



ReadWithADHD Style Guide for Publishers

Simplified PDF Edition

## Introduction

Unlike other disabilities, ADHD is incredibly varied. One individual may struggle with hyperactive tendencies (such as an inability to sit still and focus), while another may struggle with more inattentive tendencies (including executive dysfunction and a lack of motivation). It is also not uncommon for someone to experience a mixture of both. Due to these factors, it is near impossible to create a style guide that will fit the needs of every single ADHD reader. However, this does not mean publishers should not strive to make their titles as accessible as possible.

Instead of trying to make a style guide filled with intricacies and details that will include every single thing an ADHD reader could possibly use, the aim of this style guide will be to tackle the most common issues that ADHD readers may face, including these factors outlined by [PsychCentral](#):

- focusing
- memory and retention
- processing information
- sitting still
- managing time
- managing distractions (e.g., distracting thoughts or stimuli in the environment)

## Information for Copyright Page

### *Disclaimer*

Due to the nature of ADHD as described above, it is important that we do not claim that books published in this style will be a perfect solution for those with ADHD. Instead, we recommend placing this disclaimer either on or on a page close to the copyright page:

“Disclaimer: The format used for this book has been created by ADHD individuals in line with common issues that ADHD readers may face. However, due to the nature of ADHD as a disorder, we do not claim that this format will be beneficial for all individuals with ADHD. For more resources on ADHD and reading, please visit [ReadWithADHD.co.uk](http://ReadWithADHD.co.uk) for more information.”

### *Creative Commons License*

ReadWithADHD was created as a passion project, with the main goal of giving publishers a more accessible way to publish their print books for those with ADHD. Due to this, this style guide has been made completely free for public use under the CC BY-SA License. This means that, as long as ReadWithADHD is credited, you have permission to distribute, remix, adapt, and build upon the material in any way you'd like. However, if you do wish to remix or adapt this style guide in any particular way, you must licence the modified material under the same license. This allows us to keep with our mission of making reading accessible for all.

For example, you may add the following line to your book's copyright page:

*“Formatted using the ReadWithADHD Style Guide for Publishers.”*

*For more information on the CC BY-SA license, please visit:*

<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/>

## Font Style and Sizing

For ADHD readers, fonts can make a huge difference to their reading experience. Similarly to other neurodiversities such as Dyslexia, it has been shown that sans-serif fonts are the most optimal font choice for readers with ADHD. However, more factors come into play for readers with ADHD, including ensuring that letter shapes don't resemble each other, including with the letters I and L. The clearer the font, the easier the brain will be able to process the text.

The following fonts may be beneficial for ADHD Readers:

- Lexend
- Helvetica
- Veranda
- OpenDyslexic

Font sizing and spacing should also be generous, with research showing an increase in reading speed for ADHD readers using larger font sizes. For physical books, a font size of between **12-16pt** could be beneficial.

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vs.

Ilegible

## Spacing and Breaking Up Your Text

Line spacing is also really important when it comes to reading for those with ADHD. Larger spaces between lines can help make text look less dense and overwhelming, while also giving the reader more space to engage with active reading strategies.

ATG Publishing highlights this in their own [ADHD Friendly Publishing Standards](#), noting a line spacing of **1.3** in their Level 1 Guidelines, up to a spacing of **1.7** in their level 2. This larger line spacing can help those with ADHD that typically find that lines of text blend together when reading them, making for an easier and less strenuous reading experience. For the same reason, left aligned text is also recommended over a justified layout.

**Full paragraph line breaks** are also recommended for ADHD readers, to allow for large chunks of text to be clearly separated.

