention (2.8.7).
 - c. Indent 4 cells—useful for long indicators. (2.8.8)

2.9 Poetry

- Use the print layout in relation to the indentation of the poem as a guidance. (2.9.1)
- Indent runover (2.9.2)
- Use blank lines between stanzas (2.9.3)
- Include the blank line where a stanza begins at the top of a braille page (2.9.3)
- Keep short stanzas together on a braille page. Avoid a single line of a stanza at the bottom of a braille page (2.9.4)
- Shaped poems
 - * Describe the shape in a transcriber note (2.9.6)
 - * Mimic the shape if possible (2.9.7)
 - * Provide a tactile graphic of the shape if practical (2.9.9)

2.10 Drama

Braille plays may need to differ considerably from the print to allow the reader to scan parts quickly.

- Dialogue in prose: The name of the speaker begins in cell 1, and the runover continues in cell 3. (2.10.5)
- Dialogue in verse: The name of the speaker begins in cell 1. The first line of dialogue may continue immediately after the name or begin on a new line in cell 3. All lines of verse runover to cell 5. (2.10.5)
- It is acceptable to remove block capitals, italics, bold etc from a speaker's name. (2.10.6).
- Ensure clear distinction between a speaker's name and dialogue. Add a colon if not other indication is in print. (2.10.7)
- Stage directions: retain bold, italics and bracketing as per print.

--directions at beginning of an act or scene can be formatted as a standard paragraph. Leave a blank line before beginning the dialogue. (2.10.3)

--directions inline with dialogue are transcribed as is. (2.10.8)

--directions which are separate from dialogue are formatted as a note. A note begins in cell 7, runover to cell 5. (2.10.9)

DRAMA/PLAY NOTES

Plays such as Shakespeare and some poetry published for study are often printed with notes on a facing page or on the same page which have direct reference to the text. Following the general principle to consider the reader, it is often best to format these so the play occurs unbroken on the right braille page and the notes are then positioned on the left page. (2.10.14)

2.11 Footnotes and endnotes

There are several choices for formatting these in braille. When choosing an option always consider the type, length and importance of the note, and ensure that a note can be found easily without overly interrupting the flow of the main text.

Reference Marks are counters or symbols within the text that refer to an associated note elsewhere. These should be retained in the braille.

Superscript is only shown for numerals. (2.11.2)

FOOTNOTES

Footnotes usually have a reference mark at the point of relevance with the note at the bottom of the print page. Three options for braille are given.

1. Short notes¹ can be added in square brackets or similar immediately following the reference. (2.11.5, example 1)
2. Position the note immediately after the reference,² but format the note as an indented paragraph beginning in cell 7 with runover to cell 5. (2.11.5, Example 2)

¹ A few words long

² The reference is not repeated at the beginning of the note

3. Position the note after the current paragraph or at a logical break within a longer paragraph.³ The note is formatted as an indented paragraph beginning in cell 7 with runover to cell 5. (2.11.6)

ENDNOTES

These may be listed at the end of the relevant volume, or in a separate volume. Use a list format. (2.11.8, 2.11.9, 2.11.11)

2.12 Margin notes

Margin notes can take a variety of forms, and should be consistently formatted throughout a document. Some choices are:

- a) paragraph with a heading
- b) in a box
- c) using the Margin Note style in the ABA template. This style puts an arrow at the margin and formats the paragraph as a list with a deep indent.

Explain the format of margin notes in the Transcriber Notes.

Placement of margin notes is also at the discretion of the transcriber and should be at a logical point in the text, not necessarily corresponding to its position in the print.

3.4 Boxes

There are a number of options for producing boxes. The most common method uses just UEB lines at the top and bottom to define the box.

Where a variety of box types are used within the same document, a transcriber's note may be appropriate to explain their use.

Material in a box in print may also be represented as a paragraph under a heading (3.4.1). Similarly, it is sometimes appropriate to add boxes which do

³ If a print page turnover occurs before the end of the paragraph, a logical place is to position the note before this.

