



P.O. Box 22219, Lincoln, NE 68542-2219  
Phone: (402) 423-4782, Fax: (402) 423-5154  
<http://www.braille2000.co>

# ***Transcriber's Guide to Translation Typing using Braille2000***

## **Use your skills; save your fingers**

If you have the assistance of motivated typists, you and they comprise a formidable team of braille producers. The typists can input the prose, following some simple guidelines for the layout of the text. You can take their text files and quickly create well-formatted contracted braille, proofread it, and make any final adjustments to the page layouts. There are no statistics available so far, but it would not be surprising for a transcriber to keep up with four typists, and produce two to three times the braille per week than if working alone.

## **The basics**

The translation typists need to produce text files of a type known as "Rich Text Format" and often called RTF. The RTF standard was created by Microsoft but it is a public standard and other word processing programs understand it. In particular, a translation typist can use Microsoft Word, Microsoft Works, Microsoft Wordpad, and Corel WordPerfect, to name a few. Note that Wordpad is a standard part of Windows.

You will receive RTF files of text, prepared by translation typists. These files are then Inserted into the braille document using Braille2000. The Insert process also translates the text into contracted and does basic page formatting. The result is braille in the document file, as if you had entered it yourself. After you insert the braille, you can make all sorts of changes to the text, perhaps as you proofread the braille. If you wish, you can create a back-translated ink-print and send that to the typists for proofreading for content. You should still proofread the braille yourself, perhaps after the typists have proofread the back-translated print copy. And you may need to adjust the layout of some pages, particularly if you are preparing the transcription for interpoint embossing.

By the word "text" we will refer to the English RTF file and its content. By the word "braille" we will refer to the braille ABT file and its content.

## **Page layout relationships**

The better your translation typists do at putting the prose into a good page layout the less work you will have to do. There are six text to braille layout relationships which can be used. These relationships guide the braille format when doing **implicit** format control.

1. Centering versus Left-justified  
Text which is centered generates centered braille. Text which is Left-justified generates normal (left-justified, non-centered) braille. Other text alignments, such as right-justified should not be used by typists.
2. Italics versus Normal font  
Text which is set in italics generates italics in braille.

### 3. Indent and Paragraph (left) Margin

The amount of paragraph indent and “runover” (in text, one uses the term left margin, but it is the same concept) determines the indent and runover of the braille. The text indent and left-margin settings should be set in jumps of quarter inches, with each eighth-inch corresponding to one braille cell position. The table below shows the indent and left-margin settings for popular braille paragraph forms. Note that the left-margin measurement is taken from the left side of the printable area on a page and thus does not include the page margins.

| Braille form | Text indent | Text margin |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|
| 1-1          | 0”          | 0”          |
| 1-3          | 0”          | 0.25”       |
| 1-5          | 0”          | 0.5”        |
| 3-1          | 0.25”       | 0”          |
| 3-3          | 0.25”       | 0.25”       |
| 3-5          | 0.25”       | 0.5”        |
| 5-3          | 0.5”        | 0.25”       |
| 5-7          | 0.5”        | 0.75”       |

### 4. Right-indent

The area of the page used for text is that between the left- and right-side page margins. For example, if the page margins are 1.75” left and right, there will be 5” of text space when the left-margin is at 0”. If you adjust the right-hand margin for a paragraph (via the ruler) to be earlier than the page margin (by sliding the right-margin to the left), you achieve what is called a “right-indent”. The translator will shorten braille lines by the amount of right-indent, using the scale of 1/8” per cell. Only tables of contents and poetry should use this approach, normally with a right-indent amount of 0.75” (6 cells).

### 5. Tabs

Tab stops work much the same way, with each 1/8” of text space mapping to one cell position.

### 6. Choice of font

You may use any font you like, with the following two provisions:

- Elements of text that should be set in Computer Braille Code can be set in Courier font;
- Elements of text that are literal ASCII-braille symbols can be set in a braille font, such as “Braille from BRL2000.

