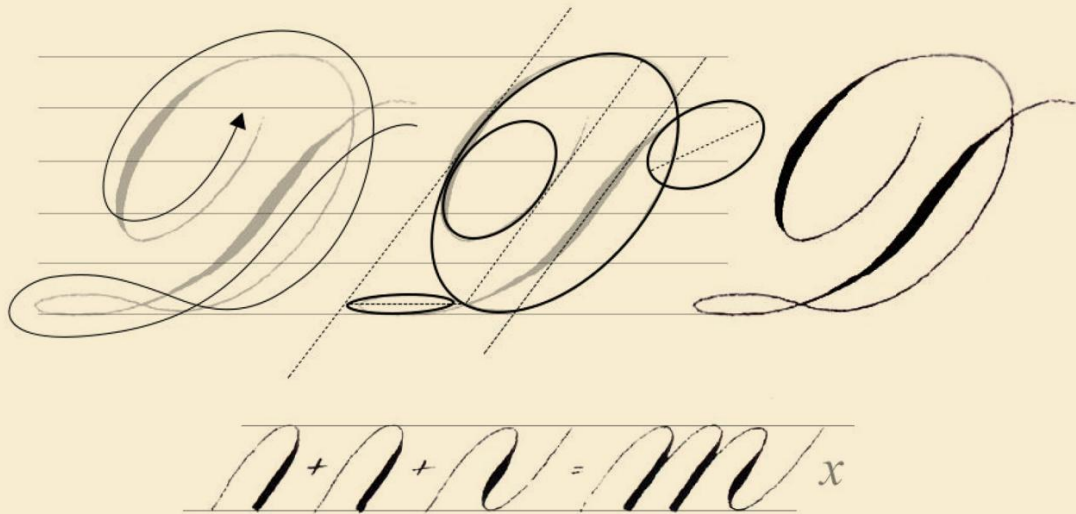


COPPERPLATE CALLIGRAPHY

1

BASIC LETTER STRUCTURE



BACKGROUND KNOWLEDGE

TOOLS AND MATERIALS

In traditional Calligraphy, the fundamental and specialized tools are pen holder, nib, ink and paper.

Some of my recommendations

Nib: Hunt 22B, Vintage Hunt 22, Leonardt Principal, Speedball #101, Gillott's #303

Ink: Higgins Eternal, Walnut Ink, McCaffery's Penman Ink

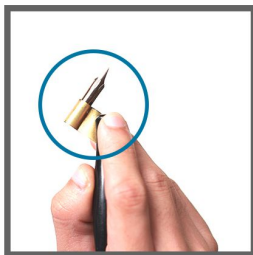
Pen holder: We should use Oblique pen holder (handcrafted pen holders can be purchased from some Penmen)

Paper: Practice paper can be ordinary art paper which is low absorbent (means it will not cause ink to bleed) or paper of these following brands: Strathmore (Patchment), Strathmore (Watercolor - Smooth surface), Saunders Waterford (Watercolor - Smooth surface)

In addition to these specialized tools, we also need additional supplies including pencil, ruler and eraser.

HOLDING A PEN CORRECTLY

Everyone has a different way to hold a pen due to natural instinct. However, in Calligraphy, holding a pen correctly is a critical factor that ensures the smoothness when writing, avoids pain as writing in a long period of time and maintains writing speed.



STEP 1

Place the index finger on the tip of the pen holder so that the forefinger is placed face down in the same direction with the nib



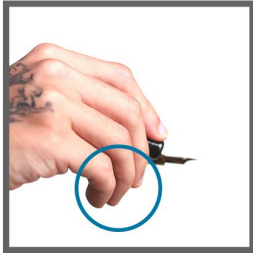
STEP 2

Keep the pen holder at the third joint of the index finger (metacarpophalangeal joint)



STEP 3

Place the thumb on the left side of the pen holder so that the thumb is detached from the index finger. The tip of the thumb is at the position of the first joint of the index finger



STEP 4

Place the middle finger on the right side of the pen holder. The first joint of the middle finger comes in contact with the pen holder. The ring finger and the pinky curl inwards, place next to the middle finger. They are the two fingers to lean against the paper surface when writing.

