

C *the* CALLIGRAPHER'S BIBLE

100 COMPLETE ALPHABETS
AND HOW TO DRAW THEM



มหาวิทยาลัยเทคโนโลยีราชมงคลพระนคร

ห้องสมุดสาขาชีวิตเวช



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Introduction

The unprecedented growth of information technology in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries are the culmination of a process that began over a century earlier with the invention of the typewriter. There is ever less need to write in a clear and legible hand, and keyboard skills have become more important than handwriting.

It is perhaps because of this reliance on technology and the mechanistic perfections it creates that, paradoxically, many people now appreciate and practise the tactile art(s) of calligraphy.

Modern-day calligraphers have a rich inheritance of Latin scripts developed over 2,000 years. Most of these are readily intelligible, and even scripts that have fallen out of use have many characteristics that can be incorporated and adapted for modern calligraphy.

The alphabet we use today was acquired by the Romans from the Etruscans. The Romans added the Greek letters Y and Z, bringing the total count to 23. “J”, “U” and “W” were medieval additions to accommodate further phonetic values.

The greatest calligraphic debt that we owe to the Romans is unquestionably that of their capital letters, above all the inscribed capitals that appear in the late

first century B.C. Inscriptions had been used in many civilizations before, but the extreme subtlety, beauty and elegance of the character of these Roman letterforms, the *capitalis monumentalis*, was different. Directly or indirectly, these letters provided the model for almost all of our text typeface capitals, as well as many of our display and calligraphic capitals.

In calligraphic terms there is one other Roman script of use to us: the Rustic capital. This gives us a different ductus but, unlike the *capitalis monumentalis*, also served as a manuscript hand.

As the Western Roman Empire fell into decline and became fragmented, most of the writing hands became increasingly regionalized. The Uncial, however, retained much of its integrity during this Late Roman period. This script can be viewed as a Latin interpretation of the Greek Uncial. Most of the Christian texts were written in Greek and as such were regarded almost reverentially. All of the known early Christian Latin texts were written in this hand.

By the sixth century A.D., the Uncial was developing different characteristics, particularly in relation to the features we now define as ascenders and descenders. We now define this letter as a Half-Uncial. Two significant developments had an

Inscription from the base of Trajan's Column in Rome. These letters, described in a stroke-by-stroke sequence on pages 42-43, are regarded by many authorities as among the finest examples of the Roman letter.



impact on this script. The first took place in northern Britain and Ireland, where the Half-Uncial attained a magnificence, as seen in the Book of Kells and the Lindisfarne Gospels, which arguably has never been surpassed. These books were written to the glory of God and as such were the very best that could be made in respect of writing, decoration, and binding.

The Half-Uncial was also an important script in continental Europe, where it was used for both secular and non-secular work, although it was written more speedily and consequently had a more cursive character. By the late eighth century Charlemagne had established the first post-Roman empire, stretching from the Baltic to northern Italy. Charlemagne saw himself as the inheritor of Imperial Rome, with literacy and the spread of knowledge key elements in his civilizing mission.

Inherent in this process were the establishment of scriptoria and the training of scribes. Also needed was an easily penned, legible, and universally acceptable script. By cutting his pen at right angles to the shaft instead of the oblique angle required for the Half-Uncial, the scribe produced a true minuscule.



This magnificent insular script dates from between the late eighth and early ninth centuries.

This gave less contrast between strokes, was more cursive in character and quicker in execution. Thus the reformed Half-Uncial became the Caroline minuscule.

The Roman capital and the Caroline minuscule are the two defining scripts for modern letters. The Caroline hand eventually became the model for the Renaissance Humanist hand. With the invention of printing with moveable type, it also became the model for many typefaces, and we can trace back much of our modern text type design to this period.

By the twelfth century the Caroline minuscule had grown increasingly cursive for secular work, and more compressed and upright for religious works. At the beginning of the thirteenth century this division was complete: the stately Gothic

Gandele!
CHRISTUS EST NATUS

Modern expressive calligraphy but with clearly defined letterforms.



This is the Caroline minuscule, which dates from the late eighth century.

scripts date from this point.

The Humanist minuscule, a child of the Renaissance, spawned other scripts: the earliest was the Italic, a cursive form of the Humanist minuscule. This letter, with a forward slope, could be written at speed. By the mid sixteenth century this script again became more formal and known as the Chancery Script through its use in the Papal Chancery in the Vatican.