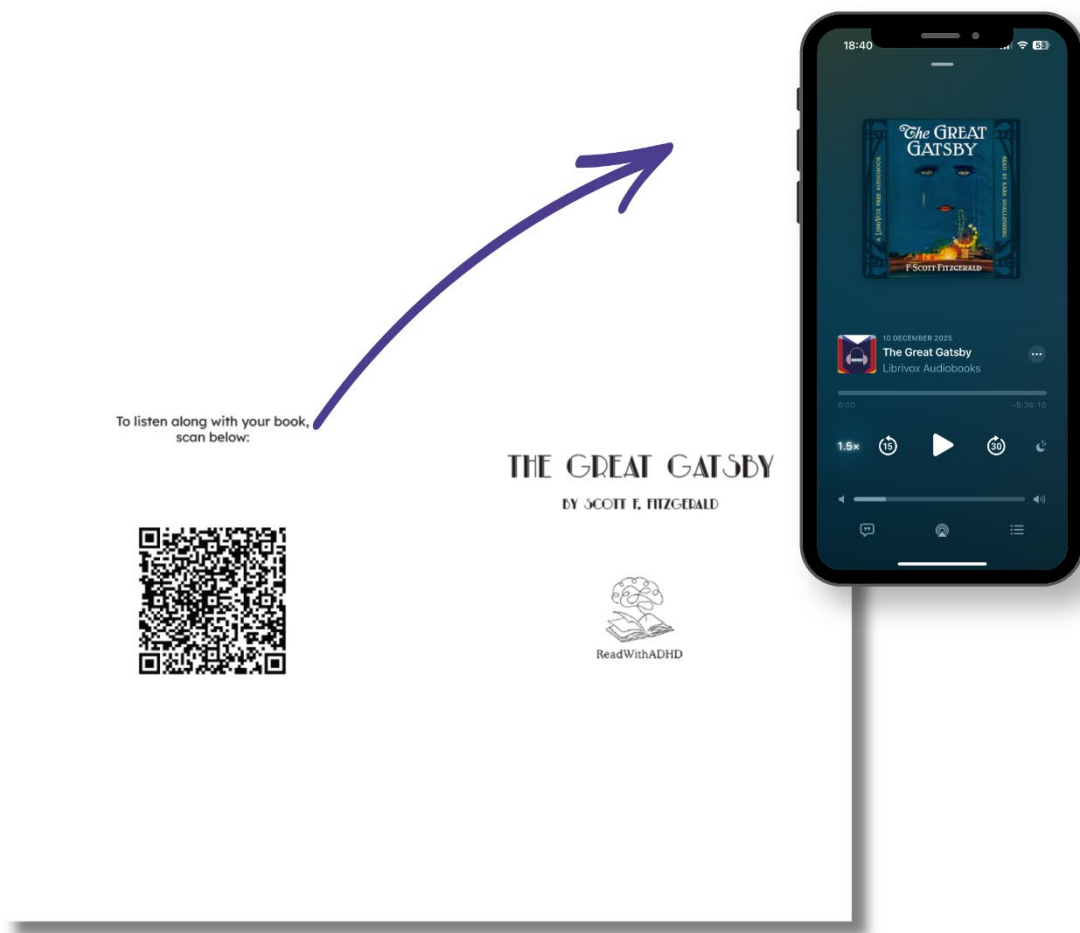
The sizing of margins can also make a large difference in the reading experience of those with ADHD. Allowing for larger margins can give more space for notetaking and annotating, which is a large part of active reading strategies. We found that a **25mm margin** gives an ideal amount of space for short margin annotations, without overcrowding the text.

Some readers may also benefit from additional space for more in-depth note taking. This may include an extra 2 page spread after each chapter, extra space at the bottom of a page, or even a small section of lined pages at the back of a book.