POSTURE

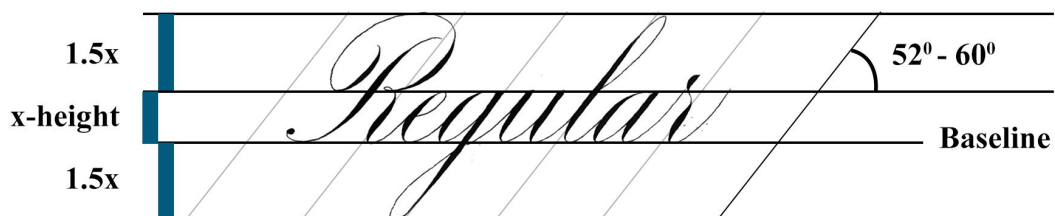
Posture affects eyesight and body balance as you write, below are some notes in posturing:

- Keep your back and neck up straight, slightly lean towards the upper part of your body
- Put both feet on the floor with your knees at a right angle (90°) in order to balance your body
- Place both arms on the table when writing, the right hand holding the pen and the left hand holding the paper
- Keep your elbows perpendicular and place them on the edge of the table (do not write on round table)

BASIC CONCEPTS

LETTER HEIGHT

General letter height structure is divided into 3 parts, in which the second part is called "x-height". The ratio of letter height in Copperplate is 1.5x : x : 1.5x



Partial description:

Height x includes One-space letters such as: a, o, c, e, i, u, v,...

Part 1 + x includes Upper letters such as h, k, l, ... and Capital letters

Part x + 3 includes Lower letters such as g, y, j, ... and some Capital letters

LETTER ANGEL

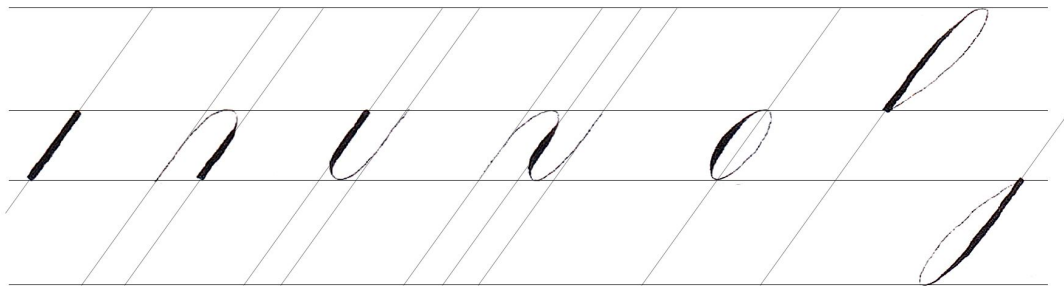
Copperplate letters are always inclined to the right, the inclination ranges from 52 to 60 degrees to the baseline

WRITING RULES AND BASIC STROKES

In Copperplate, the fundamental rule is to write with the nib at the same angle with the letter. The general rule of Copperplate is to write the upstrokes thin (without pressing the pen) and the downstrokes thick (pressing the pen).



Basic strokes are crucial elements in comprehending letter notions. All letters in the alphabet belong to certain groups. All letters in one group are similar in term of shape and normally encompass a specific basic stroke. Lowercases in Copperplate Script include 7 main basic strokes. Mastering these 7 basic strokes permits writing almost every lowercase letter in the alphabet, except for letter r, s, x and z (these letters belong to a special group which contains particular strokes)



Besides, Copperplate lowercase letters contain beginning and ending strokes



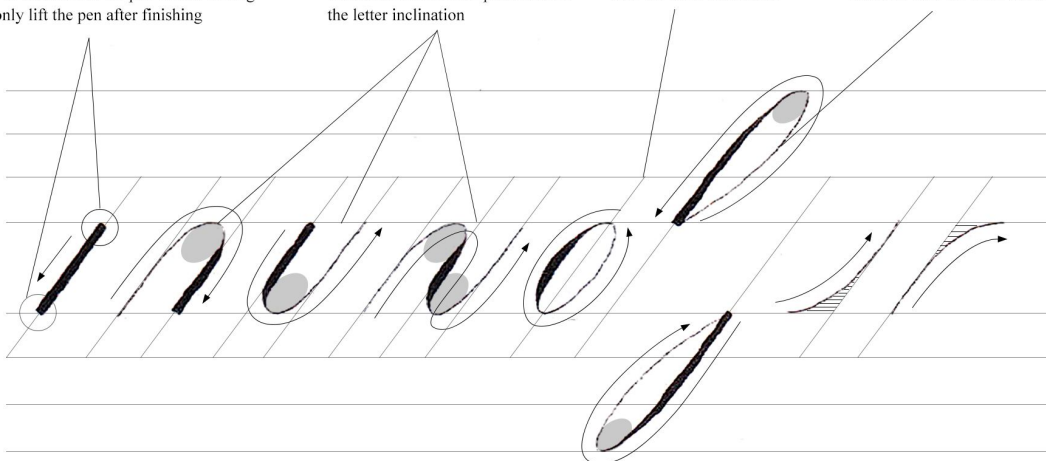
BASIC STROKES STRUCTURES AND WRITING APPROACH

The head and the tail of the stroke are not sharp
How to write: Press the pen before writing
and only lift the pen after finishing

