

Last but not least, you can use an ordinary hardboard

clipboard which can be purchased at any stationery store for very

little money. If you notch the sides at regular intervals and

use rubber bands to form lines, you will have a convenient

writing slot. For each new line, move the top rubber band past

the bottom rubber band to the next pair of notches.

For signing your name on checks or on a typewritten letter a

pocket signature guide will help you to stay on a straight line.

You can purchase one at the American Printing House for the Blind

in Louisville, Kentucky. It is a small open aluminum frame with

a rubber backing which holds it in place when you use it. A

piece of rubber elastic stretches across the frame and gives a

guide-line for writing while permitting loops to be written below

the line.

Practice your name many, many times until you know by heart

how to write it. Write your name each day for the first weeks

after you finish this course so that you don't forget how to

write it correctly. You will be proud to be able to sign your

own name and never again have to sign by an x.

GOOD LUCK!

LONGHAND WRITING FOR THE BLIND

By

Elizabeth D. Freund

Librarian

Overbrook School for the Blind

Philadelphia

Manufactured by Permission
by the

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

P. O. 6085

Louisville, KY 40206-0085

1995

7-73970-00

It is in the space provided between the grooves that you write. You can feel through the paper where the grooves are. The distance between them is 5/16 of an inch. The difficulty is that you have to divide this space within the grooves into three invisible parts: top space, mid space, and low space.

This won't be easy. But since, by now, you know the shapes of your letters, you should be able to do it. If you don't use all the space between the grooves for mid space, you should have enough left for loops and tails.

The fingers of your guiding hand will help you to keep track of the grooves. Besides, use your fingers as you did with the Marking Mat for marking the spot where you lift your pencil for dots or cross strokes, and for separating one word from the other. In a way this will be easier than it was with the wax crayon, because the pencil point is so much thinner. Press the pencil against your guiding finger for a moment before you lift the pencil. Your finger will retain the feeling of the pencil and this will make it possible for it to return to the very same spot.

If you interrupt your writing, a new problem turns up: You can't feel any more where your last letter ended as you did on the Marking Mat. Therefore, make it a rule always to finish your signature, if possible. If you are able to write notes or letters, finish your sentence before you stop so that you don't lose your train of thought. You could stick a pin into the last letter of the last word. Or you could fold the paper over at the line where you leave off, and continue on the next line. But don't forget that the sighted people will not be able to read your script if you write one sentence on top of the other.

There is a special clipboard with easy-to-use writing guide attached called Marks Script Guide, which you can get from the American Foundation for the Blind.

Some people find it easier to write on this Marks Script Guide. The writing is done on a wooden board to which you fasten a sheet of paper, or even a whole pad of paper, by a clamp. There are no grooves. The writing is done between two thin steel rods which form a writing slot above the paper without touching it. These steel rods are attached to a small carriage which can be moved up and down the board on another rod at the left hand side. The notches stop the writing slot at regular intervals to form lines. The steel rods are 10/16 of an inch apart. This gives you ample space for writing, more than on the grooved cardboard we described before. But, on the other hand, you use a lot of paper for the larger letters and, therefore, can't write very much on one sheet of paper.

It takes patience and practice to learn how to write your name in longhand. We hope our method will help you, but you have to follow it until you are sure that what you write is correct.

Scope and Sequence for Learning to Write

Don't waste time by learning all the letters of the alphabet. Concentrate on the letters needed for your name. Maybe later on some of you will like to learn more. But don't forget, sighted people will have difficulties reading what you have written if it is not written exactly as it should be, and they almost always will prefer your writing with a typewriter. But you should be able to sign your typewritten letters and your checks in longhand.

Of course, we had to make up this booklet in such a way that all the letters are included, since we couldn't know which ones you would need for your particular name. We added all the numbers. They will be helpful in learning some of the capital letters and it is always useful to know the numbers.

Read the instructions in this booklet and re-read them again AND AGAIN. Each lesson is based on the lesson before it. Therefore, you may not understand one, if you have missed the preceding one. Practice the basic exercises at the beginning of each new letter group regardless of whether a letter of this group is in your name.

It seems that students are inclined not to follow the method of the manual step by step, but prefer to begin with capital and small letters in the sequence they appear in their names.

You have to know how to write the basic form of each specific group, otherwise you will not be able to follow the explanations. Then, look to see if letters of this group appear in your name, and learn these letters. But first, learn only the small letters. Only at the very end, after you know your small letters and the numbers, then practice the capital letters in your name.

Don't think: My first name, Robert, begins with a capital R, so I will practice the capital R first, and then the o, and the b, and so on. It will only make things more difficult for you. We grouped the letters on purpose, beginning with the easiest ones.

You should concentrate on learning your signature and nothing else. If you want to learn more, you can do this easily at home with the help of the manual.

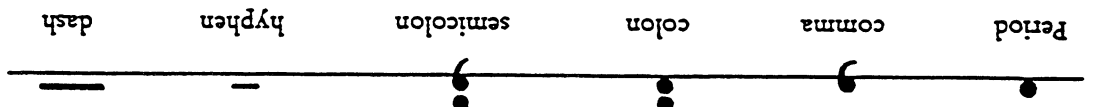
Capital I begins with a reversed loop to the left from the base line. On the base line it adds a rather flat semicircle to the left and ends with a short turn to the right as did I.

Capital J resembles a small letter I in reverse. Begin with a reversed loop from the base line to the top line, go left and back down to the starting point and then add the tail which continues down, turns left, and comes back up crossing the base line.

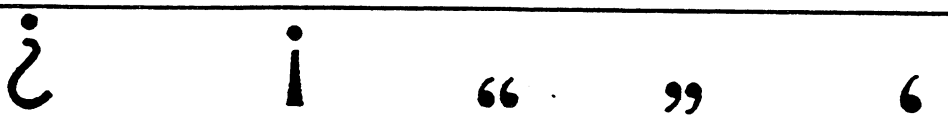
Capital S has a narrow loop at the top, otherwise it is like the small letter s.

