

**NAPE**



National Association for Primary Education

Website: [nape.org.uk](http://nape.org.uk)

# The Development of **Handwriting Skills**

**A RESOURCE BOOK FOR PARENTS**

**Christopher  
Jarman**



*A silent breeze comes*

*CCCCCC*

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For further UpToDate advice on handwriting, please also go to:  
<https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/>

This new edition has been re-designed digitised by Mike Aylen, 2022  
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## How to Write Well

This booklet is designed to teach you to write clearly, speedily and well. The writing is slightly larger than normal, so that the shapes can be seen and learnt more easily. It does not matter whether you are very young or very old. The basic rules of good writing are the same.

## How to Use This Book

Children from 5 to 8 .....

With parents' help they should trace the patterns, and the families of letters until they are learnt. Then copy all the sentences. Children may use pencil or fine fibre-tip.

Please refer to page 22 for National Curriculum descriptors (2018) and Early Learning Goal 4 (2018)  
As well as <https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/>

Young People from 9 - 12 .....

Copy the patterns and then copy the letter families. Try to remember the four rules.

Then copy out all the words and sentences.

Adults.....

Read through the booklet.

Copy out the patterns and letter families. When you have understood the rules of the letter shapes, copy out the sentences, but keep the characteristics of your own personal hand. You should aim to write in the way you want to, but now neatly and legibly. Speed will come with practice.

## The Principles of Good Writing

Our modern handwriting is based upon a joined form of the Roman lower case alphabet.

This was developed over 1,000 years ago. This most basic and historically accurate shape of handwriting consists of ovals and parallel lines.

o | o | o | o | o | o | o | o | o |

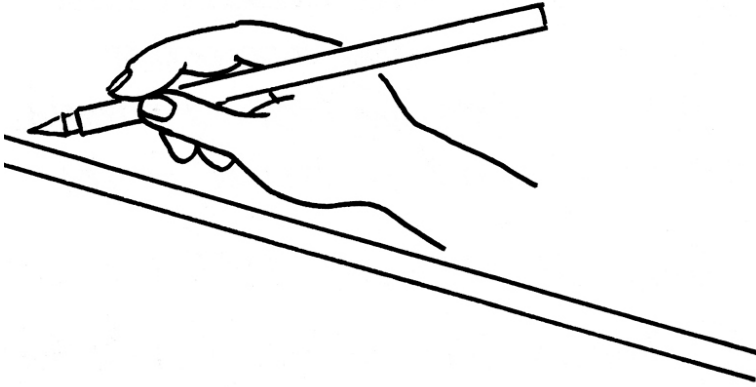
The pattern of good writing has a slight forward slope of about 10 degrees.

There are only eight patterns to be practised in order to train the hand and the eye to write clearly.

*Please refer to Page 8 for these patterns*

## Ideal Writing Conditions

1. A sloping desk or board gives better results, but is not essential.



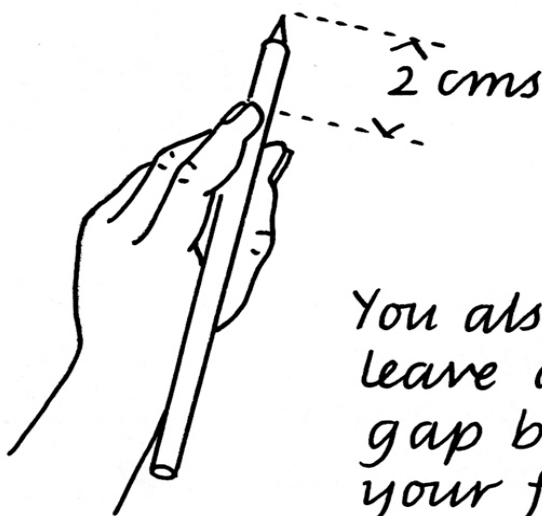
2. For right-handers the light should come from above the left shoulder.

For left-handers, from above the right shoulder.

3. Sit in an upright chair with a supported back. Keep both feet on the floor.

## Left-handers

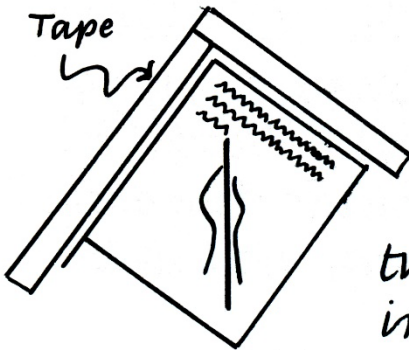
1. From an early age left-handers need to be encouraged to hold the pencil or fibre-tip with the back end pointing towards the left shoulder.