The up and down strokes are parallel
to each other and both parallel with
the letter inclination

The axis of letter "o" is parallel
with the letter inclination

The upward stroke is more
inclined than the letter inclination



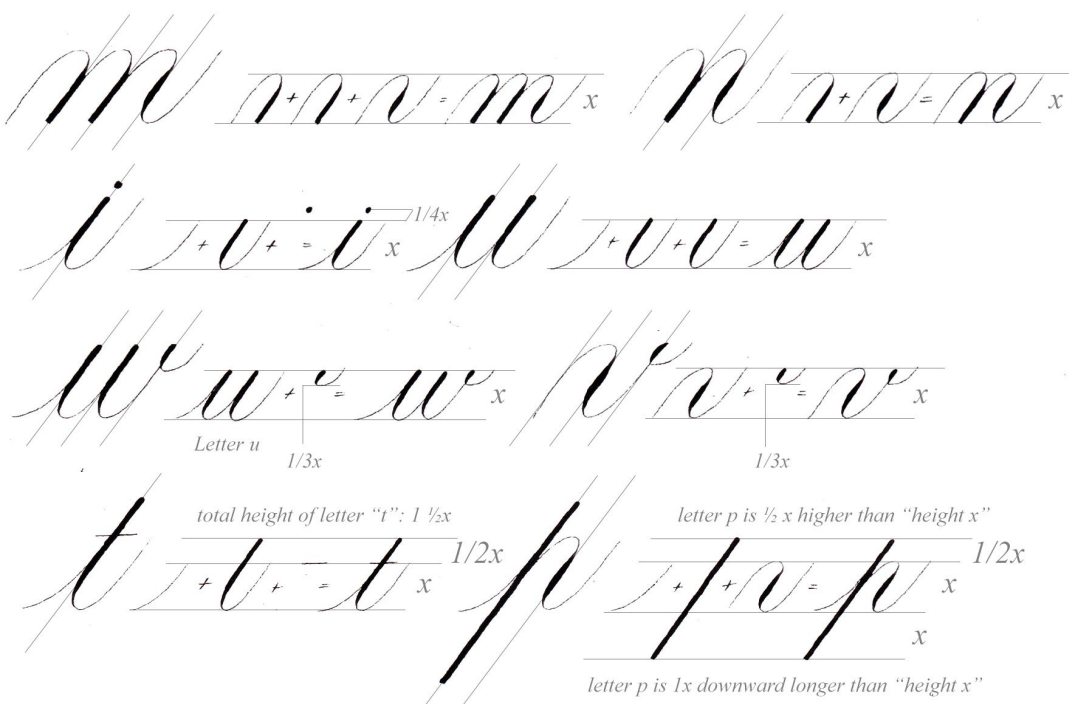
APPLICATION OF BASIC STROKES IN LETTERS

As mentioned before, basic strokes form letters. In this part, we practice forming letters with similar shape in groups. I divided lowercase letters in Copperplate into 4 groups. Note: Pay attention to the described scales of each letter