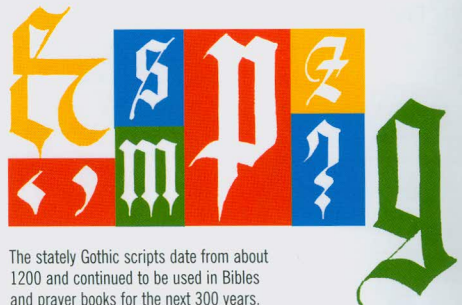
The next innovation again related to the cutting of the nib. By the mid seventeenth century, scribes discovered that by cutting their nibs to fine points, dramatically increasing the angle of slope and by joining their letters they could often write a part, or even a whole word, without lifting their pens and at a considerable speed. This Roundhand or Copperplate letter found particular favour

By 1400 the Humanist minuscule was the established writing hand of the educated person in northern Italy. The Canselleresca Formata developed from the Italic hand and dates from the mid sixteenth century.

in England, and with the rise of a trading empire it was quickly disseminated throughout the world, including the United States.

Knowledge of how the earlier scripts had been written was all but lost. The resurgence of modern calligraphy is due to the skill and painstaking research of a few individuals, including Edward Johnston in Britain. Taking the Ramsey Psalter, an English Caroline minuscule, as his model, he developed a simple and unambiguous writing hand that he taught to students. The Foundational hand remains the favourite teaching hand for almost everyone who has learned calligraphy.

The following directory contains step-by-step instructions for virtually all the major scripts from the last two millennia. In addition there are examples of many modern interpretations and re-workings. Also included is a whole range of modern scripts, drawn with pen and brush and with a variety of writing implements, both conventional and otherwise.



The stately Gothic scripts date from about 1200 and continued to be used in Bibles and prayer books for the next 300 years.



How to use this book

There are one hundred different hands shown in this book. They are organized into chronological groups. Each hand is treated in a similar way. You will find that as you become familiar with a script you may wish subtly to alter it to suit your own hand.

For scripts drawn with a broad-edged, chisel-shaped brush, angles and letter heights apply, but because of the flexibility that a brush gives these rules are more loosely applied. For Italic hands, the angle indicated is the angle at which the letter slopes from the vertical. For hands drawn with either a pointed nib, a ruling pen, or a pointed brush, measuring the height of the letter in relation to the pen or brush width is no longer applicable, although in a few instances the relationship of stem width to stem height has been indicated within the text.

Many of the scripts have been written with a broad-edged pen. When doing this, it is helpful to show the height of the letter measured in pen widths (see page 23).

The angle at which the pen is held determines the letter shape. The predominant pen angle is shown here. However, these angles are not absolutes: the angle will alter, sometimes within a single stroke and sometimes between adjacent strokes.

A "skeleton" letter shown at the beginning of the step-by-step sequence clearly shows the shape of the letter.

Renaissance

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Rotunda minuscule

The dominant Italian script, developed from the Caroline minuscule, by the twelfth century established its own distinctive form. The script retained popular until the eighteenth century and was also widely used in Spain. In size, its use varied from small text-hand to large letters, as used in choral antiphons.

Points of interest

This is the most formal of scripts, especially when used in larger sizes. Each stroke is precise, almost geometric, and meticulously crafted.

The 'o' also allows the left stroke to be a distinct angle, while the right is fully rounded.

The half 'n' can conveniently replace the full 'r'.

This more generic form of 'c' can be used as an alternative.

Rotunda minuscule

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Basic structure

Although the base of some letters is square, this is a "slanted" pen letter with the pen rotating from about 30° to the horizontal at the foot. The formal precise structure of the letter allows for little individual interpretation.

Structure	Strokes	Group
	<p>The ascenders are characteristically short and the descenders are tall.</p> <p>Begin the stroke with the pen at an angle of 30° and make a strong vertical down.</p>	b b q z
	<p>These two alternative forms of 'm' for the right 'm'. Whichever one is used repeat for the 'n'.</p> <p>Begin with a short diagonal stroke at 30° before slowly rising down into the stem.</p>	a f i j l m r t u v w y
	<p>The stem of all 'c' based letters is angular compared to the curve of the right line.</p> <p>Hold the pen at a constant angle of 30°-35°.</p> <p>Make the right stroke fully curved, down of any irregularity.</p>	c d e g p s
	<p>Occasionally we can find variations of the Gothic influence, as in this stem and base of the 'p'.</p> <p>Make left-hand stroke close to the right at 30°.</p> <p>Add an upward diagonal tally curve to the right at 30°. Draw a wide loop.</p>	bo

Numbered arrows indicate the order of individual strokes needed to create the letter. A handful of hands can be created in any sequence the calligrapher wishes and these do not have arrows.

