

Handwriting Help

Please use this document if you, your parents/ carers or Tutors have noticed that your handwriting could be more legible and neat.

How should I use this booklet?

Work through it at home or Tutor Time (if there is time). The more you practise, the better the results.

Why is handwriting important?

- It can give a sense of pride in your presentation
- People need to be able to read it. This can be incredibly important for examinations. We want you to get the credit for your ideas but examiners cannot reward words they cannot read!
- The more you practise your handwriting, the quicker you will become. This will allow you to show off more of your knowledge in examinations.

Before writing:

1) Stretch and wriggle your fingers for a few seconds.

2) Touch each finger to your thumb. Try it to your favourite tune!

3) Move your wrists in a circle.

4) Make a fist and then stretch out your hand.

5) Play an imaginary piano on the table.

6) Roll your shoulders forward and back

7) Using Lego and other activities can also help improve your fine motor skills



Common problems and solutions:

1. Does your hand start to hurt?

Does your handwriting start off well and then get more untidy as you write? This is probably because your hand is getting tired or cramped. Have a go at...



- Regular writing will help your hand become stronger, and with practise, you will be able to write for longer without tiring. See exercises above.

2. Problem letters

Some letters can cause confusion if they are not carefully formed.

For example this 't' looks like an 'r' and this 'a' could be a 'u'.

Check your handwriting for letters that might be unclear.

Have a go at...

- Take a look at handwriting styles that you find easy to read. Try writing the letter in the new way – first by itself, and then in words.
- The more you practise, the easier it will get.

3. Spacing

Getting the spacing right is an important part of handwriting. Some people have very small spaces between their letters. Other people have small spaces between their words. This can make our handwriting harder to read.

Have a go at...

If you think your writing is cramped, try stretching it out to see if it makes it easier to read. This will slow you down at first but with practise it will get easier. As a guide, spaces between words should be around the width of a pen. For spaces between letters, your letters should only touch the tails or hooks, not the letter as a whole.

4. Letter size

Some people write all their letters the same size. If you would like to give your handwriting a more standard appearance, start each sentence with a large capital letter and end the sentence with a full stop. Don't worry if you mix joined letters with uppercase letters, lots of people do this!

5. Keeping it on the line

Make sure your letters sit on the line.

Remember: all letters should sit on the line except for these six letters: g
j p y q f