Now that you know the capital letters in your name, write your full name on the Marking Mat, first on the lines as you did before. Then try to write your name without using top space and low space, so that you use only the mid space. You do this on the Marking Mat. Sharpen your crayon so that you are able to produce a thin stroke. This will help you to reduce your letters in size.

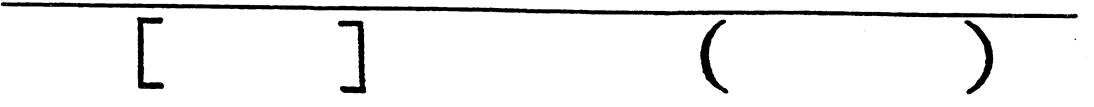
Introduction of Punctuation Signs



apostrophe quotation marks exclamation point question mark



parentheses opening closing brackets opening closing



Writing in Regular Size with a Pencil on Paper

Once you master your letters on the Marking Mat--but only then, please!--you should begin to write on paper with a pencil or pen. But keep your guide books at hand. You are no longer able to feel what you write, and therefore you have to be careful that you don't make any mistakes.

We use a grooved cardboard which we cover with a sheet of writing paper, attaching it to the board and paper clips at the four corners. Don't make the mistake of writing directly on the grooved cardboard. It is heavy and expensive.

Capital K is a number 1 with an arrow to its right, beginning at the top, touching its middle with the point, and ending with a downstroke to the right. You can join a following letter to the downstroke. Be sure the arrow touches the mainstroke.

Letters Resembling the Number 2--Q, L, D

Capital Q is exactly like a big number 2. You begin it at the top and join a following letter at the base line.

Capital L begins at the top with a small hook to the right, makes a small loop, and then makes a downward stroke, and ends with a small loop to the left and a hook to the right like a number 2. You begin at the top and join a following letter at the base line.

Capital D begins with a downstroke, makes a small loop to the left and goes to the right like a number 2. The final stroke to the right continues in a curve to the top and there adds a small loop sideways. Start a following letter close on the right at the base line.

Letters Resembling the Number 3--B, R, E

Capital B begins at the base line with a straight upstroke and add a number 3. For joining a following letter, retrace the base of the number 3.

Capital R resembles the above-mentioned capital B. You begin at the base line with a straight upstroke and add a semi-circle which returns to the upstroke at its center. Then make a curve to the right, touching the base line.

Capital E is a reverse number 3 which begins at the top.

Letters Resembling the Number 7--T, G, F, I, J, S

Capital T begins like a number 7 and ends in a rounded stroke to the left with a sharp turn to the right. Do not cross the downstroke. Start a following letter close on the right at the base line.

Capital G begins with an upward stroke into a narrow loop at the top and then hooks to the right and finishes like the letter T with a rounded stroke to the left and a sharp turn to the right.

Capital F begins like a number 7 and ends in a rounded downstroke in F crosses in the middle and then has a short, straight line going down. Start a following letter as for T.

It is essential that you follow the shape of an embossed letter with the index finger of your writing hand until you really have a good mental picture of this letter. It is necessary, too, that you practice with the grooved letters. We found that the braille sheet is easily punctured by a pencil. Therefore, for following the grooves, it is better to use the eraser end of a pencil.

We worded the description of each letter carefully. Please read these explanations while you are learning a certain letter.

Please see that you sit in the right posture. Your arms should be on the table, and the weight on them--not on your hands. You will have to be shown how to hold the pencil or crayon and how to glide your hand along while writing. The letters have to stay on the lines and touch the base and upper lines. If you don't try this from the beginning, you will never write accurately.

If the letters used in the words, "it, wit, writ, minimum, etc.," are not known to you--just study how those letters are joined. Then join the letters you know as soon as you have learned them.

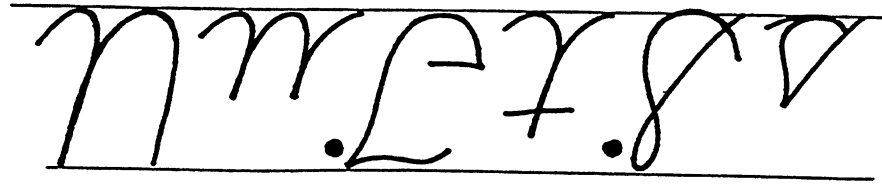
When you have learned the letters necessary for your signature, first write your signature in big size through top, mid and low space on the Marking Mat. Then cut down the size by writing your name using only the space between the two lines, still with crayon on Marking Mat, but see that the crayons are sharpened for this purpose to produce a thinner stroke. Only then proceed to write with pencil on paper over grooved cardboard.

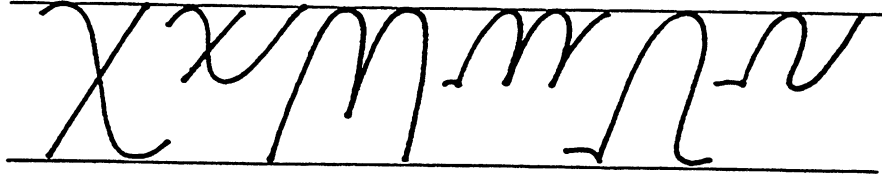
We think that it is not practical to teach groups of more than 3 or 4 students at the most at the same time since it is necessary to supervise what they are doing: that the letters are on the line, that the posture is right, that they really master a letter before jumping to the next one, etc. Since table space in most of the classrooms is scarce, it would be an easy solution of all the problems to have only 3 students work on handwriting while the others are kept busy with something else.

