

welcome to

brush lettering
basics

the basic strokes

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the Basic Strokes

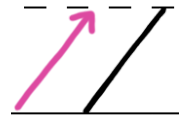
a step by step guide

Welcome to the Basic Strokes

The basic strokes are the building blocks that are used to form the letters in any brush lettering alphabet. You need to perfect these in order for your letters to look good. Start with the upstroke and downstroke to get your pen pressure right, and then move on to the other strokes. These notes are suitable for either right or left handed people, and the direction of the stroke (see pink arrows) is the same for left and right handed people. Lefties sometimes just need to move the pen slightly differently to get the same results..

The Upstroke

The upstroke is a thin line and ALWAYS goes upwards. Use the tip of your brush, go slowly and apply only the lightest amount of pressure to create a lovely even thin stroke. Resist the urge to 'flick' the nib of the pen, and try not to drag it either.



The Downstroke

The downstroke is a thick stroke and ALWAYS goes downwards. Use the side of the nib to create this stroke. Go slowly and apply a fair amount of pressure - don't grind the nib into the page, just apply enough pressure for the nib to flex sideways and create a wide stroke.



The Overturn

The overturn is a combination of the up and down strokes. Make sure that your grip is light and that the pen can move over at the top to create a soft curve. If the curve is too pointy you may need to make your fingers more flexible to give the pen space to move.



The Underturn

The overturn is a combination of the up and down strokes. Make sure that your grip is light and that the pen can move around at the bottom to create a soft curve. If the curve is too pointy you may need to make your fingers more flexible to give the pen space to move.



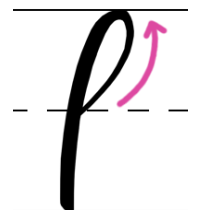
The Compound Turn

The compound turn is a combination of the overturn and underturn and is quite tricky to get right. Start in light pressure for the upstroke, then curve at the top and go into full pressure for the downstroke. Then transition to medium pressure towards the bottom of the downstroke and go into light pressure for the curve and upstroke. Try and keep the two curves consistent and don't flick out of the bottom curve too quickly.



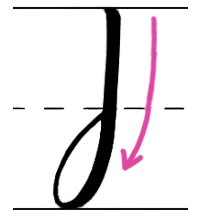
The Ascending Loop

The ascending loop is the 'top' for letters such as l, h, b, d, k and f. It starts in the middle with the thin upstroke, with a turn at the top and then down into a long downstroke in full pressure. Try and keep the downstroke straight, or very slightly curved towards the left for a soft look - if it is curving in towards the right then relax your grip and allow the pen to move away from your hand in a slight arc.



The Descending Loop

The descending loop is the 'tail' for letters such as j, g and y. It starts in full pressure for the downstroke, then moves into medium pressure 2/3 of the way down and into light pressure as you go into the curve and thin upstroke.



The Oval

The oval is a tricky shape to do and requires a very light and flexible hand. Start in the 2 o'clock position (see pink line) and NOT at the top of the shape. Do a light upstroke moving around into a curved full pressure downstroke. Continue down, move into medium pressure 2/3 of the way down, then curve around and up in light pressure making sure to join up where you started.

