

X- and Y- Coordinates

- In computer software such as InDesign, there is a grid function and a control palette (shown below), that allows users to line up objects based on x- and y-coordinates similar to a graph in math.

- In this document, the top left corner is x-value 0p0,

and y-value 0p0. In some documents, the x-value is negative for the left page of a spread, zero is in the gutter between the two pages, and the right side ends at x value 52p0.

- The y-value starts at top always at 0, and moves

down the spread in positive values. These values are key to helping students align elements on a page. Using just your eyes doesn't give you the precision for elements. As with width and height, values for x- and y- are written as #p#, with picas before the p, and point after.

- X- and y- values are determined by object grid point selected. If you look at the sample, inside the red box on the left is a grid system with nine points. Each point corresponds to the frame of an object, and will dictate what corner of an object is being positioned. In this example, the object is being aligned to the top left corner of the frame. All of my x- and y- values will position the object to that point. If I change frame points, my values for x- and y- will change.

- If I want to figure out how to line up objects one pica from each other, I can use my x- and y-values to do so in two ways.

- 1. I can move my frame grid to the bottom or side of my object. Using that value, I can add 1 pica to the value

if I want to move it over to the right or down. I can subtract 1 pica from the value to move it up or to the left. When I select the object to align, I will change my setting to the opposite side of the measurement I just used. They should line up now.

- 2. I can use the width and height and add them to the x- and y- values to get my position for my coordinates. For example, if I have an object at 2p3x, and 3p3y, and it is 7p6 wide and 9p6 tall, then my new measurements would be 10p9x, and 13p9y if I want an object to be one pica away from the previous object. Remember to add your two values, and add one more pica for the space.

- Staffers and professionals use these values to align all of the elements on a spread. Even one point off is visibly noticeable to people.

- For non-software users, the blue graphing design paper also includes grids, but instead of entering in a value, users will have to count out their squares to find the x- and y-values. It would be beneficial to make or order pica rulers.