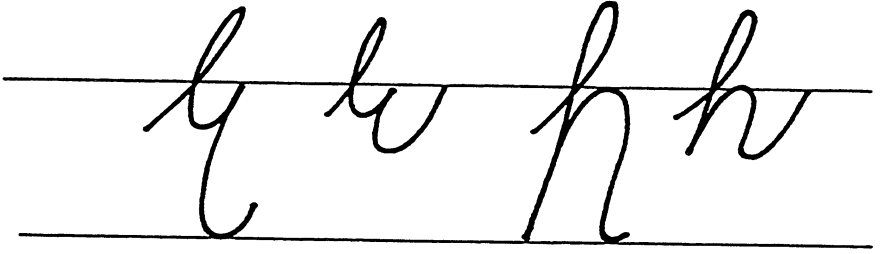
MATERIALS

Instruction Booklet with Embossed Letters

This booklet has embossed samples of all the letters. They can be easily felt. Before beginning to learn a letter, feel the sample with your index finger, and follow its outline until you







If you have to join a small letter to a capital letter, and there is no upstroke at the end of the capital letter, begin the small letter at the base line.

We prepared a chart of embossed (but not engraved) capital letters side by side with their small letters. In this chart the letters are smaller than the samples you saw so far. But, by now, we hope you know the shape of the letters so well that it is no longer necessary to make the letters so very big. This chart is arranged according to the alphabet so that it is easy for you to find the letter you are looking for.

Y, Z
 Letters Resembling Small Letters--A, C, M, N, O, P, U, V, W, X,

The capital letters A, C, M, N, O, P, U, V, W, X, Y, and Z have almost the same shape as their small letters. Just the same, please practice them first on the Marking Mat in large size.

All the other capital letters are more or less different from their small letters. On the chart you will find a large dot to the upper right of these letters. We will explain how these letters are written by likening them to numbers.

Letters Resembling the Number 1--H, K,

Capital H is a combination of two number ones, side by side. At the end of the last downstroke you return to the middle of the first downstroke and then cross over to the second one. Join a following letter to this cross-stroke.

get the idea of how it is written. Try to find out how the stroke is drawn. Is it upwards, slanted, rounded or straight?

Practice Booklet with Engraved Letters

Besides, we have prepared a booklet in which you will find the same letters, not embossed but engraved. Follow the grooves of the letter which you already know from the embossed sample with the eraser-end of a pencil. By tracing the letter you will accustom the muscles in your hand to the movement needed for writing the letter correctly. To write with a pen or pencil is different from using a stylus for braille writing. The stylus is pushed straight up and down, while a crayon, pencil or pen is held at a slant.

At the beginning you will use a Tactile Marking Mat and a wax crayon for copying the oversized sample letters in this booklet. Maybe you will think: Why should I practice oversized letters when my signature has to be done in a small size? Believe us that by writing these enlarged letters many times until they really look perfect, you will master them soon. Once you really know them, it will be easy for you to reduce them to the right small size. If you begin by immediately writing small size letters, you are almost sure to fail. Please, don't blame it on our method.

Tactile Marking Mat

The Tactile Marking Mat is a textured plastic sheet. Paper clips hold down a sheet of thin newspaper. When you make a stroke with the crayon, the texture on the plastic retains bits of the soft crayon on the pliable paper so that the stroke you make can be felt. But this is the case only if you use one sheet of paper. The crayon would not be tactile with heavier paper or two layers of newspaper. This Marking Mat is an ideal means for you to practice your handwriting because you can feel what you are writing while you are writing.

Preparation for Writing

Work Space

You have this instruction booklet, the practice booklet with the engraved letters, and the Marking Mat. You will need some space to have all three of them within your reach so that you can compare again while you are practicing. It would be ideal, if you would have a big table to write on. If you have only small desks, maybe you can produce a larger surface by putting some desks together until they form a large table.

Holding a Crayon or Pencil

Before you begin your writing you must know how to hold a crayon or pencil. To hold it correctly, grasp it above its point with the tips of thumb and index finger of your writing hand. Support it underneath with the last joint of the middle finger. Only the tapered point of crayon or pencil should protrude. Please note: the tip of your thumb and the tip of your index finger always touch the crayon or pencil, and we mean the tip, not any upper part of the index finger. Some students are inclined to put the tip of the thumb and the second knuckle of the index finger on the pencil. This might be good with the stylus but it is definitely wrong with the pencil. Be very careful not to make this mistake. Don't hold the crayon or pencil too stiffly. All the fingers are slightly bent. The crayon has to give a bit when you are writing.

Posture and Positioning

Another important thing is the right posture of your body while writing. You are sitting on a chair before a table or desk. Don't slump or lean back in the chair. The upper part of your body should be slightly bent forward without touching the table. There should be 2-3 inches between the edge of the table and your chest. The mat is on the table right before you, a little bit slanted to the left if you are writing with your right hand. If you are left-handed, slant the mat to the right side. Since the Marking Mat is 17" by 13 1/3", you might have to move it in the process of writing because you should write in front of you and not at the left or at the right.

Rest your forearm comfortably on the table so that the weight is on your arm. The side of your hand along your little finger is on the table so that your hand can turn at the wrist and your fingers are free for any movement with the crayon. If your arm is not on the table but somewhere up in the air, your hand has the additional task of remaining upright on the table and your fingers are cramped. Try and you will agree that it makes a lot of difference.

It is very important to have the right way of holding your tool and to sit in the right manner. With a vertical crayon you might puncture the paper and your letters won't look as they should. The Marking Mat won't retain the crayon either. Only when you are able to follow these instructions are you ready for writing.

Introduction to Handwriting

With Braille you have three different levels on which you put your dots: points 1 and 4, points 2 and 5, and points 3 and

Introduction of Capital Letters

Remember that there is no capital letter sign in longhand writing.

Most capital letters have the same shape as the small letters, but they extend into the top space and some of them even extend into the low space.

