

Editorial Graphics and Publishing Services

Is It One Space or Two Spaces after a Period?

Two Spaces After a Period—The Old Way

Most typewriter fonts are what are called monospaced fonts. That means every character takes up the same amount of space. An “I” takes up as much space as an “m,” for example. When using a monospaced font, where everything is the same width, it makes sense to type two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence to create a visual break. For that reason, people who learned to type on a typewriter were taught to put two spaces after a period at the end of a sentence.

One Space After a Period—The New Way

But when you are typing on a computer, most fonts are proportional fonts, which means that characters are different widths. An “I” is more narrow than an “m,” for example, and putting extra space between sentences does not do anything to improve readability.

Notice how in this example, the “I’s” and “t” take up much less space in the proportional font than they do in the monospaced font.

Miniwidget	(Times New roman, proportional)
Miniwidget	(Courier, monospaced)

Using one space is by far the most widely accepted and logical style. *The Chicago Manual of Style*, the *AP Stylebook*, and the Modern Language Association all recommend using one space after a period at the end of a sentence.

Taken from Grammar Girl, Quick and Dirty Tips for Better Writing, <http://grammar.quickanddirtytips.com/>