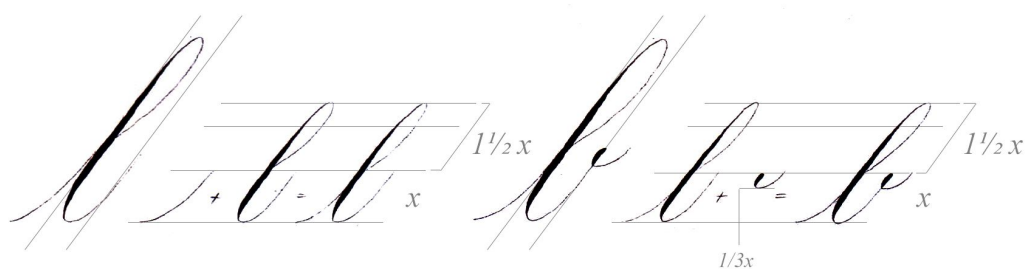
Group 1: a, d, o, c, e

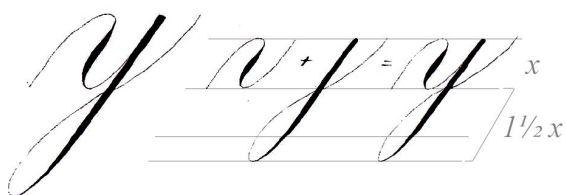
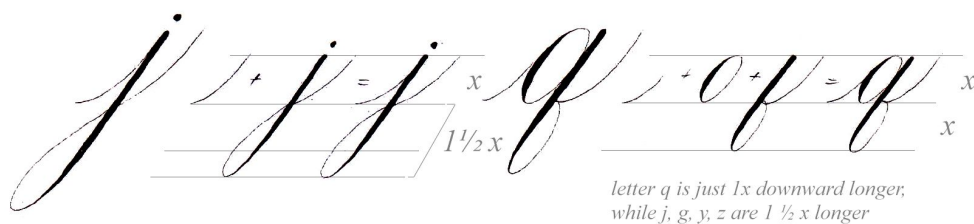
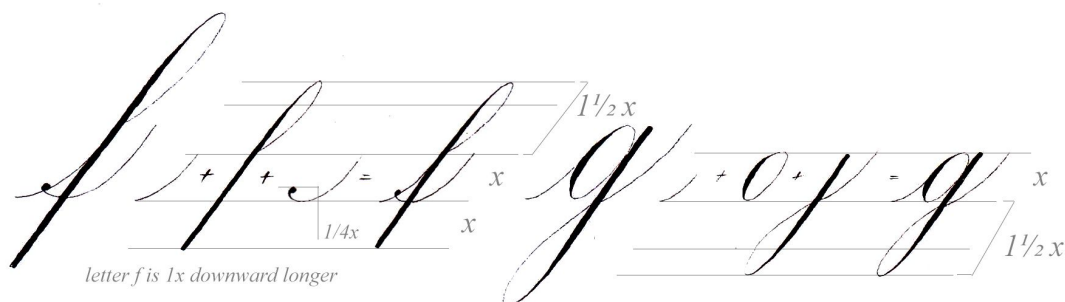
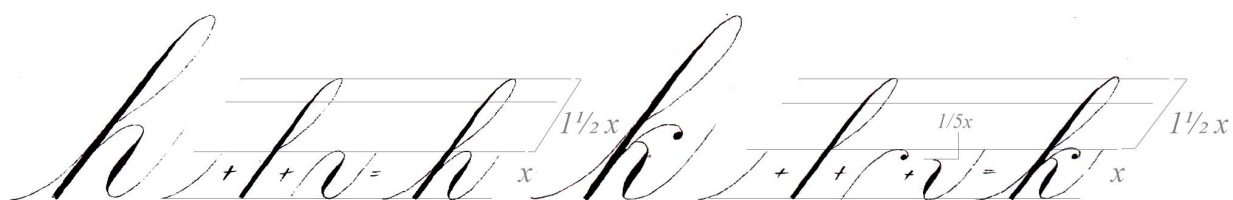


Group 2: m, n, i, u, w, v, p, t



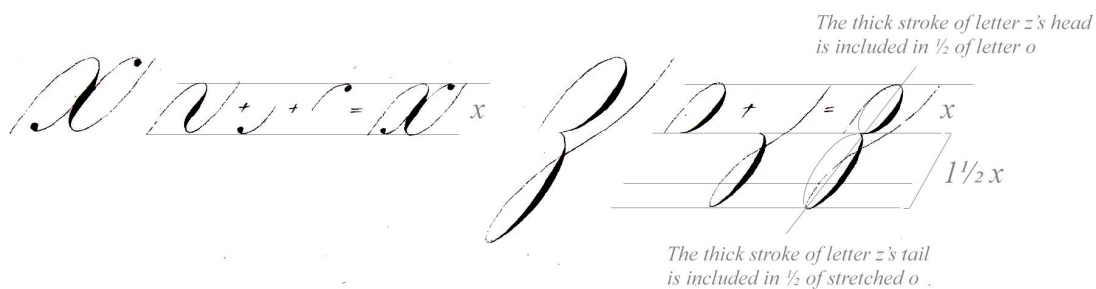
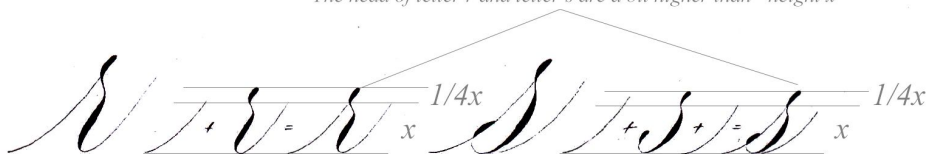
Group 3: l, b, h, k, f, g, j, q, y





Group 4: r, s, x, z (the special group)

The head of letter r and letter s are a bit higher than "height x"