Capital letters do not need to begin with an upstroke from the base line because there is no preceding letter.

a A B C

d D e f F

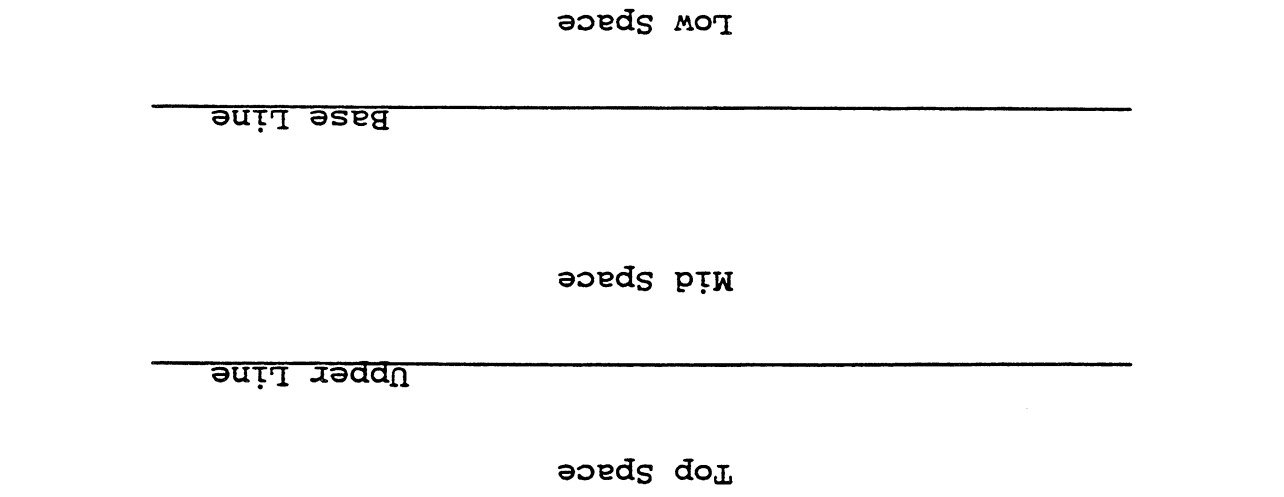
g G H A I J

k K L I

m M n o

p P q r R.

6. In handwriting, too, there are three different levels as the following sketch shows you.



Most letters stay on the base line and reach up as far as the upper line, filling the mid space. Some letters extend above the upper line, and a few extend below the base line. Top space and low space have almost the same width as mid space.

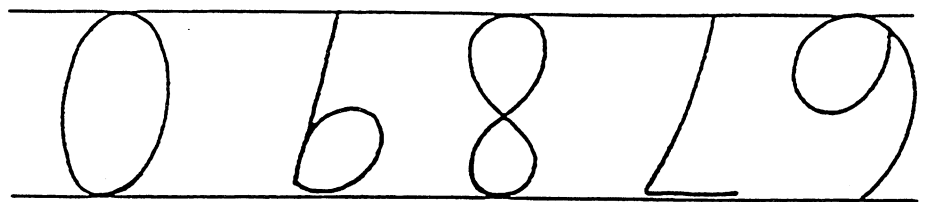
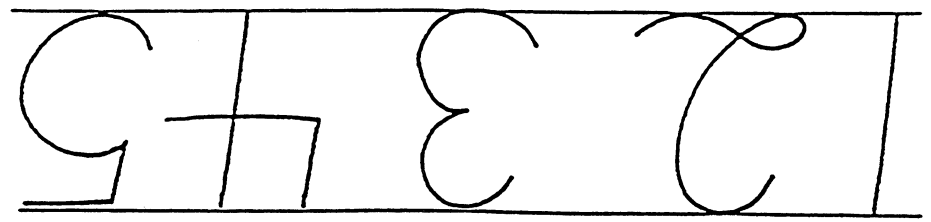
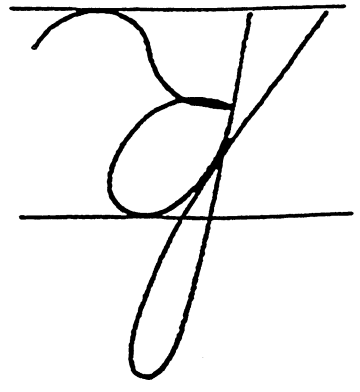
The newspaper on which you will write has to have lines which you can feel. You or your friends can make such lines by using a tracing wheel, such as is used for marking sewing patterns, over a soft surface. The distance between the lines should be approximately $1 - 1/4$ ".

Some people like to write with their right hand, others use the left one. We will call the one you use your "writing hand." You will use the other hand for guiding your writing. Therefore, we will refer to it as your "guiding hand."

In handwriting you always write from left to right, never the other way, as you do when using a braille slate. As you write one letter and begin another, the writing hand glides on its side slowly from left to right. If the hand does not move along, you would write one letter on top of the other. The fingers of your guiding hand have to move, too. Like little bloodhounds they crawl along on the base and upper lines behind the crayon to make sure that your letters are in the right place. But the fingers of the guiding hand should never touch or move the point of the crayon or pencil.

You never use the Braille contractions: Letter sign as always two letters, a and r, and not an abbreviation. There are 26 small letters. Furthermore, there is no capital letter sign. You have to learn a special letter for each capital letter. But, fortunately, most of the capital letters have the same or a very

Now you are through with the whole alphabet in small letters.



Introduction of Numbers

Learning to write the numbers is important because they are useful to know and besides, they will be helpful in learning the capital letters.

All numbers are approximately $1 1/2$ " spaces high, stand on the base line, and begin at the top. There are only a few which require special explanations. With most of them you will get the right idea from the samples.