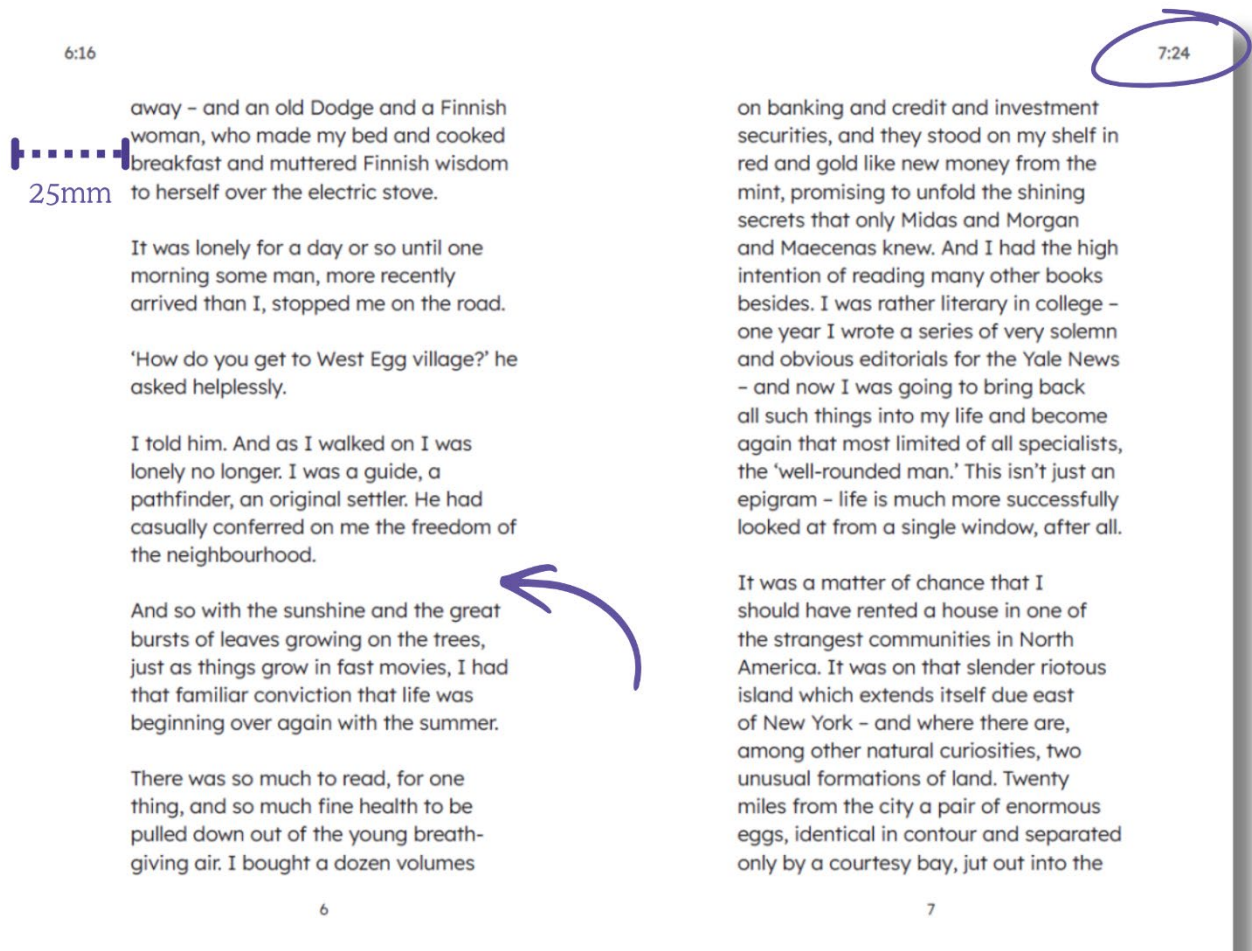
## Incorporating Audiobooks

To help readers with their retention skills, along with their ability to focus, we will need to make sure that our books are styled to be inclusive of popular ADHD reading strategies, such as Active Reading and Immersive Reading.

As Immersive Reading includes listening to a copy of the text's audiobook alongside reading, a QR code can be added to the beginning of the book that matches with the text that the reader has purchased.



## Page Layout (With Example)



- For the main text pages, a larger margin size is recommended to allow for easier notetaking. In this example, a margin size of 25mm has been used.
- Full line breaks between paragraphs allow the text to be easier for the brain to process.
- For the most optimal audiobook integration, time stamps have also been added to the corners of page spreads, instead of running headers. This allows for readers to easily sync their audiobooks back with their physical books and pick up where they previously left off.
- Left aligned text is recommended.

## Additional Information

- Where possible, avoid long dense paragraphs of text. Smaller paragraphs are also recommended to help break up a text into more digestible sections.
- Visual input can be very helpful for ADHD readers, so illustrations of relevant scenes and information (such as maps or new settings) are recommended.
- For newer and more experimental font styles, you may wish to look into Bionic Reading. Information for publishers and their license can be found [here](#).
- For ADHD readers, representation is more important than ever. Ensure that you are publishing diverse voices and stories, while also supporting your authors.

## *Further Reading*

- Psychcentral - How ADHD May Affect Reading:  
<https://psychcentral.com/adhd/adhd-and-reading#impact-of-adhd-on-reading>
- ATG Publishing ADHD Friendly Publishing Standards:  
<https://atgpublishing.com/adhd-publishing/>
- Caboche Press - Writing Barriers for Disabled Writers:  
<https://cabochepress.com/writingbarriers/>
- Listening Books - ADHD Awareness Month, How Audiobooks can Transform Reading: <https://www.listening-books.org.uk/adhd-awareness-month-how-audiobooks-can-transform-reading>
- How To ADHD - How I Made My Book ADHD-Friendly:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MZJWG240Fgg>

