

# **A Guide to Writing the old German “Kurrent” Script**

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**Here you will also find explanations and reading exercises  
using several fonts**

# A Guide to Writing the old German “Kurrent” Script

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For those of you who would like to be able to read the old German scripts that were banned by decree in Germany in 1941, it is recommendable to first master how to write these particular scripts. I have selected the “Kurrent” script, which was in common usage in 1900.

Once you have learned this particular script and its characteristic features, you will discover that it becomes far easier to decipher the preceding and subsequent German scripts. Moreover, it will make it easier to read old block letters.

This course is primarily aimed at people carrying out research into their family history or those intending to delve deeper into local history and who would like to read private, business or legal historical documents. A great many of those who have participated in my courses, which, incidentally, are held at the local adult education centre (Volkshochschule) here in the German city of Krefeld, have told me that they have become much more adept at editing texts expeditiously.

Perhaps this would also be interesting for young people who, prior to their studies at university, would like to interpret the meaning of old German handwriting.

It should be noted that mastery of the German language in both spoken and written forms is a prerequisite. Moreover, please bear in mind that this is not a tutorial for learning the German language.

If you would like to try your hand at mastering this particular script, a fountain pen or a traditional penholder and nib, which must be dipped in ink, are considered suitable. Ball point pens are not deemed appropriate. Moreover, you should not use bird or goose feathers.

Let us begin with the typeface of the “Kurrent” script as it was written back in the 1900's. You will notice that both finely written texts, such as those in friendship books, official documents, business documents, invoices, love letters - as well as military postal service letters from the world wars - have one thing in common: the letters are narrowly set together, pointed, and slightly tilted to the right.

As is evident in the Latin style of writing, the letters of the “Kurrent” script also have varying size ratios.

*a n i b A g j f f Anna Tgal Juni Zofa*

Therefore, we can see that there are single-stage, two-stage and three-stage letters. Single-stage letters are written between the baseline and mean line: a. Two-stage letters can be written between the ascender line and the baseline: b, A, or between mean line and descender line: g. Three-stage letters are written between the ascender line and the descender line: J, P, Z, f ....

When writing the “Kurrent” script, it is important to adhere to the *size ratio* between the ascender, x-height and descender.

Let us take a closer look at the lined paper for “Kurrent” script, which was used in the 1900's.

|                  |       |   |
|------------------|-------|---|
| 1 Ascender line  | _____ | 1 |
| 2 Mean line      | _____ | 2 |
| 3 Baseline       | _____ | 3 |
| 4 Descender line | _____ | 4 |

You can find two pages with these lines at the end of this guide.

The baseline is the most important. The distance from top to bottom is 2:1:2. Therefore, ascenders and descenders are twice as large as the x-heights. The lined paper ultimately acts as a kind of “corset”. It creates a framework for the letters. Those learning the “Kurrent” script for the first time will automatically be able to create a tidy style of writing.

On the previous pages, you will find two lined guide sheets that can be used for copying. One guide sheet has 12 lines while the other one features 14 lines. You can choose any distance (spacing); however, you must adhere to the 2:1:2 ratio. I recommend going to any reputable copy shop to copy the pages - single or double sided - or even as complete writing pads. My advice to beginners is to begin practicing using the broader lined guide paper, and then move onto the narrow lined paper when they have become more adept at this style of writing. Please note that *a pen will glide much better over paper that has a smooth surface.*

You should take into consideration the rightward angled strokes of the letters, which is an angle of 60 to 70 degrees. When writing, it may help to think of the hands of a clock positioned at 07:05. Small, medium and large letters are therefore not perpendicular - (which is the case with Sutterlin).