This panel calls out characteristics of the script and sometimes offers alternative letterforms.

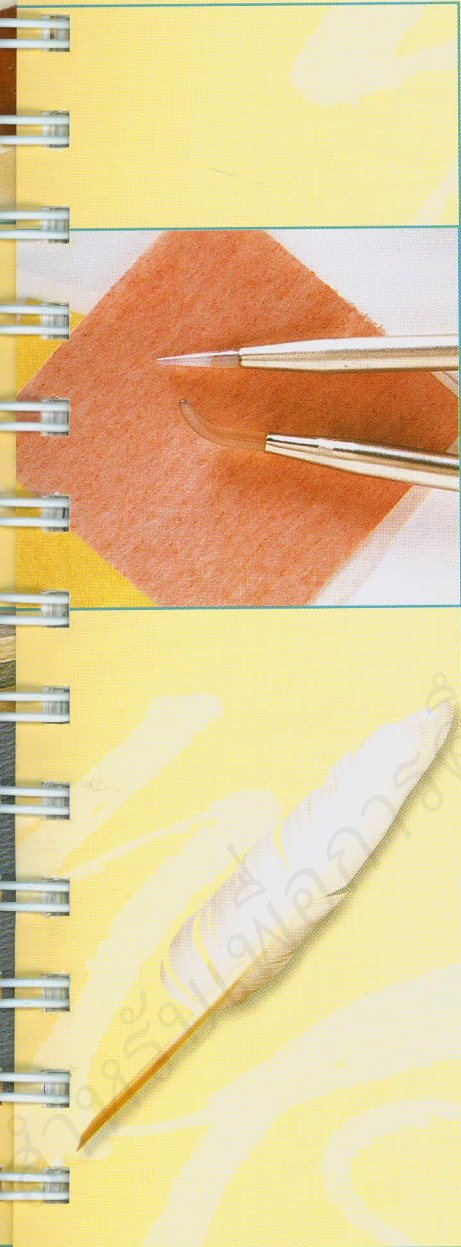
Step-by-step sequences demonstrate a selection of letters. Practise will give you a good grasp of the entire script.

Letters are organized into general groups. Not all letters are included and some letters may fall into several groups. They are, however, a useful indication of the way letters relate to each other.

Preparation

Full enjoyment of calligraphy begins with getting to know your tools and equipment. The following pages offer guidance on what you might need, and shows you how to use what you choose.

There are detailed instructions for developing writing skills, from getting your pen working to ruling lines ready for studying an alphabet. The simple suggestions for laying out your text will help you to produce visually effective designs.



Tools and materials

The writing instrument is one of the most significant factors in the appearance of a calligraphic letter. Edged or pointed, soft, rigid or flexible – these factors affect the speed and rhythm of writing, and everyone develops favourites. Exploration of the many kinds of pens, papers and inks is part of the fascination of calligraphy.

To find the right tools to suit your level of expertise, look through the following descriptions. Availability may be the final deciding factor. Although office and stationery suppliers will have the more standard items, artists' suppliers will be the major source. More specialized items will only be available through groups such as calligraphy societies. Find the nearest society through your local library or check the Internet for national societies.

Pens

Felt-tipped pens

Economical and convenient disposable felt-tipped pens are useful tools for practice, and for items that will not be on display for very long: the inks are generally not lightfast, so their colors fade over time. They should be replaced when the tips start to lose their sharp edge.



Felt-tipped pens

Dip pens



Fountain pens

Fountain pens are popular for beginners, as they have convenient ink cartridges, which can be purchased in a variety of colours. However, these inks will also fade in time, so fountain pens, too, are excellent tools for practice and temporary documents. Once black ink has been used, it is difficult to wash out sufficiently well to change to a bright colour. Several nib sizes are available in a pen set.



Fountain pen sets include a wide range of nib sizes.

Dip pens

All dip pens will be useful for writing with coloured inks and paints, as they wash out easily.

