

InDesign tips - Other People's Files

If X – it could be . . .

You can't select an object that you can see [pointer tools] –

- Locked or hidden layers
- Locked object
- A transparent object, empty or mostly empty box sitting on top
- A master page item

You can't select text you can see [text tool] –

- Baseline shifted text (text appears above or below the selection area)
- Its not actually text, but a linked image file
- A transparent object, empty or mostly empty box sitting on top

You can't see text in an over set text box –

- Text wrap on a nearby object, or on the image inside a nearby object
- A hidden break character in the text box
- Overly large inset spacing in the text frame options
- First Baseline set too low for box height in the text frame options
- Cheap font that needs an oversized text box

You can't change line spacing –

- Try selecting the whole sentence or paragraph and reapplying the line space
- Check if lines are locked to the baseline grid
- Text wrap on a nearby object

If lines of text jump out of a text box –

- The “keep options” may force lines to stay together, or with following text/previous text
- Text wrap on a nearby object
- Paragraph specified to start at the top of a box or column

If new text doesn't look like the old text –

- A character style sheet is applied and shouldn't be, or isn't applied and should be
- Old text is skewed to manually make italic text
- Old text is in a scaled text box
- Nested character styles, such as those that automatically add a character style to a drop cap or bullet character
- Horizontal or vertical scaling on text

Look out for:

- Manual hyphenation (a hyphen typed to break a word at the end of a line of text: “mara-thon”)
- Soft returns
- Anything colored with “registration”
- Small things like text or rules that are 4-c black
- Text that should be variables but were typed: page numbers and jump heads that don't update when the pagination changes
- Hidden objects or layers
- Text boxes threaded in unexpected directions
- Graphics pasted in instead of linked
- Empty boxes on top of other objects
- Tabs or spaces used for paragraph indent or to align text, the alignment may be lost if text size or font is changed

Be extra careful when. . .

- Ungrouping objects - there may have been an effect applied to the group that will be lost
- Changing style sheets - style sheets may be applied to text you don't intend to change, or the style sheet may be the basis for other style sheets, changing unrelated text
- Search and replace - work on a copy file and do each change one by one
- Updating/relinking images - occasionally the wrong file is updated
- Resizing a text box by dragging the corner handles, you may accidentally stretch the text

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