Now, you can print out the templates for the letters. These letters originate from a font that is used on a computer. They were created to give the reader the impression of actual handwriting. It is for this reason the *connecting lines* between two letters are simply *bisected*. Here are some examples:

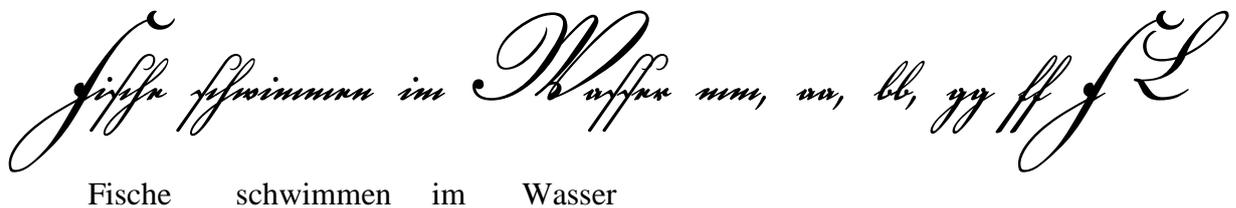


The following is applicable for all *lowercase letters* at the beginning of a word: *always start to write the letter on the baseline*, and, when possible, finish the letter at the mean line when you reach the end of the word. It may appear that some uppercase letters have unusual entrance strokes; these are merely shown to indicate the connection. If an uppercase letter stands alone, such half entrance strokes do not appear:



Please note that when I introduce individual letters, I will also show you examples of other script typefaces. This is necessary because I use the “DS Kurrent” font from the company Delbanco-Frakturschriften, and, unfortunately, this does not provide all of the available characters on the keyboard. This primarily concerns the following letters: d (No. 17), D (No. 53), e (No. 14), F (No. 52), p (No. 24) and P (No. 49). These letters all have certain deviations in their size and inclination, and therefore you will need to make certain adjustments. It is a good idea to write all facets of these letters so that you can recognise them in ancient manuscripts.

The older scripts, such as “Kurrent” which roughly dates back to 1814, had a line ratio of 2:2:1:2:2. For example, the sentence below reads: *Fische schwimmen im Wasser* (*Fish swim in water*). However, you can forget this for the time being. You will find an example of this script in the chapter entitled “Reading exercises”.



# Kurrent around 1900

*A A A A A*    *E E E E E*    *F F F F F* (all are applicable) *G*  
 A    B    C    D+D    E    F + F + F    G

---

*H H H H H*    *L L L L L*    *M M M M M*    *O O O O O*    *P P P P P*    *Q*  
 H    I    J    K    L    M    N    O    P + P    Q

---

*R R R R R*    *S S S S S*    *T T T T T*    *U U U U U*    *V V V V V*    *W W W W W*    *X X X X X*    *Y Y Y Y Y*    *Z*  
 R    S    T    ST    U    V    W    X    Y    Z

---

*Nil Nil Übel*  
 Danger of confusion with Nil    Stil    Übel

---

*a a a a a*    *e e e e e*    *f f f f f*    *i i i i i*    *j j j j j*    *k k k k k*    *l*  
 a    b    c    d+d    e+e    f    g    h    i    j    k    l

---

*m m m m m*    *n n n n n*    *o o o o o*    *p p p p p*    *q q q q q*    *r r r r r*    *s s s s s*    *t t t t t*    *u u u u u*    *v*  
 m    n    o    p+p    q    r    s    s    t    u    v

---

*w w w w w*    *x x x x x*    *y y y y y*    *z z z z z*    *ch ch ch ch ch*    *ck ck ck ck ck*    *sch sch sch sch sch*    *ss ss ss ss ss*    *st st st st st*    *ß*  
 w    x    y    z -    ch    ck    sch    ss    st    ß

---

The above show examples of the different ways of writing the letters: D, d, e, F, P, p, in other fonts

Please print out this page.

So, let us start doing some writing. However, we will dispense with an ABC approach, and, instead, focus upon a method that will be based upon the common characteristics of each letter. Please note that you can find an index of the letters and the chapter number they have been allocated at the end of the course on page 33 (a - 12, A - 30).

Let us start with the lowercase letters. Each letter will be introduced and explained individually. This will be followed by a specific exercise. Make sure you pay attention to the angle of incline! Remember the hands of a clock positioned at 07:05! In this way, you will be able to create the typical typeface.

First, the letter must be written, and this will be done across a whole line. Following this, we will look at the exercises for the special characters.

Write with a fountain pen, or, when possible, using a traditional penholder and nib, which must be dipped in ink. Please do not erase or improve the letter. Why, you may ask? Well, later you will be able to see the difficulties you were faced with when you wrote the particular letter. Only write on appropriately lined paper, which should be *smooth*.

