

GREAT-ER 2
GUI Styleguide

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1 Introduction

This styleguide does not aim to be a complete GUI guideline, but should only list special cases where common sense does not result in a consistent user interface. If in doubt, apply common sense or consult general user interface guidelines.

2 Alignment and Placement

Grouped controls should be aligned horizontally or vertically.

2.1 Buttons

Dialog box buttons should be grouped horizontally and placed at the bottom of the dialog box with no other controls to the left or right of them.

If the dialog box is small, they should be centered horizontally. If it is big enough to add at least one more button, the button group should be in the lower right corner.

A group of dialog box buttons must be one of the following combinations in the given order:

- OK
- OK, Cancel
- OK, Apply, Cancel
- OK, Apply, Revert, Cancel
- Yes, No
- Yes, No, Cancel

Other buttons must not follow these restrictions. They should be aligned and placed like other controls and can contain any text. They should not be placed at the end of a dialog box.

2.2 Static Text

If static text is used as a label for a control, it may be placed above or to the left of the control.

Static text above controls should be left justified with it.

Static text to the left of a control must be right justified with other static text of the same group of controls. It should be right justified with static text of other controls if possible. Additionally it should be centered vertically with the first line (or item) of a control.

3 Dimensions

Dimensions of controls should generally not be set explicitly, but should be calculated dynamically by the used GUI toolkit from a default value which will be modified by alignment constraints.

Grouped controls of the same type should have the same dimensions.

Grouped controls of different types should share at least one dimension, if possible.

3.1 Text Entry

The minimum dimensions of multiline text entry controls should explicitly be set to an appropriate size.

3.2 Icons

The dimensions of icons can be of any size. Icons of the same type (e.g. toolbox icons, status icons) should share the same dimensions through an application. Where appropriate, e.g. in error message dialogs, predefined system icons should be used.

4 Spacing

Generally two distances are used:

SMALLSPACE is 3 screen pixels wide or high.

SPACE is 8 screen pixels wide or high.

BIGSPACE is two *SPACE*s wide or high.

4.1 Frames

4.1.1 Windows and Dialogs

There should be at least a *SPACE* between any item in a window or dialog box and the edge of the drawable area, i.e. inside the window or dialog border.

There must be a consistent spacing between the border of the window or dialog box and its elements.

4.1.2 Notebooks

There should be a *SPACE* around a notebook. There should be at least a *SPACE* between any item in a notebook and the edge of the notebook.

4.1.3 Group box

There should be a *SPACE* around a group box (wxStaticBox in wxPython; GtkFrame in GTK+). There is one exception: The distance to another group box may be reduced to *SMALLSPACE* if appropriate.

There should be at least a *SMALLSPACE* between any item in a group box and the inner edge of the drawable area of this group box.

4.2 Controls

Controls should have a *SPACE* between them. If a group of controls should be separated from another group of controls, a *BIGSPACE* should be used.

4.2.1 Buttons

If buttons are grouped horizontally, there should be a *BIGSPACE* between each button. If they are grouped vertically, there should only be a *SPACE* between them.

4.2.2 Text Entry

If text entry controls are grouped, there should be a *SPACE* between each of them. Labels for them should be placed at least *SMALLSPACE* away.

4.2.3 Radio Buttons and Check Boxes

If radio buttons or check boxes with their label are grouped horizontally, there should be two *SMALLSPACE* between them. If they are grouped vertically, there should only be a *SMALLSPACE* between them.