You also need to leave a longer gap between your fingertips and the point, about 2 cms.

2. Left-handers are also helped by having a cushion or a higher chair than right-handers, as the left elbow is held lower when writing.

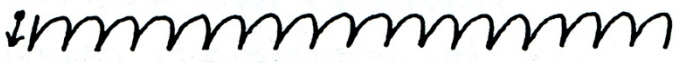




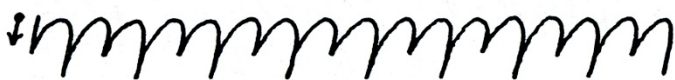
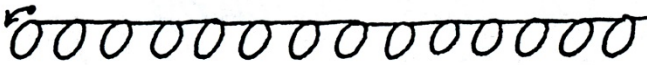

3. Left-handers need to see what they are writing. For this the book or paper should be tilted to the  
RIGHT  
on a desk or table.



It is a help to the youngest writers to stick two pieces of tape in an L shape on the table as a paper guide.



## The Basic Patterns

1. 
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 
7. 
8. 

You will see that they are almost all parts of ovals and straight lines.

Each pattern helps you to learn a family group of letters.

1. mmm rnmhbpk

2. cccc coadgqe

3. uuu iuyt

4. vvv vwx

5. llll iuylt d

6. rrr rnm p

7. oooo oa od og

8. llllll i l u h m n

f s j z do not belong to any special group.

## Four Rules For Good Writing

1. All letters should start at the top.

e.g.

n c s o b

2. All similar letters should be the same height.

e.g.

h d l b k f

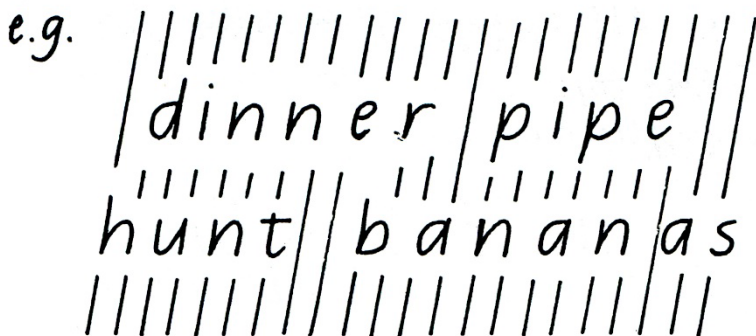
n m s a w i

note: the letter t is written at an in-between height

e.g.

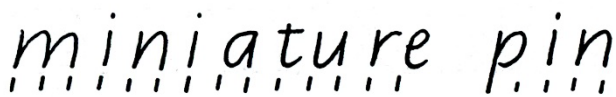
m t h

3. All downstrokes should be made parallel to each other.

e.g. 

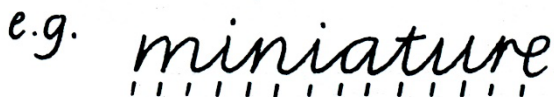
4. All downstrokes should be the same distance apart,

e.g.

miniature pin

filling until

and especially when written joined up.

e.g. miniature

## Practising The Letter Shapes

It is more helpful in learning the letter shapes, always to practise writing them in the family groups.

e.g.

r n m h p b k

c o a g d q e

Do not practise in rows of one letter like this,

a a a a a a a a a a a

as it will not help you learn the similarities and the relationships between letters.

e.g. Look for the hidden ones.

p m g

### Practice Sentences

Five or six big  
planes zoomed  
quickly by the  
big tower.

Many big jack-  
daws quickly  
zipped over  
the fox pen.

## The Capital Letters

These should be based upon the plain Roman Capitals and should be no taller than the letters l h d b k .

Capitals need not be joined to small letters unless the join occurs naturally. Capitals are never joined to one another.

A B C D E F G  
H I J K L M N  
O P Q R S T U  
V W X Y Z

note M and W are written with full depth & height in centre.