Henceforth, this shall now be applicable for all letters. Please note that the instructions will not be repeated. All lowercase letters must begin on the baseline!

---

1.) l -  

The upstroke ascends from the baseline and the loop must reach up to the ascender line. The loop should be written distinctly and should not be too small. It should be wide enough so that you could “fill it with colour”. *This applies to all ascending and descending loops.*

The downward stroke crosses just above the mean line and forms the lower loop (swash) on the baseline. *Always make sure you pay attention to the angle of incline of the letter!*

Exercise: row 1 with single letters  Row 2 has two letters joined 


2.) b -  

As is shown in 1. - Please make sure that the lower loop reaches the mean line and includes a small enclosed loop. You can see that the letter “b” has a small “lobe” which is used as a connection to the subsequent letter.

Exercise: row 1 with single letters  Row 2 has two letters joined: 


### 3.) t -



Starting on the baseline, take a gently curved hairline stroke upward to the ascender line; the descending stroke should be written gently and taken diagonally to the baseline. Place a small enclosed loop where the next letter is to be joined.

Exercise: row 1 with single letters: 

Row 2 has two letters joined: 



### 4.) k -

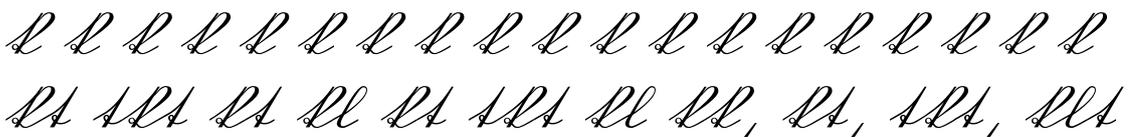


The lowercase “k” is like the “t” and is a two-stage letter.

Use the mnemonic: 1 and 2 = k.  $1 + 2 = k$  Starting on the baseline, write  without an enclosed loop. Following this, add a generous number 2, which also encompasses an enclosed loop on the downstroke above the baseline:

Exercise: row 1 with single letters: 

Row 2: connected letters:   = 



### 5.) f -



Starting on the baseline, take the upstroke to the upper left curve and then take the downstroke from the ascender line down to the descender line. Please try to keep a steady hand and do not shake; keep the stroke firm and even all the way down to the descender line. Do not forget about the angle of incline and the loop – it shouldn't be too wide, but not too close together either. As with the “t”, we finish off with a small enclosed loop; the next letter will be attached to this.

Exercise: row 1 with single letters: 

Row 2: connected letters:   = 



## 6.) h -



Starting on the baseline, draw an upper ascending loop and then take the stroke down to the descender line without shaking. The letter finishes with a descending stem loop, which crosses over the baseline. As with the letter “f”, it must be a straight and solidly written downstroke.

Exercise: row 1 with single letters:  Row 2: connected letters:       
                   
                 

## 7.) s -



Attention! The letter  is also known as a “long s” and is placed at the *beginning of a German word or a syllable*: some examples of German words are: sein (to be), aufstehen (get up), schön (beautiful), stumm (mute), le-sen (read), ab-setzen (put down), singen (sing), spielen (play)...

It must never be at the end of a syllable or word: Haus (house), Maus (mouse), auslaufen (leak), Reis-gericht (rice dish)

Later in this course, you will learn a letter that can be used in place of this, the so-called round  (“s”), which is described in no. 18.

When the uppercase letters are introduced, you will be given a wealth of examples for practice.

Moreover, you will find various exercises for practicing the “S” rule on pages 30 and 31.

As is the case with the letter “t”, the “s” begins on the baseline. After you take the entrance stroke in a gentle curve, the downstroke follows swiftly. Take a full pressure stroke straight down from the ascender to the descender line! The connection to the next letter is made from the baseline.

Exercise: row 1 . Please observe the inclined, full pressure downstrokes!

Row 2: grouped letters



So far, the following letters have been introduced:

b, c, ch, f, h, k, ck, l, m, n, s, sch, st. t  
*b, c, ch, f, h, k, ck, l, m, n, s, sch, st. t*

Unfortunately, we are unable to use them to form words in the German language.

However, if you have been practicing beautifully inclined letters on the lined guide paper, and have managed to get the size ratio of your ascenders and descenders in the correct proportion to the single-stage “c”, “n” and “m” letters, then you are already on your way to achieving a good style for the “Kurrent” script.