All other fonts are translated to the target language, set in advance of translation via the Braille2000 "Language" button.

You can do an entire file using implicit formatting, as described above. As an alternative, Translation Typing offers several explicit format directives, listed below. An explicit format directive is placed alone on a line or at the beginning of a paragraph. It specifies an overriding braille format for the immediately following text and all subsequent text that has the same text layout (same indent and left-margin, and same style (centered versus left-justified). When the text layout changes, implicit formatting resumes, unless (a) you use another explicit format directive, or (b) you have used %explicit to switch to everything-explicit mode.

When an explicit format control is used, text paragraphs might as well all be blocked at the left margin (0” indent and left-margin). When everything is explicit (via %explicit), then all text might as well be written at the left-margin, including centered headings (centering is in this case indicated by the %centered directive, and need not appear centered in text).

There are thus three ways to prepare Translation Typing text:

- by carefully laying out the text, making sure the indent and left-margin are right for braille,
- by laying out the text in a good-looking way, and using a format directive whenever this is contrary to braille practice, and
- by arranging all the text in as simple a form as possible and indicating all braille layouts via format directives. Approach 1 makes no use of format directive, except for %pn=. Approach 2 uses format directives only as required and does not use %explicit. Approach 3 begins the file with %explicit and then uses a format directive for all

changes in layout.

## Special directives

There are a few aspects of page layout that are unique to braille. These are indicated by special directives which can appear inline (in the text) or as a separate paragraph. A special directive is a single word that begins with the % sign. When written inline (with the text) it is typed as a word, set off (as needed) from any adjacent text by blanks. The following special directives are defined. Italics denotes a variable (fill-in) part of the directive.

| Directive          | Use   |
|--------------------|---|
| %explicit          | To ignore paragraph shape and rely only on directives for braille format control  |
| %implicit          | To honor paragraph shape (indent and margins) and to format the corresponding braille paragraph according to the scale of 1/8" per cell; you may use directives below as required |
| %pn= <i>number</i> | To give the print page number   |
| %tnl               | To generate a left-of-text (beginning) TN symbol  |
| %tnr               | To generate a right-of-text (ending) TN symbol  |
| %page              | To generate a braille page break  |
| %center            | To cause all following paragraphs to become centered braille  |
| %head              | To cause the single following paragraph to be centered with a blank line before and after   |
| %subhead           | To cause the single following paragraph to be a 5-5 paragraph with preceding blank line   |
| %runhead           | To cause the single following paragraph to be taken as the running head   |
| %left              | To cause all following paragraphs to be regular (uncentered)  |
| %x-y               | To set the following paragraphs as x-y braille paragraphs (x, y are numbers)  |
| %toc               | To set the following paragraphs as contents entries   |
| %tocv              | To set the following paragraphs as contents entries of level v (v=0,1,2,3, etc.)  |
| %indent            | To set the following paragraphs as 3-1 braille paragraphs   |
| %indentv           | To set the following paragraphs as indented paragraphs of level v   |
| %block             | To set the following paragraphs as 1-1 braille paragraphs   |
| %blockv            | To set the following paragraphs as block paragraphs of level v  |
| %note              | To set the following paragraphs as 7-5 braille paragraphs   |
| %tnote             | To set the following paragraphs as 7-5 braille paragraphs with leading and trailing blank lines.  |
| %list              | To set the following paragraphs as 1-3 braille paragraphs   |
| %listv             | To set the following paragraphs as list items of level v  |
| %space             | To generate a blank line in braille   |
| %spacev            | To generate v number of blank lines in braille (v=1,2,...9)   |
| %reqsp             | To check for a blank line in braille at this point, generating one if necessary   |
| % <i>text</i>      | To use the % character as plain text, use %% to represent %   |

The use of any of the format control directives causes the adoption of explicit format control. You could follow some explicitly controlled paragraphs with %implicit to resume implicit formatting. %pn=, %tnl, %tnr, %space, %page do not adopt explicit format control (they make to change to explicit versus implicit control, and can be used with either).