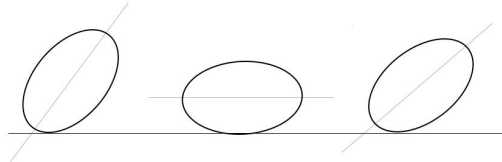
CAPITAL LETTERS

Part 1: Basic strokes and warm-up exercise

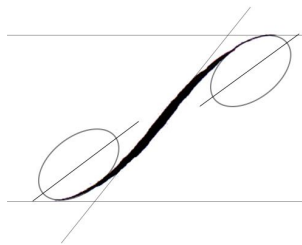
Although Capital letters in Copperplate are more difficult than Lowercase letters, we can simplify by comprehending the Oval Rule, it will be much easier.

In Copperplate capital letters (or in Spencerian and Business Cursive you may learn later), apart from simple straight strokes, most strokes in Capital letters follow the Oval Rule: they are embodied in Oval shapes with Horizontal and Vertical scaling of approximately 2:3. Some common Ovals:

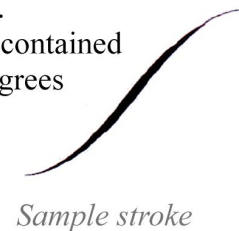
1. Oval whose axis is parallel with the letter inclination
2. Oval with horizontal axis
3. Oval with diagonal axis of approximately 45 degrees



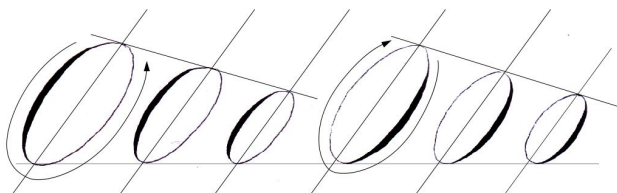
Warm-up exercise



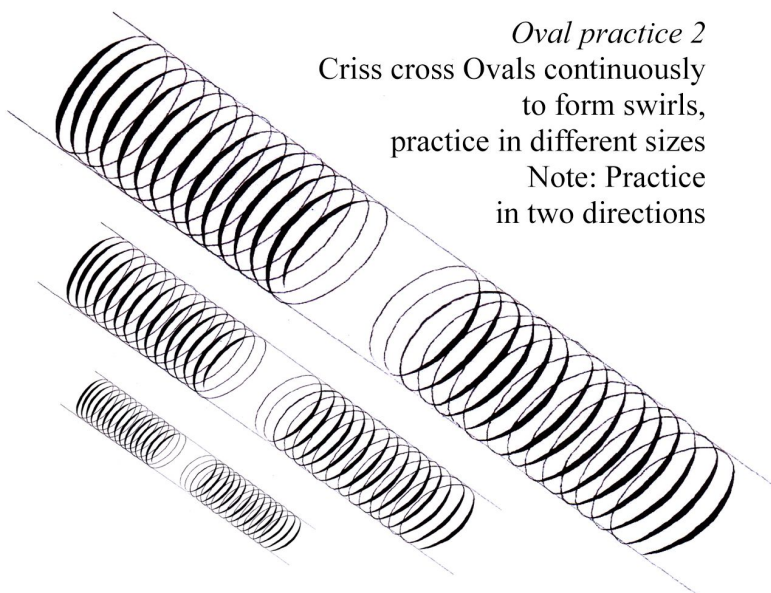
This is a basic stroke in Capital letters. The head and the tail of the stroke are contained in an Oval with diagonal axis of 45 degrees to the baseline, the middle part is a straight line paralleling with the letter inclination



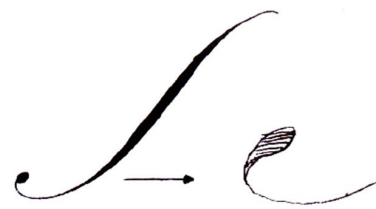
Sample stroke



Oval practice 1
Draw Ovals whose axis is parallel with the letter inclination. Draw large Ovals to smaller ones in two directions: clockwise and counterclockwise



Oval practice 2
Criss cross Ovals continuously to form swirls, practice in different sizes
Note: Practice in two directions