Number 4 begins with a short stroke down, then continues to the right. Now lift the crayon for the downstroke which crosses the horizontal stroke and ends at the base line.

Number 5 begins with a horizontal stroke from right to left; then follows a short down stroke to which a reversed half ball is joined.

Numbers 8, 9, and 0 all begin at the top with a round stroke to the left.

Feel and copy the numbers until you master them.

similar shape as the small ones, the main difference is that they are taller.

The letters we will teach you are as simple as possible.

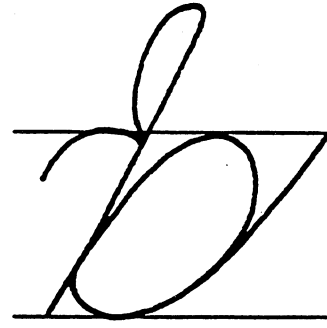
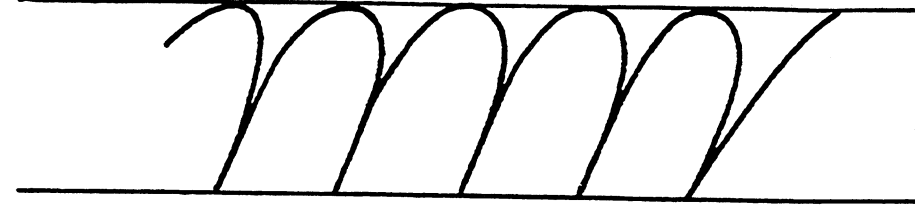
Seeing people often use little embellishing hooks and curls here and there which date from the time when monks did handwriting. Don't let people tell you that you should write their way or that only their letters are correct. Modern schools don't teach these fancy letters anymore. Why should you learn them?

Introduction of Small Letters

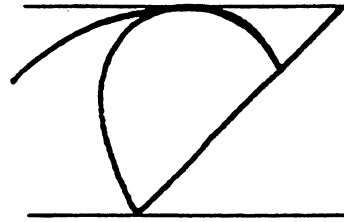
To make it easier, we divided the small letters into groups, each group containing letters which are constructed in a similar way, so that it will help you to memorize them. They will be introduced on the following pages:

6	Introduction of Small Letters
6	Pointer Letters--u, i, t, w, r
9	Mound Letters--n, m, v, x
11	Loop Letters--e, l, b, h
12	Tail Letters--j, y, z
13	Circle Letters--c, a, d, g, o
15	Odd Letters--f, q, s, p, k
16	Introduction of Numbers
17	Introduction of Capital Letters
18	Letters Resembling Small Letters--A, C, M, N, O, P, U, V, W, X, Y, Z
19	Letters Resembling Number 1--H, K
19	Letters Resembling Number 2--Q, L, D
19	Letters Resembling Number 3--B, R, E
20	Letters Resembling Number 7--T, G, F, I, J, S
20	Introduction of Punctuation Signs

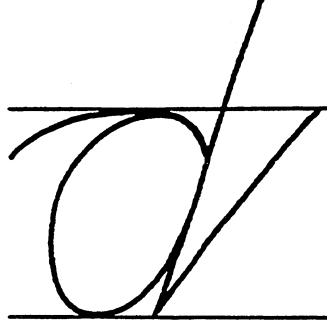
After all these introductions now let us begin with the pointers. By this we mean letters which point upwards. Feel the sample, then take the engraved letter booklet and beginning on the left at the base line, follow the long line of pointers with the eraser-tip of your pencil at least 20 times.



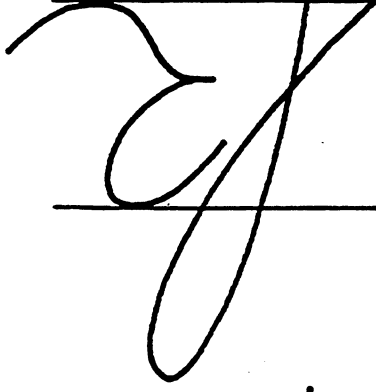
Letter g has a reversed narrow tail, too. It begins with the letter a, which is not rounded off at the end, but goes straight down all the way to the low space, has a narrow reversed tail and a short hook at the base line. We hope this letter doesn't appear in your name. It is a headache.



Letter s begins with an upstroke that is more slanted than a pointer. After touching the upper line it descends to the right in an acute angle. Then, forming a semicircle to the left, it touches the base line and curves just a little bit upwards until it touches the first upstroke. Now it retraces and makes a short upstroke to the right.



Letter p begins with a pointer going into the top space almost as high as t and then straight down to the low space, then it turns to the text in a tail cross the downstroke halfway through the mid space, and there adds a mound which curves back to the downstroke in a semi-circle, and retraces the last stroke like the letter s.

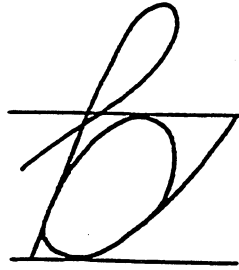


Letter k almost looks like a letter h. But unlike the letter h it does not add a mound but something almost like a half pretzel, bending the mound first to the left and then to the right. Our sample shows both parts separated and then the finished letter after these two parts have been combined. How fortunate

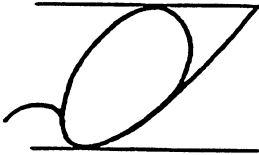
you add a reversed tail on the right side of the downstroke. Add a short hook at the base line. Attention: This letter is difficult. Trace it many times before you begin to write.

but definitely not a letter d. (Don't forget: feel the embossed letter and trace the engraved letters before you try writing).

Letter g begins in the very same way as letter a. But it adds a large tail, crossing the downstroke at the base line. This is difficult. Therefore feel, trace and write.



Letter o begins with a letter c which is rounded into a whole circle by bringing the stroke up to the right until it touches the horn. There you add a short hook as in the letters w, v, b.

