According the ODF 1.2 specification, consecutive whitespace characters (space, tab, newline) should be collapsed to one space within <text:p> and <text:h> elements. The <text:s> element is not considered for collapsing. In this document, several combinations of spaces, text and <text:span> elements are shown. The number of spaces that should be displayed between the 'a' and 'b' characters is printed at the end of each line.

Simple spaces

no space

a b   ab   0

one space

a b   a b 1
a b   a b 1
a b   a b 1

two consecutive spaces

a b   a b 1
a b   a b 1
a b   a b 1

three consecutive spaces

a b   a   b1

Spaces and <s/>

no space

a b   a<s/>b   1

one space

a b   a <s/>b   2
a b   a <s/>b   2
a b   a<s/> b   2
a b   a<s/> b   2

two spaces

a b   a <s/>b   2
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a<s/> b   2

three spaces

a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3
a b   a <s/> b   3

four spaces

a b   a <s/> b   3