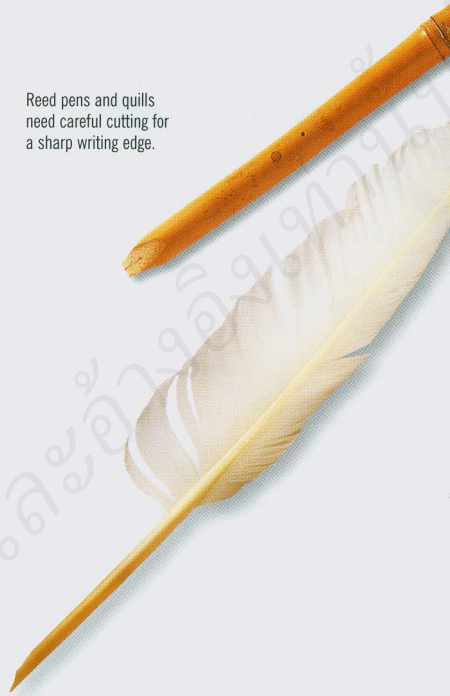
Quills: These are the best-known traditional dip pen. People who use them constantly insist that there is no finer tool. Some skill is needed to cut the nib sufficiently well for consistently sharp writing, as it softens and wears with use, necessitating re-cutting after a short time. Practising on reed pens, if you can obtain suitable Norfolk reed, is a good introduction. It is sometimes possible to purchase ready-cut quills.

Steel nibs: These became popular as a convenient ready-cut tool manufactured in up to ten widths. They are square-cut “roundhand” nibs, which attach to a pen holder (handle). A separate reservoir attaches to the underneath of the nib to help retain more ink. (This reservoir is not a precision instrument and often needs its grip adjusted by squeezing or opening out the sides.)

Steel nibs have a straight writing edge, but it is possible to obtain left oblique nibs for left-handers, which help to compensate slightly for the wrist-twisting that a left-hander has to do to achieve the same angle of writing (see *Preparing to Write*, page 20). Sometimes these nibs need “breaking in” when new: Hold each side for two to three seconds (don’t overdo it!) over a match flame to burn off the varnish at the first 1cm of the tip. Test it by dipping in the ink; if the nib stays coated, it is ready for use.

Some dip nibs come with a reservoir built into the top, which is very convenient, as it never slips off and does not


Reed pens and quills need careful cutting for a sharp writing edge.



Steel nibs come in many shapes. Many have reservoirs attached.



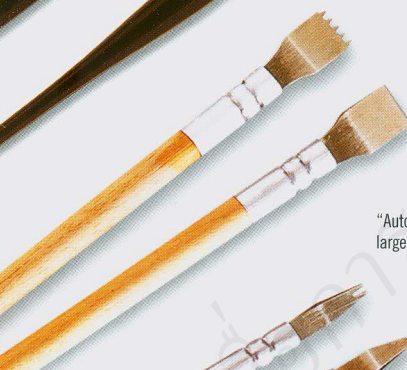
Handle for a straight
Copperplate nib



Handle with elbow nib



Pens with attached
reservoirs



"Automatic" pens for
large lettering



"Elbow"
copperplate nib

pinch the nib. Many of these nibs are slightly right oblique, designed for the comfort of right-handers – so left-handers beware.

Copperplate nibs: Copperplate work requires a flexible, pointed nib without a reservoir. Copperplate nibs wear out more quickly than square-edged pens because they are worked by pressure, thus causing eventual metal fatigue. It is worth purchasing several at a time.

Poster pens: Larger pens for poster work come in many varieties from specialized suppliers. "Automatic" pens and multi-stroke pens are the most popular. They have very wide nibs in various sizes and retain the ink with some form of integral reservoir. They are simple to wash out and generally come with an integral handle.

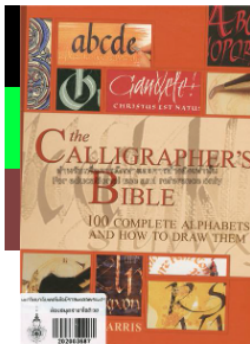
Ruling pens: These were once the domain of technical draughtspeople but have been adopted by calligraphers for two roles: for ruling straight lines and for freeform experimental writing. For the latter purpose they are held flatter to encourage the ink to flow out freely. Several specialized ruling pens have been designed by calligraphers to make bolder marks for greater expression.




Brause, Mitchell, and Speedball nibs

สามารถยืมและติดตามหนังสือใหม่ได้ที่ ระบบห้องสมุดอัตโนมัติ Walai Autolib

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" สำหรับเพื่อการศึกษาระดับปริญญาและอ้างอิงเท่านั้น "