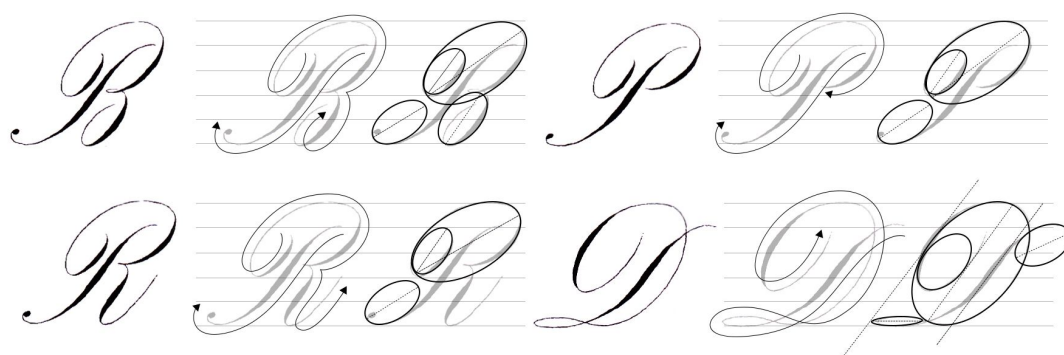
With the basic strokes in Capital letters, we add a water-drop at the end to complete the stroke. This technique applies in many letters of the Capitals

CAPITAL LETTERS

Part 2: Capital alphabet

Similar to lowercase letters, I divide capital letters into 5 groups which contain words that are similar in term of shape. To write correctly, please notice the Oval shapes I analyzed next to the letter as you learn. Each letter is analyzed by 3 steps: Sample letter, directions of strokes and Oval analysis.

