

# The Importance of Good Handwriting



The Copperplate style of writing has been taught by writing masters from the 17<sup>th</sup> century onwards. It is sometimes known as the English running hand and by the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century had been adopted in France, Spain and Italy.

This neat easy-to-read script is also easy to write. Word after word can be produced without lifting the pen between letters. This type of script is widely used for business records and legal documents.

It is called Copperplate because this style was copied from printed writing manuals produced by engraving a thin sheet of copper. Special narrow pen nibs are used to imitate the fine lines made by the engraving tool.

Good handwriting is regarded as being of great importance by many who believe that you can tell a great deal from a person's hand. Before beginning to write sitting posture is most important, as is the grip of the pen and the position of the paper. Of course letters must be formed with the right hand only, while the left hand holds the paper steady. (Victorians believed in conformity, but also with ink, using the left hand creates difficulties in the practical sense.)

Capital letters rely heavily on the S-shaped "line of beauty" seen not only in calligraphy but also in furniture design and architecture of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Many capitals are begun with the S shaped downstroke, made heavier by flattening the nib slightly, then a thinner and lighter upstroke. This creates a beautiful style of contrasts. Each letter is neat, regular and well-formed and should slant to the right at an angle of 55 degrees to the horizontal baseline.

Teachers in the goldfields schools take regular writing lessons. For young male students a neat hand increases their chances of gaining work, most particularly in areas requiring book-keeping. For female students a good hand is regarded as a reflection of good personal habits, a trait most necessary in a wife. Also a young lady may need to write shopping lists, recipes, and also letters to the mother country to report on her new life in the colonies.

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# Capitals

S S S O o o o o

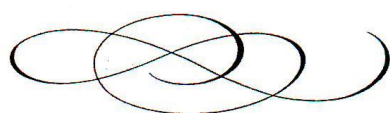
A B C D E F G

H I J K L

M N O P Q R

S T U V

W X Y Z



Minuscules

lunnot

a b b c d e f f f

g g h h i j k k k l l

m n o p p p q

r r s s s t t u v w

x y y z z z