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LaserWriter: Thinnest Possible Lines

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TOPIC -----

What is the minimum line width that a Personal LaserWriter NT can print (in millimeters and points)? Is this the same for all LaserWriter printers?

DISCUSSION -----

The thinnest line a LaserWriter can print is limited by what's known as a device pixel. With all LaserWriter models to date, including the Personal LaserWriter (using the Canon P-110 engine), a device pixel is 1/300 of an inch, or .08mm. This translates to 24/100, or roughly one quarter of a point.

Many programs won't actually display a line this narrow, and instead use one point as their smallest printable unit. This PostScript code will generate an example page with a matrix of lines, each a single device pixel thick:

```
0 setlinewidth
72 72 612 {dup 0 moveto 792 lineto stroke} for
72 72 792 {dup 0 exch moveto 612 exch lineto stroke} for
showpage
```

Use a PostScript dump utility to download this program. This feature is available in version 7 of the LaserWriter Font Utility, or one of the old standbys like PSDump or Widgets.

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