

Shaylor's Compendium  
of  
Penmanship.

[illustration]

Complete Instructions.

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Published By  
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Description: This eight-page pamphlet, was written and published by H. W. Shaylor. Shaylor, an artist, developed a handwriting system.

## GOOD WRITING.

### *HOW TO ACQUIRE IT.*

Nearly all persons admire good penmanship, and would like to write well, but it seems to them that their case is hopeless; that only those who are gifted, or those possessing a genius for such work, can ever succeed. While all must admit that persons possessing the natural genius will succeed much better, it is mainly because this inherent love impels them to devote more time to its cultivation; for no one, without great labor and careful painstaking, in addition to the natural ability, should ever expect to succeed in any art or science. This is lost sight of, or never fully comprehended, by those who claim that only those possessing the natural ability can succeed. They seem to have the impression that to be thus endowed is the only thing necessary to an accomplishment, while in fact it is simply the foundation on which attainment can be reached. We claim more than this, viz., that nine persons out of ten, no matter what the natural bent of their mind may be, can become, by careful practice, what the majority of people would term "excellent penmen." You may ask then, "Why is it that there are so many poor writers?" For the reason that men hold such opinions as above given. They think they cannot, and so make no effort.

No man can tell what he can do without making at least one good honest effort. How often do we hear people say when

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No man can tell what he can do without making at least one good effort. How often do we hear people say when

admiring good penmanship, — “If I could write like that I would give almost anything I have,” and yet the very same persons, with plenty of time at their disposal, have never given an hour of it to its acquisition. Because they cannot execute, at first trial, as well as another who has made it a profession for years, they are discouraged and take refuge in the common plea that it is not their *forte*. There are others who are waiting to be taught to write, or, as they may say, “waiting for some one to *learn* them to write.” But remember that one cannot *learn* another anything. He must learn himself. He can be *taught*, but teaching, without personal application, amounts to very little. In writing, as in almost everything else, one’s success depends upon the effort made. It has been our aim to present in these copies forms of the most approved style and the best suited to business purposes, and we trust our efforts will meet a want felt by those who are seeking to prepare themselves for future usefulness.

### Position.

The first thing in the practice of penmanship to which we call your attention is *position*. It is of the greatest importance, especially if you intend to make writing a business, that you attain a healthful position of the body while writing, whether sitting or standing, and that this position be one that will admit of free, easy motions. To accomplish this the writer should sit fronting the desk, keeping both sides equally distant from it, never resting against it, and should have a table so high as to compel the body to sit erect. Maintain a position that will give free expansion of the lungs, as such posture is absolutely indispensable to the preservation of health. Avoid dropping the body into an awkward, tiresome position, but sit erect. Be particular to obey these rules while writing, and it will soon become a fixed habit with you, and will be perfectly easy and natural, besides admitting of freedom of motion and the maintaining of health.

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A desk or table, with a perfectly smooth, level, or nearly level, surface, is best for writing. The hands should be placed on the desk at right angles to one another, and the paper at a corresponding angle with the right arm. Under some circumstances a position may be taken with the right side turned to the desk, as shown in the accompanying cut.



Never attempt to write with a single sheet of paper on a bare table, but have at least half a dozen sheets under the one on which you are writing, to form a soft, smooth surface for the pen.

### Penholding.

Take the pen between the first and second fingers and thumb, the penholder crossing the hand just forward of the knuckle joint,

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### Penholding.

Take the pen between the first and second fingers and thumb, the penholder crossing the hand just forward of the knuckle joint,

and crossing the second finger at the root of the nail. Place the thumb against the pen, opposite the first joint of the forefinger, with just enough pressure to hold the pen in position. The third and fourth fingers should be drawn back to form a rest for the hand, just touching the back of the nails. This is called the hand-rest. The second and third fingers should separate at the second joint.

The penholder should be held at an angle of 45 degrees, the top of it pointing toward the shoulder.

### Movement.

Without proper movement, writing can never be either easy or graceful. One of the greatest difficulties in acquiring a good handwriting lies here. We will try and make it plain:—

There are two rests in writing—one on the arm near the elbow, called the *Arm-rest*; and one on the fingers, called the *Hand-rest*. On the latter the hand should slide from left to right in the formation of every letter. Not only from left to right, but partially in every direction which the pen takes. If these fingers should leave a trace of their course, it would be seen to correspond nearly with the course of the pen, shown in the form of the letters produced. The right side of the hand should never touch the desk. No one can ever write rapidly or easily without attention to this rule. If the arm is placed in position to write, and remains stationary on the two rests, letters can be formed by extending and contracting the fingers and thumb. This in writing is called the finger movement.

Should the fingers and thumb remain in one position without contracting or extending, and an attempt be made to write by sliding on the hand-rest, we should call it the muscular or forearm movement. Should these two be united so that the hand moves from left to right on the hand-rest, with the arm as the center of motion, and at the same time in extended letters the finger movement should be used, it would be called a combined move-

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ment—and this is *the* movement for all practical business purposes.