If the percent sign appears as plain text but not the first character of a word, just type the percent sign in the usual way. It will not be taken as a special directive unless it begins a word. Only if a word begins with a plain percent character (rare) do you need to type it as a double-percent.

## Inserting the file

An RTF file is brought into Braille2000 via the Insert or Append buttons in the Control Panel. You then select Text File and a Windows open-type dialog box appears. If the "Files of type" box is not set to Rich Text files, change it, and then proceed to select the file to be translated.

You can also paste text from the clipboard. When working in the Braille View, use a right-button click to the Paste button in the Control Panel. Then select Print-text. When working in the Print View, just click the Paste button.

If you are doing textbook format and the typists have used %pn= you should click the "Options" button at the bottom of the dialog box and then put a checkmark in the box for the "Generate print page numbers" option. In the options box you will also find a control for handling italics and bold.

## **Summary**

Translation Typing, used to produce RTF files of English prose, can save you hours of direct entry time. As you can imagine, translation typing can't do everything. And you don't want to overburden volunteer typists with too many braille format issues. But there is still a lot of braille prose that is formatted in simple sensible ways, braille you won't have to enter yourself if you have helpers doing translation typing.

For books that have many lists, tables, or math expressions, you will have to decide at what point it is easier to input the whole thing in braille yourself. For some difficult items, you may find you can save time by having typists prepare all the prose and then you come along after it is translated to braille and insert the "hard" parts. You will have to select a strategy on a case by case basis.

It is particularly helpful, when proofreading translation-generated braille to have quick shortcuts all set up for putting paragraphs into various standard indent/runover formats. You can often proofread and adjust the paragraph layout in one operation, and with good shortcuts any braille format adjustments won't slow you down.

## Appendix: Operational Details

The directives cause the following results.

| <b>Directive</b>   | <b>Result</b>  |
|--------------------|--|
| %explicit          | Text layout is ignored, except for paragraph boundaries.   |
| %implicit          | Text layout is inspected and converted to cell positions in the scale of 1/8" equals one cell; any format directives below apply to the immediately following homogeneous layout of text, i.e., the format directive ends when the text layout changes |
| %pn= <i>number</i> | Generates a print page turn  |
| %tnl               | Generates a left-of-text (beginning) TN symbol   |
| %tnr               | Generates a right-of-text (ending) TN symbol   |
| %page              | Generates a braille page break   |
| %center            | Generates a centered region with a blank line before and after; blank lines are generated only as needed   |
| %head              | Does %center for the single following paragraph; then restores the previous layout declaration   |
| %subhead           | Does %reqspace; %block3 for the single following paragraph; then restores the previous layout declaration  |
| %runhead           | Declares the following paragraph to be the running head  |
| %left              | Cancels centering  |
| %x-y               | Sets indent to x and runover to y  |
| %toc               | Sets indent to 1 and runover to 3 and right-indent to 6 (same as toc0)   |
| %tocv              | If v=0, does %toc; else sets indent to (v*2)-1 and runover to 3+(v*2) and right-indent to 6  |
| %indent            | Sets indent to 3 and runover to 1 (same as indent1)  |
| %indentv           | Sets indent to 1+(v*2) and runover to (v*2)-1  |
| %block             | Sets indent to 1 and runover to 1 (same as block1)   |
| %blockv            | Sets indent to (v*2)-1 and runover to (v*2)-1  |
| %note              | Sets indent to 7 and runover to 5  |
| %nnote             | Sets indent to 7 and runover to 5  |
| %list              | Sets indent to 1 and runover to 3  |
| %listv             | Sets indent to (v*2)-1 and runover to 3+(v*2)  |
| %space             | Adds a blank line to the braille   |
| %spacev            | Adds v blank lines to the braille  |
| %reqsp             | If the preceding braille line is not blank, does %space  |