Please read the following German lyrics, which you will see are separated according to their phonetic syllable. If you know the melody, you can either hum or sing it. Tap in time to the rhythm!

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Al - le Vö - gel sind schon da,              | (All the birds are already here,)                 |
| al - le Vö - gel, al - le.                   | (All the birds, all of them!)                     |
| Welch ein Sin - gen, Mu - si - zier'n        | (Oh what singing, music-playing,)                 |
| Pfei - fen, Zwit - schern, Ti - ri - lier'n, | (Whistling, chirping, trilling)                   |
| Früh - ling will nun ein - mar - schier'n,   | (Spring wants to come now with all his<br>might,) |
| kommt mit Sang und Schal - le.               | (It comes with songs and sounds.)                 |

Check for yourself: in every German phonetic syllable

|                        |             |         |    |    |      |
|------------------------|-------------|---------|----|----|------|
| you will find a vowel: | a,          | e,      | i, | o, | u    |
| or an umlaut:          | ä,          |         |    | ö, | ü    |
| or a diphthong:        | ai, au, äu, | ei, eu, | ie |    | or y |

This is the case with all German words. Some phonetic syllables are very short and some consist of many letters. For example:

Rolf, Hein-rich, Angst-ha-se (coward), Ur-su-la, Au-ßen-mi-ni-ster (foreign minister), Syl-vi-a, Bä-der (baths), Häus-chen (cottage), Kai-ser (emperor), Leu-te (people), Schwie-rig-keit (difficulty), Bi-o-lo-gie (biology), Bür-ste (brush)

It is for this reason that the connections between the vowels have to be practiced well. You must be in a position to be able to connect them with other letters quickly and confidently. For example: la, le, li, lo, lu, lau, leu, lei.

Attention: a, e, i, o, u, and the variations are single-stage letters that are written between the baseline and mean line; however, the letter “y” is the exception.

Henceforth, we will plan in three rows for each letter.

We will use row 1 for practicing the letters, while rows 2 and 3 will be for copying and writing out words. However, this might only be possible at a later stage following the introduction of additional letters.

11.) o ö - o ö

*ob*

This letter is placed between the baseline and mean line. The upstroke is taken from the baseline to the mean line in a straight line and without haste. Subsequently, we take the stroke around to form an oval, which must remain open at the apex of the letter. A small enclosed loop that reaches up to the mean line finishes the letter.

Exercise: row 1 *o ö*

2. Copy all of the words

*o ö o ö o ö o ö o ö o ö o ö o ö o*  
*ob, foif, fo, tot, oft, pfön, foft, toll, foll,*

12.) a ä - a ä

*an*

The lowercase letter “a” starts just like the letter “o”. The downstroke begins at the enclosed loop, very tightly written and straight, and is taken down to the baseline. From there, you take a gently curved upstroke to the mean line.

Exercise: row 1 *a ä*

2. Copy all of the words

*a ä a ä a ä a ä a ä a ä a ä a*  
*alt, salt, naif, fallo, matt, narft, flayf*

13.) i j - i j

*in ja*

The letter “i” is written in a similar way to the letter “c”, but omits the tick-like symbol; instead it has a dot. Therefore, the stroke is up-down-up with a small dot on top. “j” is written with a lower loop, crossing the baseline.

Exercise: row 1 *i j*

2. Copy all of the words

*i j i j i j i j i j i j i j i j i j*  
*in, im, ja, if, ifn, jojo, inft, finft, pinft*



16.)

ä, ö, ü, ai, au, äu, ei, eu, ie  
*ä, ö, ü, ai, au, äu, ei, eu, ie*

Copy the following words: *fällen, böse, müffen, uniu,*  
*laufen, laufen, fünfeln, feilen, fünfeln*  
*pfählen, pfählen, binten, abfeilen, pfen*

17.-1) d - *d*                      *da*                      *dann*

17.-2) d - *d*                      *da*                      *dann*

Look closely at the examples given. The letter is written in one stroke:

The upstroke begins on the baseline and is taken up to the mean line - the down stroke is curved - starting with a sharp angle, it lightly curves up to the ascender line - and, with a leftward curve - which almost creates a circular loop - finishes with a small upstroke. A new letter is either commenced upon the baseline - or you can extend the loop of the letter "d" down until it connects even to the smallest letter. (Make sure you adjust the size and angle of incline!)