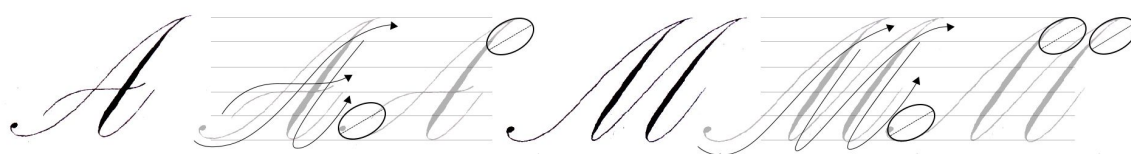
Group 1: B, P, R, D



Group 2: I, J, T, F, H, K

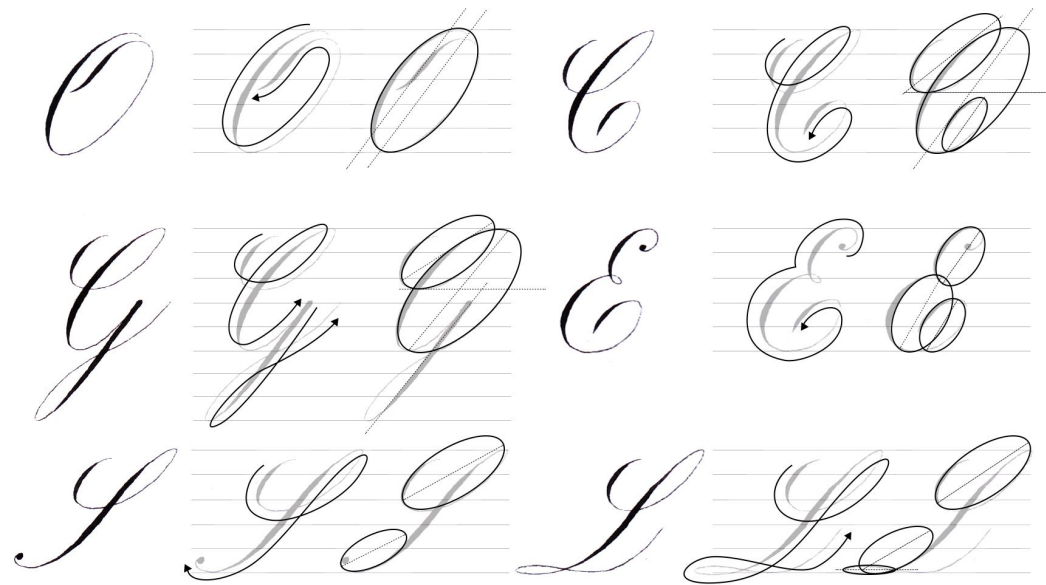


Group 3: A, M, N, V, W

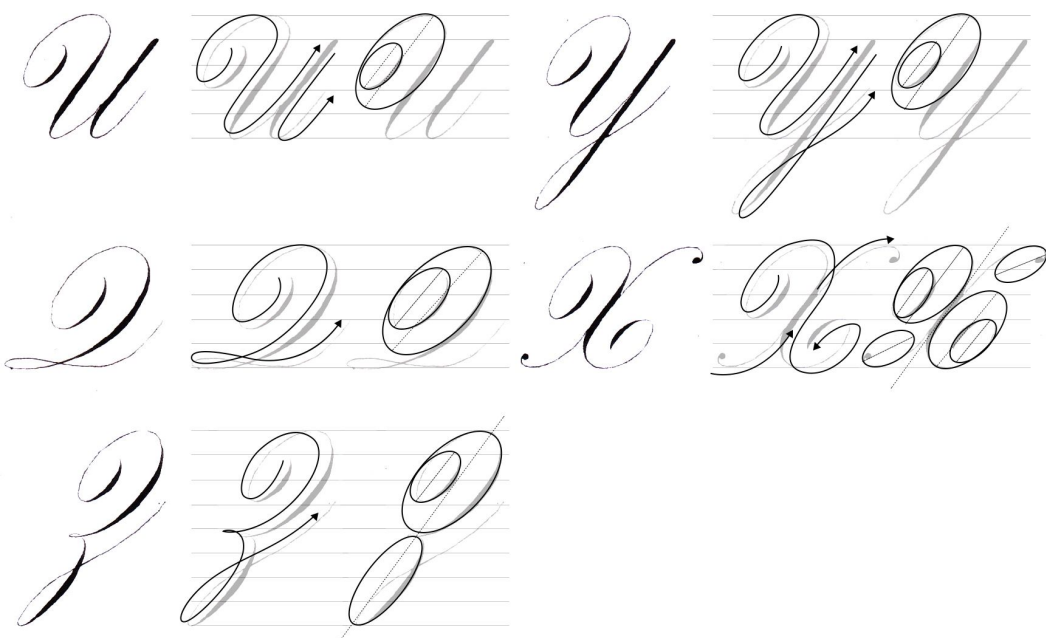




Group 4: O, C, G, E, S, L

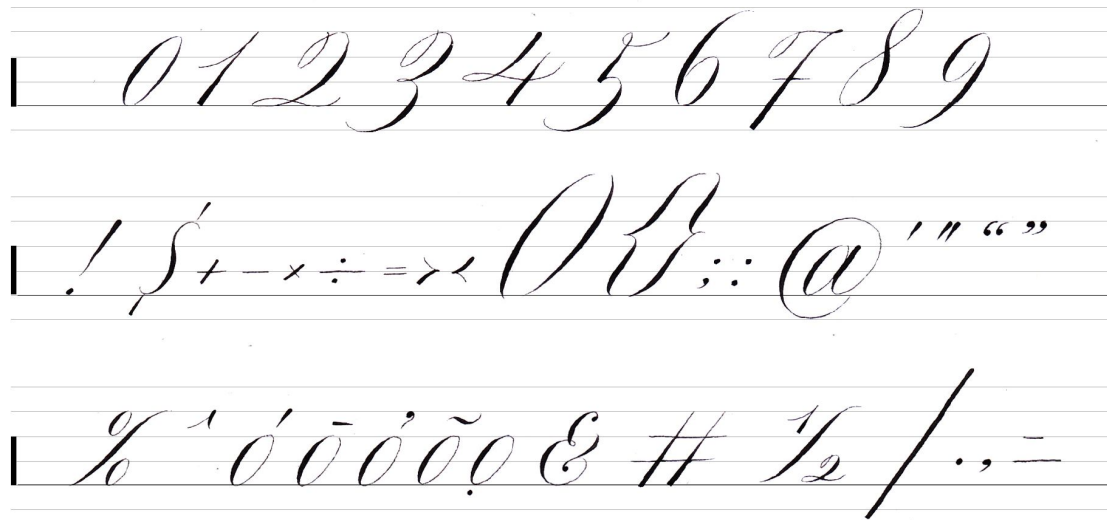


Group 5: U, Y, Q, X, Z



NUMBERS, PUNCTUATION MARKS AND SYMBOLS

Reference



THICKNESS OF LETTERS

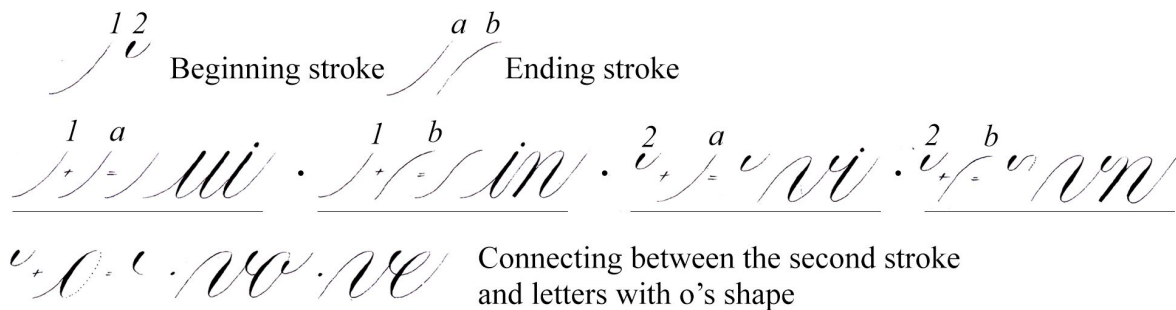
Patience Patience

Bold and medium: appropriate for writing name, title;
medium thickness can be used to write content

Patience Patience

Light and slender: appropriate for writing text, big content;
when writing slender stroke (without pressing the pen) we can use daily-use pen.

