

Runt — a short word, the only one in the last line of the paragraph

There are two terms referring to common text flow problems that occur in typesetting.

Widow — the last line of the paragraph at the beginning of the next page/column.

Orphan — the first line of the paragraph at the end of the page/column.

And now, in our time, when everyone began to use indesign, another term **Runt** appeared in typesetting — it was invented by [David Blatner](#) for a short single word in the last line of a paragraph.

What is special about this short word standing alone in the last line of a paragraph? Why did this topic arise? According to a number of designers (not all), such a short word spoils a page view, and we need to do something with it.

Resetting the “Hyphenate Last Word” checkbox on the “Hyphenation” tab in paragraph style settings will not help if this short word turned out to be entirely on one line.

A reasonable solution is to assign the “No break” attribute to the space before this word.

And on the Internet as one everyone is on the way to do this by introducing the grep command into the paragraph style of the main text.

<https://nukefactory.com/tutorials/widows-orphans-and-runts/>

good description of these typesetting terms.

<https://luminousworks.com/runts.html>

here you may found new term ‘de-runted’

<https://www.id-extras.com/indesign-grep-to-avoid-runts/>

interesting discussion about runts in layouts.

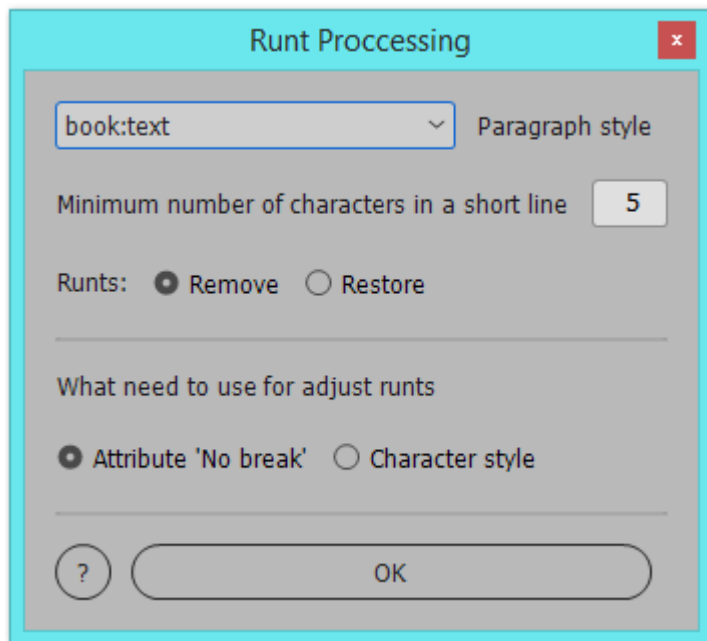
and you can also find many sites with the same approach to solving this problem. On all these sites where this question is discussed, everyone sees only one solution: use grep commands in paragraph style. And they agree to put up with the fact that the use of grep styles slows down the process of recalculating the layout. And this is sometimes very noticeable.

But if we remember Apple’s motto: **Think different**, and refuse to be obligated to do as everyone does, not to be such a conformist, then you can see another solution: use a script! After all, this task to assign to some of the last spaces of the paragraph the attribute “No break” *is needed only once*. And if you do, like everyone who is in the trend of imposed solutions — add grep commands to the paragraph style — then

each recalculation of the layout will find for these spaces again and again and confirm the already established attribute “No break.” And this is a direct waste of time!

Therefore, it is more expedient to determine the paragraph style of the text, find spaces before the last word in the selected text with a script and assign the “No break” attribute to these spaces or remove it.

This task is solved by a free script.



It is assumed that there are user-created paragraph styles in the file, and the script works only with these styles. If only [Basic Paragraph], then the program will not work.

Two ways to make a space before a short word get the attribute “No break”:

- just change the attribute of this sign, then a plus sign will appear in the paragraph styles panel after the name of the paragraph style used;
- create your own character style for these spaces.

The desired option is selected by radio buttons. If you select the second option, the #RuntRemove character style will be created, if it is not already in operation. In the settings of this character style, the “No break” checkbox is selected, and this is the only setting in this character style.

The selected area is processed, expanded to the border of the last paragraph that fell into the selection.

If the “Remove” radio button is active, then the last words in the paragraphs are searched, and if the number of characters after the last space in the paragraph is less than or equal to the limit value (“The minimum number of characters in a short line”), then the spaces before the found words are formed in accordance with the selected radio button.

If the “Restore” radio button is active, then the last words in paragraphs are searched, and the space before each word is applied by character style [None], and the attribute “No break” is cleared.

This is a *one-time text processing*, grep search commands are not implemented in the paragraph style, which can potentially slow down the layout recalculation process.

Using Ctrl+Z keys, you can roll back the layout to the state before the program starts.

We all have different tasks, and it may be important for someone to have such control over the design of the text in their texts. Take the program for yourself, practice to understand what is the minimum number of characters of the last word in your works, when it is justified to get rid of this word.

Nigel French in the book **Indesign Type: Professional Typography with Adobe InDesign** recommends starting with 8 characters, and then see what happens if there are 9 or 10 of them.

The archive with this program must be unpacked in the user area of the scripts, then when you click on the cross in the header of the program window, the current settings will be remembered:— the selected style and the minimum number of characters in a short line.

P. S.

On the website <https://shop.dotextok.ru/en/> this script about working with short words that create one last line of a paragraph is not the single free script. There are others that are also very useful in some cases, for example, getting a list of free hotkeys in InDesign.

<https://shop.dotextok.ru/en/06-free-keyboard-shortcuts-in-indesign-free-script>.

Any search engine will tell us which ones are busy, but which ones are free, you can't immediately find out. This free script will help you with this.

And I am sure, you will not regret if you find time to get acquainted with two unique solutions:

1) creating any kind of footnotes in one story.

<https://shop.dotextok.ru/en/11-any-footnotes-in-your-text-flow>.

You know there are several options for the design of footnotes in InDesign, but only one option is possible within one story. This script removes this limitation.

2) division of the last row of the table.

<https://shop.dotextok.ru/en/02-divide-table-row>.

It has always been in the Word program, but it is not in InDesign. But for several years now, there has been a script that helps both divide lines and combine them if there are changes in the layout.

If you have any questions, be free to write me in Russian or English. I always answer.

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