Exercise: row 1 *d, d*

2. Copy all of the words

*d d d d d d d d d d d d d*  
*da, dann, und, die, dumm, du, ein, undig,*  
*diefe, dabi, unden, fände, gefunden, finden*

## 18.) Closing - s - *b*

*bib*

The letter begins on the baseline and forms a circular shape, which moves in a clockwise direction, and is placed between the baseline and mean line. When the circle is complete, take the stroke up to the ascender line and finish the stroke with a right open loop.

This letter is placed at the *end of a word or syllable*. Please note that an explanation of how to write the letter ‘*b*’ can be found on pages 31 and 32.

Exercise: row 1 *b*

2. Copy all of the words

*b b*  
*bab, nihtb, aub, aubunfman, loblaunfman, nb,*  
*inbfalle, ninb, fuhb, laifub, abunib, nahtb*

## 19.) g - *g*

*gufun*

One can write the letter “g” in a very simple way. First, you write a letter “a” and then you take a downstroke to the descender line and then take it back up to the baseline in a loop.

Exercise: row 1 *g*

2. Copy all of the words

*g g*  
*gaben, gaben, gib, golun, gut, gugun, glunif*  
*giftig, gulb, glatt, glafig, gun = ftig*

st is never seperated! Please refer to the explanations about old hyphenation on page 32.

## 20.- 1) q - *q*

## 20.- 2) qu - *qu*

This letter is very simple. One writes the letter g without a loop, but with a firm downstroke which goes to the descender line. If no other letter follows, *the letter “q” finishes on the descender line*. The subsequent letter commences on the baseline.

Exercise: row 1 *q, qu*

2. Copy all of the words

*q qu q qu*  
*quaffeln, quallen, quastpfen, qualman,*  
*quinstpfen, quälun, ququöllun, quistagulb*



## 23.) x -



This very elegant lowercase letter is the only letter to have an open *right-curving* lower loop. However, it is not very easy to write.

1. Take the upstroke from the baseline up to the mean line.
2. Write a wide open curve that is taken back to the mean line.
3. From here, take a thin left curving loop at an oblique angle back down to the descender line.
4. Now, immediately swing the curving line to the right and upwards to finish off with a curl. The letter is now complete.

The next letter begins on the baseline.

Exercise:  practice, practice, practice...

2. Copy all of the words

                          
*x=mal, fagen, migen, regalt, fig, bozun, axial, x=balinbig, maximal, regallant*

## 24.-1) p -

## 24.-2) p -

Start by taking a sloping upstroke from the baseline to the mean line. Form a wide and open curve, as with the letter “x”, and take this stroke back to the mean line. From here, take a slender left curve down at a steep angle to the descender line and follow this with a *left* curved loop - like we have already done with the letter “g” – and take the stroke back to the baseline. *p must be open at the top!*

Although “p” is quite a complicated letter to write, there even exists another complex form thereof. Take the upstroke from the baseline to the mean line - following this, immediately draw a circle to the right, which you take to the mean line, placing it slightly above the mean line.- Now, draw a “g” loop, which passes down on the left side of the circle and continues down to the descender line. It ends on the right side of the mean line next to the circle. You can use both forms.

Exercise: row 1   practice both forms well!

2. Copy all of the words

              
*yarden, yaffen, yallen, ylagun, yilun, ylast, yinlen, yfrifen, yflugun, yilant*

## 25.) r -



We can practice writing the letter “r” in a number of stages.

1. Upstroke and downstroke between the baseline and the mean line.
2. A small enclosed loop on the baseline.
3. From this position, take the upstroke close and parallel to the downstroke and up to the mean line, then finish with a small tick.

Attention! These letters should always be *very narrowly* written!

Exercise: practice writing 1 row of  in 3 stages.

2. Copy all of the words

27.) w - *w* (*n* *v* *w*)

We can use the letter “r” and “v” as the basis for the letter “w”.

1. As already shown, one begins this letter like the letter “n” – “up-down-up-down”.
2. This is followed by an enclosed loop on the baseline.
3. From this position, the stroke then continues with the inverted “o”.