RULE FOR CONNECTING LETTERS



WORD SPACING

*a quick brown fox
jumps over the lazy dog*

WRITING SAMPLES

In 5 groups of Capital letters, I will select one specific letter of each group to write as samples including a Capital letter at the beginning and Lowercase letters in the following.

*Brilliant
Internation Writing
Landscape Universal*

Numbers

2018 1965 1673 9³/₄

LETTER VARIATIONS

Common variants of letters with head (h, k, l, ...) and tail (g, j, y, ...)

*h h h h h h h
g g g g g g g*

Variants of some other letters



FLOURISH

Flourish also has some certain rules; common flourishes are normally contained in Oval whose axis is parallel with the letter inclination, Oval with horizontal axis or swirl flourish.

Axis parallels with the letter inclination and



Flourish 1

Flourish 2



Flourish 3

Sample letter: B

Sample letter: K

Horizontal axis



Flourish 1

Flourish 2

Flourish 3

Flourish 4

Penman's

Example: Penman's

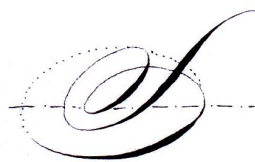
Oval with diagonal axis and Oval with horizontal axis combined



Flourish 1

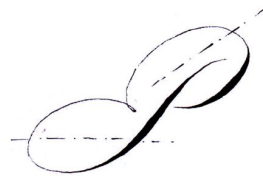
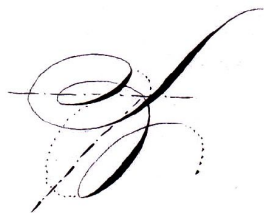


Flourish 2



Flourish 2a

Flourish 3

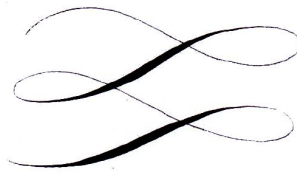


Example: P

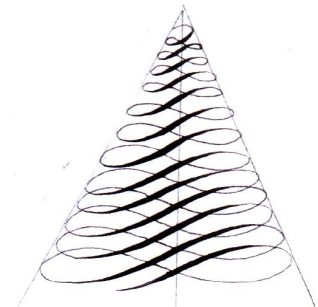
Swirl flourish



Criss-cross



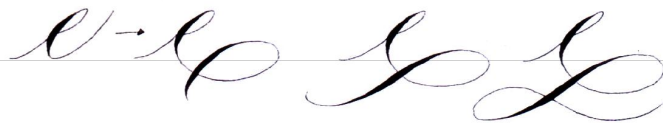
Separate



Pyramid flourish exercise

Adding flourish into the tail end

Adding flourish into the end of a letter create a balance effect in overall. There are many different ways to add flourish. However, I have collected some of my common use flourishes here for easier practice. Once understanding about flourish, you can design/create your own unique ones.



End of letter with swirl flourish

End of letter with Oval with horizontal axis



Flourish 1



Flourish 2

This is my common use flourish - a combination of Oval with horizontal axis and swirl flourish



Flourish 3



Example for Flourish 1



Example for Flourish 2



Example for Flourish 3



Example: Flourish at the Capital letter and the end of the word

APPLICATION (BY ALPHABET)



Ealasaid

Kaitland

Gabrienne

Lakendra

Gabriela

Macaria

Maldana

Nandalia

Ibrahim

Obadiah

^{MR.}Jackie

Pacifica

Queenie

Valdemar

Radcliffe

Walcott

Sakura

Harrier

Taffline

Yolanda

Ulrecht

Zephyr

A A A A A

B B B B B

C C C C C

D D D D D

E E E E

F F F F F

G G G G

H H H H H

J J J J J J J

K K K K

L L L L L

M M M M

N N N N

O O O O

P P P P P

Q Q Q Q

R R R R R

S S S S S

T T T T T

U U U U U

V V V V V

X X X X

Y Y Y Y Y

Z Z Z