



A LIFESTYLE EDUCATION THROUGH DISCIPLESHIP™ GUIDE
FROM ME AND MY HOUSE

Freedom & Simplicity™ in Handwriting

Sampler Pages Excerpted from Freedom & Simplicity™ in Handwriting
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To purchase go to: <http://frommeandmyhouse.com/led-handwriting.htm>

by Lisa Hodgen
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Greetings from Me and My House,

We hope you enjoy and are blessed by *Freedom & Simplicity in Handwriting*. We desire to be “helpers of your joy” and pray that you find it beneficial as you seek to educate in *Freedom & Simplicity™*. If you find it helpful, please tell your friends and send them to our website to get their own copy.

The body of this Guide is printed in GDI Basic font from Educational Fontware, Inc. <http://educationalfontware.com> It is an italic style very similar to what our directions for letter formation will produce. If you would like to produce copywork guides or “worksheets” for your children you can purchase this, along with many other handwriting fonts, from them. Several varieties of each are included, such as: bold, dashes, outlines, arrows, with rules, and combinations of these, in print as well as cursive.

Writing for the Glory of God,
Lisa

Footnotes:

Quotes taken from *Italic Letters*, by Getty and Debay, used with permission. *Italic Letters*, published by Portland State University, 1992.

On page 5, the quote from Howard Glasser is taken from page 116 in *Italic Letters*.

On page 8, the quote from D.W. Wiggins is taken from page 6 in *Italic Letters*.

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Principled Handwriting

Who would have ever thought that there is a principled way to teach Handwriting? Not I. Oh, I know that everything comes from God, and should be taught based upon this, but I never thought I would delve into what principled teaching of Handwriting looks like. Perhaps you haven't either. Then this study is for you. This guide does not cover the broader details relating to writing and English in general, only as applied to Handwriting. For much more information about our written language see our forthcoming *Freedom & Simplicity™ in Writing* (when it comes out).

There's more to it than just wiggling your fingers and out come the letters.
Howard Glasser on Handwriting

Foundations

Let's take a look at some foundational things to learn and teach about Handwriting. What is it? Where did it come from and how has it come about? Why should we study it? Then we will take a look at how to teach it.

Penmanship, the art of handwriting, is the orderly form of written communication produced by hand. Throughout time man has developed other ways of writing besides manually inscribing his thoughts and knowledge, and we can see great advancements made in the availability of written materials after the printing press was developed, and then portable and now electronic type. But manual writing forms the basis and is the seed for all types of written language.

We see in God's Word that He not only many times commands men to write, but there are times when He Himself writes: the 10 Commandments on the tables of stone, the warning to Belshazzar in the book of Daniel, and Jesus' writing in the ground. We could even say that God wrote at Creation and after the Flood, for our study of geography is His "writing on the earth" - geo=earth, graphy=writing. He engraved the characteristics of the surface of our earth.

In Genesis we are given the Book of Adam (and others), indicating that human writing is nearly as old as Creation. For millennia scribes have handwritten, over and over, the writings that would be passed along to others, most importantly, the Bible. We have God's Word today because it has been preserved for us, through the meticulous copying of manuscripts by scribes.

Over time men have developed many forms of writing their language. Those that are most effective and lasting, that bring liberty, are those that have a balance of power and form, that is, written characters that represent sounds. Liberty is not seen in peoples that have a spoken but not written language. A written language is necessary for the preservation of knowledge and history. Languages that have retained a written form after the spoken power has left are considered "dead languages".

The Rudiments of Handwriting

Malachi 3:6 - I am the Lord, I change not.

1 Corinthians 14:40 - Let all things be done decently and in order.

The Rudiments of Handwriting are based on Malachi 3:6 and 1 Corinthians 14:40, for it is in steadfast consistency (patterned after God's own character) and orderliness that we are able to produce Handwriting that is not only clear and legible, but also fluent and beautiful. The more consistent and uniform all the aspects of Handwriting are, the easier it will be to read and the faster others will be able to read and understand it.

The qualities of letterforms at their best are order, simplicity and grace.

D.W. Dwigings

The characters of our written language (letters of our alphabet) are made up of a few simple strokes. But neither the strokes nor the characters (letters) themselves convey any meaning when they are isolated. Only when strokes are properly combined into individual letters, and letters (representing specific sounds) are joined in union, do they express the power of language. This power of properly combined strokes, that form letters, that form words, that form sentences, that form compositions – this expression of our written language can reach far beyond our own physical limitations of time and space.

Handwriting begins with the seed of the individual strokes that make up our letters. The rudiments of Handwriting are the **strokes** (shape), **size** (proportion), **spacing**, and **slant** (slope), and **speed**. The more orderly (consistently uniform) we are able to make these, the more legible our writing will be and the more comely. As an art form, penmanship is not just utilitarian but also can express beauty.

We have chosen an italic form of handwriting because it is an expansionary form. There are very few changes from manuscript (print) to cursive. The seeds planted in the beginning, the strokes and letter shapes, will grow into the cursive letters with just the addition of serifs and joins. This style can even “grow up” into a very nice Calligraphy hand too.

We will look at each of these Rudiments as we go through the teaching of Handwriting. Let us write for the Glory of God as an expression of His orderliness and beauty.

Pre-writing

Before going to pencil and paper, a child should “practice” writing in other ways. Using his large arm muscles is a good way to start. The child will get a “feel” for the shape of the letter. Next the child can trace letters with his finger(s). Large sandpaper letters are excellent for this. But even large letters you have written will work. Then the

Tip: For children able to use regular notebook paper (or any paper without a midline) but still needing practice in proper height you can create a temporary midline guide for them by paper clipping another piece of paper behind the one they are writing on, shifted up, with its lines half-way between the lines on the top paper. You can see this midline through your top piece of paper to help guide you. You can do the same thing for slant, by tilting the paper underneath to the proper angle to give you a “hidden” guide to direct you for uniform slant.

Beginning Basics

- ❖ We teach lower case letters before capitals. Lower case letters are used 98% of the time.
- ❖ We write in the same direction we read – left to right.
- ❖ All letters sit on the ground or baseline, except for lower case *j* which has no body.
- ❖ Most lower case letters are written without lifting the pencil. *k*, *x* and the letters that are crossed or dotted are the exceptions.
- ❖ All lower case letters begin with a downward (straight or slant) or counterclockwise stroke, except *z*, which begins with a left to right line. All of the curved letters move slightly horizontal before they curve, *e* moving to the right in its counterclockwise curve.

Speed

The faster we write, the sloppier we tend to be. But very slow writing is not practical for most everyday usage, and can be unwise stewardship of our time. The goal is to find our quickest speed that still retains a nice, consistent, legible handwriting. The italic style that we use was chosen for this very reason. It produces a fine legible hand, even at quick speeds.

But in learning and for practice, we need to start slow and develop a consistent, orderly hand. Then we can gradually increase speed as the other rudiments become a natural part of our handwriting. Various speeds will be used for different types of writing. When jotting a note to yourself you will use a faster speed that may not produce as nice of hand as when you slow down to write a formal invitation. Choose and maintain the proper speed for the job at hand to produce the necessary degree of “beauty” in your handwriting.

Size

Work for consistently sized and proportioned letters. Handwriting looks sloppy when letters are of varying sizes.