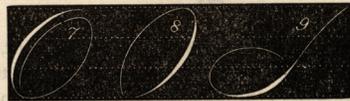
In the execution of large capitals, and in flourishing, no rest should be made except on the fingers.

### Elements and Principles.

All of the small letters of the alphabet are based on the following six principles:



Practice these separately before attempting them in combination with the other parts to complete a letter. The capital letters are formed from the three following:



Observe how these principles enter into the construction of letters. Examine the first part of such letters as W, X, Z, M, N, V, U, Y, etc., and note the similarity, and how all have the eighth principle as the distinguishing feature.

### How to Practice.

“Practice makes perfect” is an old saying, but not always a true one; to be effective it must be intelligent. There must be a definite aim, or no mark will be hit. Fix firmly in mind, by careful study, the exact form of every letter; then practice faithfully until you can see some evidence of improvement. What you want is a free, easy, rapid handwriting, that shall be perfectly

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legible. This can only be gained by continued practice, and not by what you read in books or what any one may tell you. Commence practicing from the *exercise slips*, and continue to practice from them every time you write. This will give you a free motion, while, at the same time, you will grow familiar with the formation of letters and the different combinations in writing. For the capital letters, practice on exercises Nos. 19, 20, 21, and 22. Too much time cannot be given to these different exercises. It will benefit you far more than practicing word-writing alone.

There are five things necessary to be kept before your mind constantly while practicing, viz. : —

Shape,  
Size,  
Slant,  
Spacing,  
Shading.

Remember the five S's and you will readily call them to mind.

### Shape.

Under this head we can give but a general hint, as too much space would be required to carefully analyze each letter.

In the capital letters the general outline of the majority is that of the oval.

In the small letters most of the curves are parts of similar ovals. Study the form carefully enough so that in your practice one letter shall never be mistaken for another.

### Size.

In business writing the short letters are usually made about one-tenth of an inch in height. In the business letter shown in this set the letters are about one-eleventh. Whatever the standard may be, uniformity must be shown in all the letters of a class. The capital and loop letters are made about three times as high as the short letters.

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There are three letters only which are made but twice as high — t, d, and p; all letters extending below the line should be made twice as long as the short letters, except p and q, which are a trifle shorter.

### Slant.

It is generally conceded that a line forming an angle of 52 degrees with the horizontal is about the best for business purposes, and this is often termed the "regular slant." All of the straight lines in small letters, except in x, should be made at this slant.

In determining the slant of letters formed from curved lines like O or E, draw a straight line dividing the oval equally, lengthwise, and this line should be at the regular slant.

### Spacing.

One space in writing is equal to the height of small u.

One space in width equals the distance between the points of small u at the top.

By reference to the alphabet of small letters it will be seen that the scale consists of five spaces. Study this and you can easily ascertain the length of any letter.

By spacing we also mean the distance between letters, words, and sentences.

The distances between letters in a word, measured at the top of the short letters, except in a, d, g, or q, should be little more than one space; the distance between words twice, and distance between sentences three times as great.

### Shading.

The general rule for shading capitals is that one line only should be shaded, and the nearer that shade is to the center of the letter the better balanced it will be.

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With the exception of the extended letters, we would say that no shade is necessary to produce a good effect. When double letters are written, the first generally receives the shade, as in double l or b.

In business writing, however, there is usually but little shading, and this is more preferable, as it is neater and more rapid; also, in book-keeping there should never be any shading, except on ledger headings, and here it is a matter of taste. We prefer for all book purposes perfectly plain writing, without *flourish* or *shade*. It looks much neater and is more legible.

### Materials.

Good materials are as essential to good work as pure air to health. Select the best of paper, pens, and ink, and you will find them the cheapest in the end. Paper should be of good weight and well finished; by this we do not mean too glossy, but smooth and well sized. One cannot do good work on glossy paper. Paper with a slightly rough surface, if of good quality, is the best for writing. Do not be afraid of using too much paper. To become a good penman, one must use a great deal of paper in practicing, and should not be afraid of spoiling it. The pen for general practice should be of medium size, fine point, and quite elastic. Ink should be of good color (we prefer black), and should flow freely. As the water in ink evaporates rapidly, a little water should be added as it thickens.

Finally, let us again urge the importance of practice. If you would become a good penman, you can do so by practice. We have given you all the copies and all the instruction that is necessary. Always criticise your writing; compare it with the copy; study it minutely and see wherein it differs. Your success here, as in all things, depends upon yourself. Earnest, well-directed effort will always be rewarded with success.

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The Most Practical Copy-Book Yet Published

[illustration]

The Author Is An Experienced and Practical Teacher.

[sideways on left]  
Superintendents and School Committees Should Examine  
Them Before Adopting Others.

[sideways on right]  
For Any Information Concerning These Copy-Books,  
Address H. W. Shaylor, Portland, Maine.