A Practice With Capitals

Anne Bill Cathy  
Don Edgar Freddie  
Gale Helen Isaac  
Josephine Kevin  
Lorna Mike Nan  
Oscar Pauline  
Quentin Rod Sue  
Tom Ursula Val  
Will Xerxes Zeb



### How to Join Letters

There are two kinds of join,

1. Horizontal,

wood top two on

vote from fox of

2. Diagonal,

main came do

his and mum in

The following letters are best left unjoined, as the pen ends up in an inconvenient position. Sometimes however, a loop may be made if desired.

b g j p q y s

### Joining Practice

\* Shows where letters are best left unjoined for speed and legibility

an b<sup>\*</sup>un can din

end fun g<sup>\*</sup>ame g<sup>\*</sup>o

hop inn j<sup>\*</sup>ump<sup>\*</sup>er

killing lump my

nine over p<sup>\*</sup>inch

q<sup>\*</sup>uince rip s<sup>\*</sup>ing

tan unto vio<sup>\*</sup>let

wave y<sup>\*</sup>o<sup>\*</sup>lk zinc.

Some Pages to Copy

We have all enough  
strength to bear other  
people's troubles.

To refuse praise  
reveals a desire to be  
praised twice over.

The intellect is always  
fooled by the heart.

Duc de la Rochefoucauld

### Final Hints

1. If you have copied the writing in this book carefully, slowly, and large size, you will now be in a position to write easily, speedily and small size!
2. If you are teaching a small child with this book, teach yourself completely before you start. Do not expect miracles from infants as their co-ordination is still immature.
3. Remember : It's not the hours you put in , it is what you put into the hours.

Good Luck !

## Early Learning Goal 4 (ELG 4) 2018

They handle equipment and tools effectively, including pencils for writing.

## Exceeding ELG4 2018

They hold paper in position and use their preferred hand for writing, using a correct pencil grip. They are beginning to be able to write on lines and control letter size.

Also refer to <https://nha-handwriting.org.uk/>

## National Curriculum Past Programmes of Study (2014)

**Pupils should be taught to:**

### Year 1

Sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly: begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place: form capital letters: form digits 0-9: understand which letters belong to which handwriting 'families' (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.

*Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.*

### Year 2

Form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another: start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined: write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters: use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters.

### Year 3 & 4

Use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left un-joined: increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting, [for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant, and that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch].

### Years 5 & 6

Write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters: choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task.

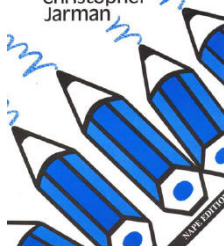
They should also be taught to use an un-joined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra, and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.

# NAPE PUBLICATIONS

## presents the Christopher Jarman Handwriting Scheme

### Handwriting Skills COPYBOOK 2

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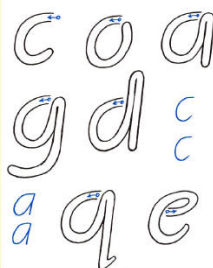
### Remember.....

#### There are Three Levels of Handwriting

- First: Formal Writing; this is for careful display work, signs, maps, invitations, applications for jobs and so on.
- Second: Informal Writing; this is for everyday school work, rough drafts for poems or stories, letters to close friends.
- Third: Fast Writing; this is for rapid notes to yourself, lots for shopping, telephone messages, your own personal thoughts etc.

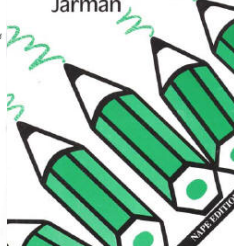


Letter pairs to trace. This is the c o a g d q e family. Your hand movements are the same for each letter.



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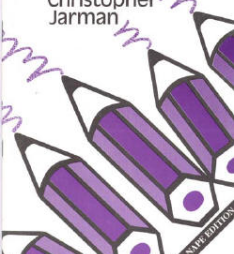


Copying another language helps you to concentrate on the writing. This is Latin.

Arboribus consista Italia est,  
Italy is planted with trees,  
ut tota pomarium videatur  
so as to seem one orchard.  
Olea ubi matura erit,  
When the olive is ripe, it  
quam primum cogi oportet.  
must be gathered in as  
soon as possible.  
Quamquam festinas, non est  
Although you are in haste,  
mora longa.  
the delay is not long.

### Handwriting Skills COPYBOOK 5

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Jarman



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