6. Making mistakes

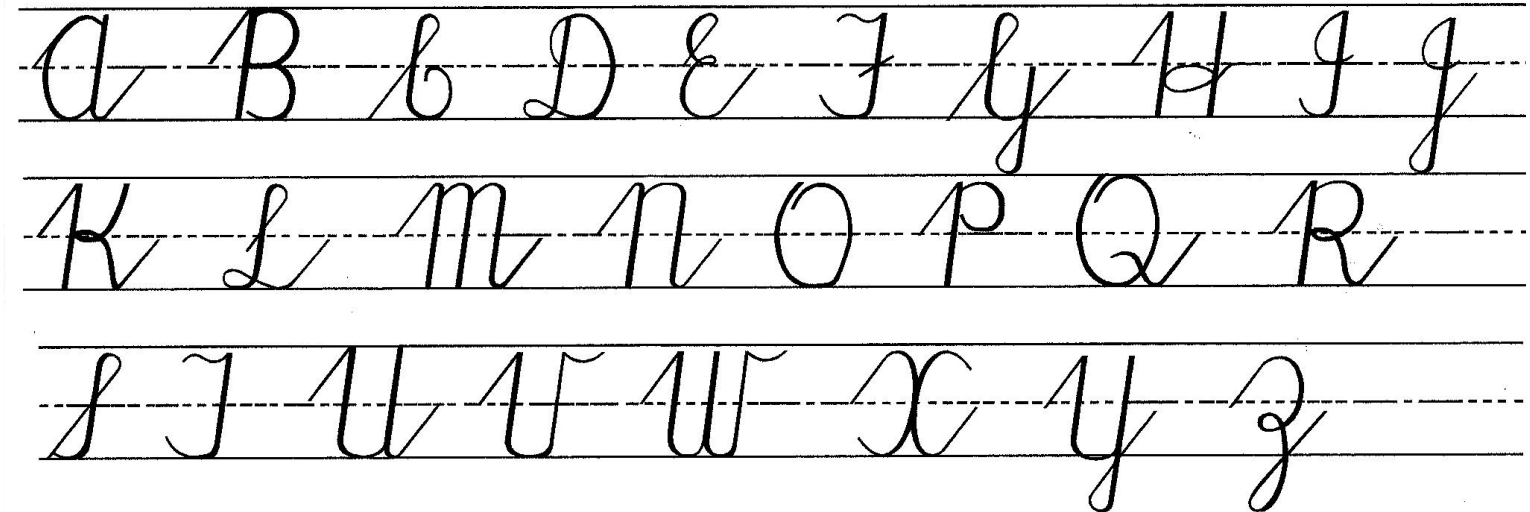
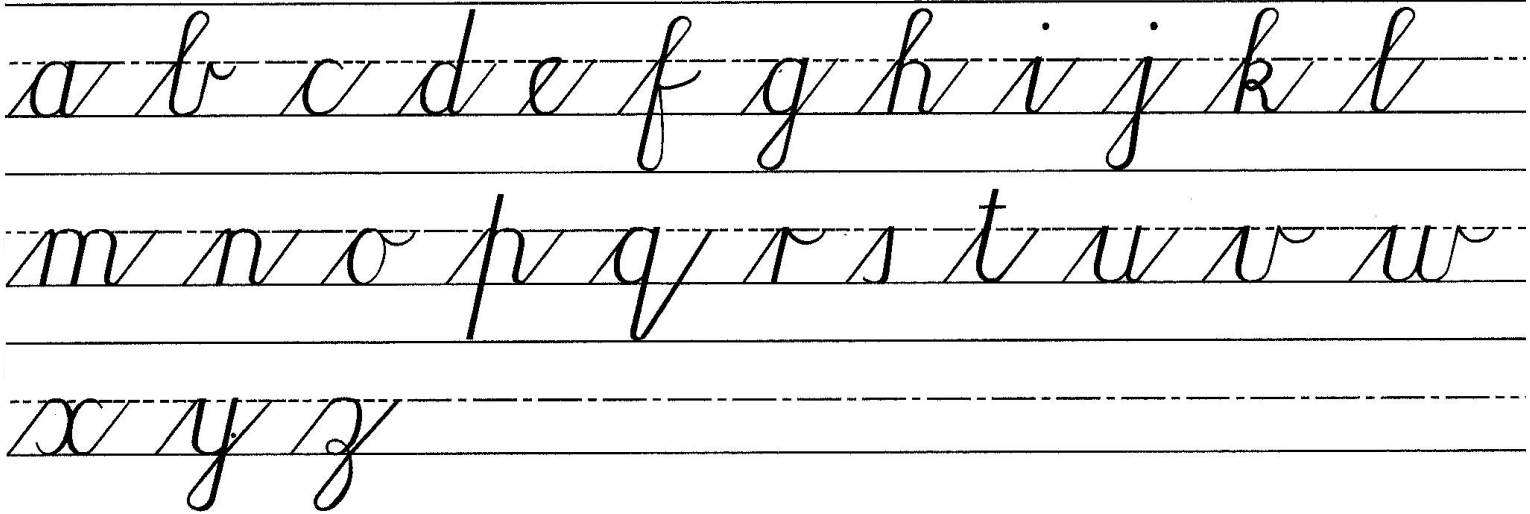
We all make mistakes! If you make a mistake when you're writing:

- Do look at the shape of the letter and see if it can be changed easily. For example a 'c' can easily be changed into 'a' or 'd' or 'o'.

- Don't write over letters if they are a different shape for example: writing 'w' over 's'.

Have a go at...:

If you can't start again, put brackets around your mistake and draw a line through it. This is better than trying to write over a word (which usually makes it look worse). It also looks neater than scribbling the word out.



Practise sentences of your choice using the lines:

Handwriting practice lines consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dotted midline, repeated down the page.

A series of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of solid top and bottom lines with a dotted midline, repeated down the page.

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