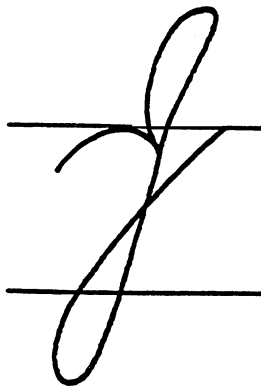


Do you already know many letters contained in your name? If you do, begin to practice parts of your name, even if you don't yet know the capital letters. Leave them for later.

Do you hold your crayon in the correct position? Do you use your guiding hand? Are the words spaced? Be sure that your letters touch the lines where they should. Do you always compare your letters with the samples in this book? Please do, because you must avoid getting into a wrong habit.

Odd Letters--f, g, s, p, k

There are 5 more small letters left. Let us call them the odd letters because they don't fit exactly into the other groups. They are f, g, s, p, and k.

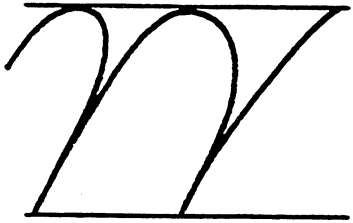


Letter f is the only small letter which extends into both the top space and the low space. Begin with a long loop upwards which you then continue all the way down into the low space. There

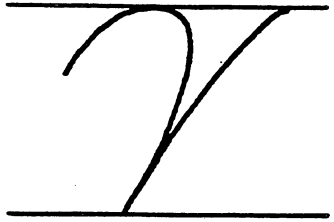
After your fingers know, by this method, how a pointer is made, take your Marking Mat and a crayon and make an upstroke from the base line to the upper line. This upstroke has to be slanted. Then you make a downstroke. You will find that the upstroke is partly covered by the downstroke. This has to be done this way. When the downstroke gets near the base line, make a round stroke to the right, slightly touching the base line without lifting the crayon.

Practice these pointers many times. Do you hold the crayon in a slant as you should? Compare your pointers with the sample, you may find that yours don't match the sample. Do your pointers touch both base and upper lines? Now look at the letters which are in the pointers group. Are any of these letters in your name? Then practice them until they really look perfect.

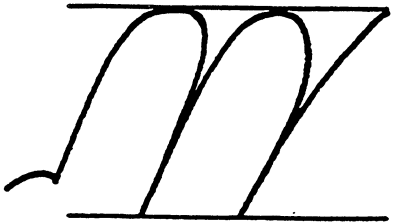
Letter u consists of two pointers joined together. It stays within the mid space, and has to touch both the base and the upper line. First, feel it on the engraved sample many times with a pencil. Only after having done so, practice it on the Marking Mat.



Letter j is one pointer. After rounding it off to the right, lift your crayon because now you have to make the dot above the j. Put the middle finger of your guiding hand on the tip of the pointer and touch the paper with your crayon in the upper space a little bit above the finger. The finger is your guide for finding the right spot. There is your j! one pointer and the dot.



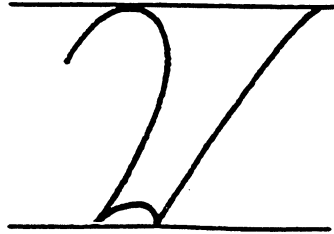
Remember: First you feel the letter, then you trace the engraved sample, then use the wax crayon on the Marking Mat.



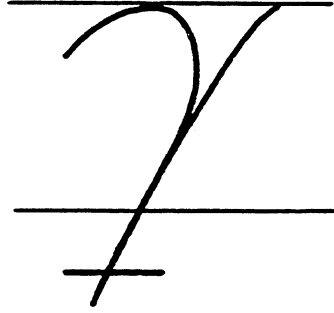
Letter w begins like the letter u. You first make two pointers (upstroke, downstroke, upstroke, downstroke). But after you round off to the right, you continue upwards through the mid space to the upper line, and there you add a

short hook, something like a half circle. Again, don't forget our procedure: feeling the letter, then tracing, then writing.

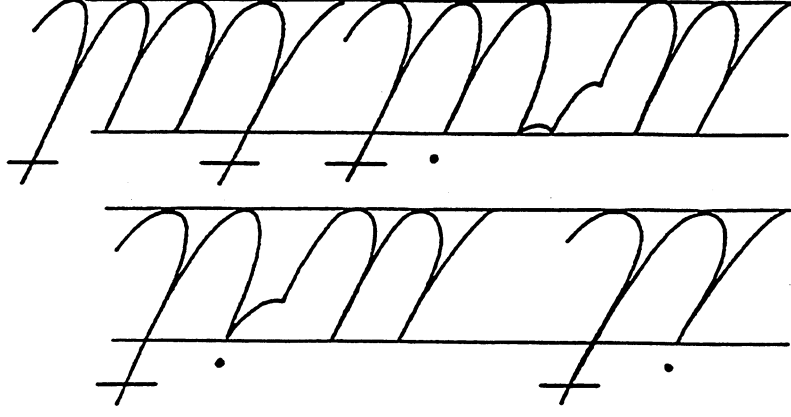
Letter r consists of the upstroke and the downstroke of a pointer, but these two strokes are separated by a short hook. Feel, trace, write!



Letter t extends above the mid space into the top space, as you can see when you feel and trace it. Therefore, you need extra space above the upper line, when you write it. First make a long upstroke. The downstroke retraces the upstroke to almost halfway of the mid space, then the two strokes separate, and you round off to the right after touching the base line slightly. Lift your crayon from the paper and feel with the index finger of your guiding hand for the upper line. Slightly above this line you now cross the letter with a short horizontal stroke.



Now look at the letter combinations: it, wit, writ, tut, which show you how letters are joined.



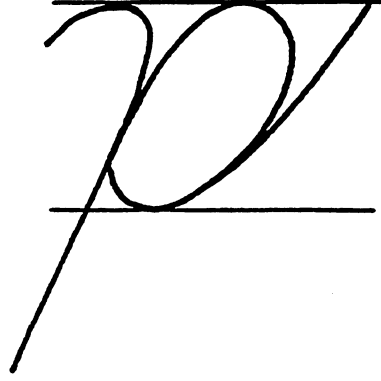
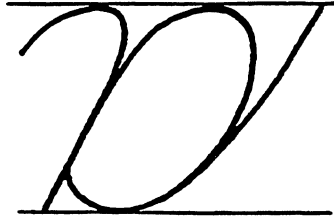
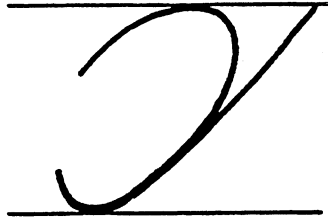
Notice that all letters in a word are joined to each other. If they were not joined, the letters by themselves would not make sense. The joining is done by using the upstroke at the end of a letter for the beginning of the next letter.

Circle Letters--c, a, d, g, o

We call the next letter group circles because each of these letters contains a characteristic round shape. But this round shape resembles more an oval than a perfectly round circle. Since letter c is the beginning of all the other circle letters, you should learn it whether it is in your name or not.

Letter c does not have a closed round shape, but only part of a circle. First, please trace it many times. Make a slanted stroke from the base line to the middle line, round it off to the right as you would do a mound. Continue only a little bit downwards, then retrace the upper part of the mound adding a semicircle stroke. Touch the base line and finish with a rounded stroke to the right. Let us call the point where you begin to retrace the horn. It looks like one, doesn't it?

Into this group belong a, d, g, and o. Please practice the ones in your name.



Letter a begins with the letter c to which a pointer is added. The pointer has to touch the horn on its way up. It will be easier for you, if you put a finger of your guiding hand on the horn to make sure that the connection is made. The circle in letter a and the following circle letters should never be left open.

Letter d is very similar. It is a close combination of the letter c and the letter t (without the cross-stroke). Be sure that the circle part of the letter d stays within the mid space, touching both base and upper line. But the t-part extends into the top space. Does your upstroke touch the horn, as it should? If it doesn't, you have a letter c plus an unfinished letter t,

You will find it somewhat difficult to join the letter e to a preceding letter w, v, or b on account of the hook which is so high up. Therefore, in such a case make the hook a little longer before adding the letter e.

Don't forget to put the index finger of your guiding hand on the point where you lift the crayon for dotting the letter i or crossing the letter t. Don't fuse one letter into the next, but keep each unit (letters m, n, u, w) a bit separated from the following letter. Make sure that your words are not flying around like wild birds. The letter i, w, r, n, m, x, v, and e have to stay between the base and the upper lines, and touch both of them. The letters, t, l, b and h have to extend into the top space and they, too, have to stand firmly on the base line.

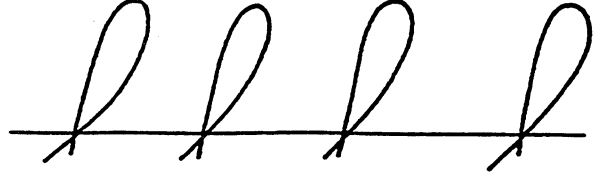
How is your posture?

Do you hold your crayon in the correct way?

Is your Marking Mat right in front of you on the table?

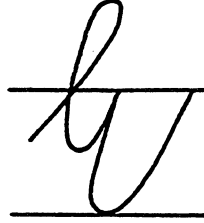
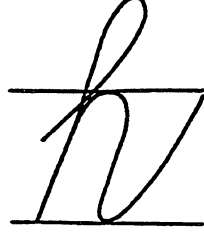
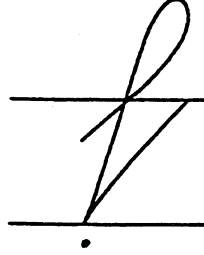
Tail Letters--i, v, z

Now come the group of letters with tails. A tail is an upside-down loop extending into the low space. You begin at the base line, go straight down, round off to the left, come up again and cross the downstroke at the base line. Practice these tails, and please, not once but at least twenty times.



Letter i begins with a pointer to the middle line. But the downstroke goes straight down below the base line, turns to the left in a tail, crosses the downstroke at the base line, and extends in a short stroke to the right. Put a dot on the letter i, just like the dot on the letter j.

Letter v is a combination of a mound rounded to the right joined together with a letter j without a dot.



Letter z begins with a mound to which a second smaller mound is added. The downstroke of this second mound goes straight below the base line, turns left into a tail, and crosses the downstroke at the base line.

The small hook at the end of a letter w is used for the upstroke of a following letter. If the letter t is followed by another letter, put a finger of your guiding hand at the spot where you finished the pointer before crossing a letter t, so that you know where the next letter should be joined.

Do the same before putting the dot on a letter i.

Each word has to be separated from the next by a blank space. Use the index finger of your guiding hand for measuring out this blank. Put your finger at the end of the last word and begin the next word on the other side of the finger.

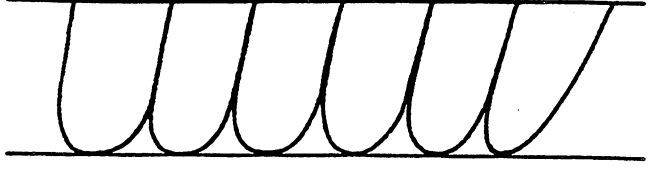
Please continue with the small letters and don't jump to capital letters now. Believe us that it is best to follow our method step by step.

Mound Letters--n, m, v, x

The mounds are like pointers, upside down. You begin at the base line, make an upstroke, round it to the right before you get to the upper line, touch the upper line slightly, and then make a downstroke ending on the base line. This downstroke is partly retraced when you write the next mound. Feel the mounds on the embossed sample with your index finger, trace the engraved sample with the eraser-tip of your pencil at least 20 times, and then practice on the Marking Mat. Practice these mounds until you are sure they look as they should, touching both base and upper lines.

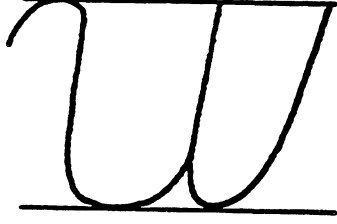
Are the tips of the thumb and the index finger of your writing hand touching the pencil?

Are you sitting upright on your chair?
Is your mat in front of you?



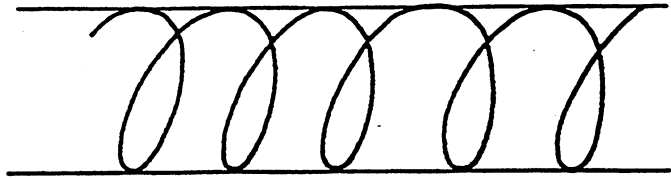
Once you know how to write mounds, practice the letters of this group which belong to your name.

Letter n is the simplest letter of the mounds. You begin at the base line, draw one mound, and join a second to it. This last mound does not end on the base line, but rounds off to the right. Letter n stays within the mid space touching both base and upper lines. Feel, trace, write!



Loop Letters--e, l, b, h

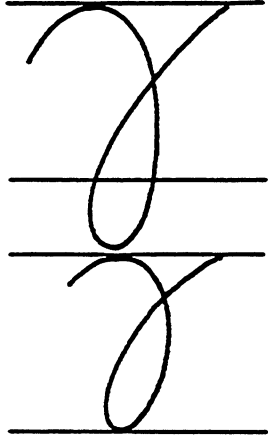
The loops are the next letter group. A loop starts with a slant upstroke and curves to the left before the downstroke is made so that the two strokes cross each other halfway up the mid space and form a loop. Then the downstroke is rounded off to the right after having touched the base line slightly.



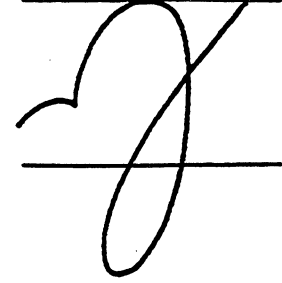
Is there a letter e, l, b or h in your name?

Letter e is the single loop within the mid space. Practice loops many times until you master them.

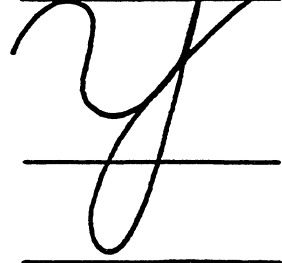
Letter l is just like letter e, but it has a much longer loop which extends into the top space. Upstroke and downstroke cross halfway up in mid space as in letter e.



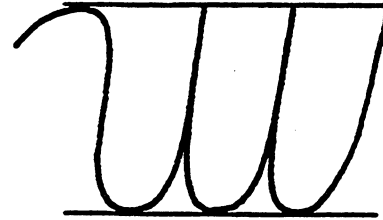
Letter b is almost the same as letter l. First an upstroke to the upper space. Then a long loop to the left, followed by a downstroke which rounds off to the right. But now it continues upwards almost to the upper line and there a short hook is added as in letters w and v.



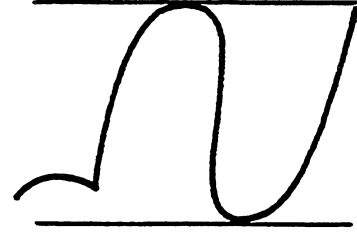
Letter h begins like a letter l with a long loop. But instead of rounding off the downstroke near the base line, it goes straight down to it, retraces the downstroke halfway up and adds a mound which ends in a rounded stroke to the right.



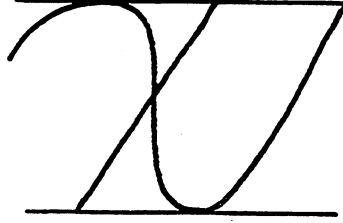
Letter m is not difficult either. This time 3 mounds are joined together. The last one is rounded off to the right.



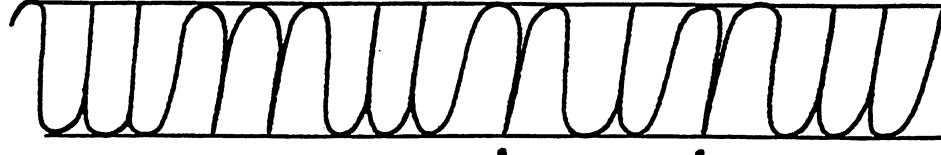
Letter v begins with a mound. Round it off to the right and continue up in mid space as you do with a letter w, attach a short hook. Feel, trace, write!



Letter x is one single mound which ends in a rounded off stroke to the right. Then you lift your crayon, touch down on the paper at the upper line and draw a stroke in a downward slant to the left, crossing the downstroke of the mound and ending at the base line. Use a finger of your guiding hand for finding the right spot for this operation. Fortunately, few names contain an x.



Now study the word minimum (feel it and trace it). By doing so, you will learn more about how to join letters to each other.



The mounds in letters m and n or the two pointers in letter i should be slightly together so that they form a unit, each letter separated a bit from the other. Before making the dot on the letter i, put a finger of your guiding hand at the end of the letter i so that you know where to continue.

Do you have your crayon in the right slant position? Are the tips of your thumb and index finger touching the pencil?

Do your letters all touch the base and the upper line? Don't forget to extend the letter t into the upper space. Try to write correctly from the beginning.