If a subsequent letter does not follow this letter then, we can end the letter “w” on the baseline, otherwise, the connection to a subsequent letter should be made on the baseline.

Exercise: row 1 *w*

2. Copy all of the words

*w*  
*wab*, *war*, *win*, *wo*, *wann*, *warum*, *wann*,  
*wil*, *wit*, *wagen*, *walfer*, *warm*, *wasfen*

28.) y - *y* (*n* *v* *y*)

We can use the letter “r” as the basis for this letter.

One simply takes the v curve down to the descender line and form a loop - as is the case with the letter “g”.

Exercise: row 1 *y*

2. Copy all of the words

*y*  
*yngelich*, *yftmach*, *ymbolich*, *yellow*,  
*ymmlich*, *yginlich*, *ygerunglich*, *yab*

## Writing uppercase letters in the old German “Kurrent” script

From this point onwards, one has to pay particular attention to the way in which the letter “S” is written.

In the case of the German round “S” (b), please refer to pages 30 and 31.

The uppercase letters are two or three stage. They are placed between the base and the ascender line or are between the descender and ascender line. They shall now be presented in groups.

Due to the fact that the uppercase letters are only found at the beginning of words, they are not written as often as the lowercase ones. The best way to practice writing them is by forming very short words.

For example: ball, bear, bed, bite, boat, book, bus, tree, legs, bee, bend,  
or: number, counter, cell, barge, customs, customs officers, train, trains, fence, pointer, stuff, goat ...

You may also place a consonant after another consonant before a vowel follows (l, r, m, n, t, p, sch, w). You will see that the syllables often become quite long. “Schwerstarbeit” (hard labor), “Schnaps-fla-sche” (a bottle of spirits), “Strauch-bee-re” (treeberries). This is important to bear in mind when you want to decipher ancient hand-writing.

For example: Friday, grave, track, gneiss, old, Kl, Kna-be, Kreis .. Ph .. Pl .. Pn .. Pr .. Rhein, St .. Str .. Sch .. sleeps, Schr .. Sl .. Sm .. Str .. Sp.. Spr .. Tr Tsche-chien (Czech Republic), Schiffs-wrack, Zwei-fel (doubt).

Make sure that you reserve three lines for each letter; the first is for practicing the letters; the second and third lines are for copying out and complete them with your own words.

O Ö, A Ä, G, Qu, U - O Ö, U Ä, G, Qu, U

29.) O Ö - O Ö *Olya*

The uppercase letter “O” is written in the same way as the Latin “O”. However, you must pay attention to the angle of incline. The upper part of the letter “O” should never be fully closed.

Always remember: never correct a letter. You should always rewrite it.

Exercise: row 1 O Ö

2. Copy all of the words

O Ö O Ö O Ö O Ö O Ö O Ö O Ö O  
Oft, Ocht, Ofen, Ozen, Ozon, Öffnung,  
Öl, Olin, Olan, Ofen, Ofen, Ofen







### 39.) N - *N*

*Not*

You begin this letter the same way as the letter “S”, then you connect the tick, which is followed by the down stroke - this should be close to the other stroke and taken straight down to the baseline. Finish with a small upward swash.

Exercise: row 1 *N*

2. Copy all of the words

*N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N*  
*Naht, Nasir, Norim, Nutzen, Not, Nabel*  
*Nordsee, Nation, Norwegen, Nusskn, Notiz*

### 40.) St - *St* *St und T = N in St!*

The letter “St” in the old German “Kurrent” script is an exception. You will see that two capital letters are placed one after the other. You have to look at the letters closely.

Do not confuse: *N* - *N*

First, write a capital “S”, beginning on the ascender line with the “T” swash.

Exercise: row 1 *N N*

2. Copy all of the words

*N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N N*  
*Nall, Nab, Ninsul, Noff, Nurn, Nain, Nost*  
*Nalla, Ninden, Nand, Nimm, Nion, Ninn,*  
*Nandl = Nandl    Nab - Nabel    Nil - Nil*

### 41.) R - *R* (*T R*) *Ras*

When you have written the capital “S” – without a tick-like symbol – one writes the “R” arc in one single stroke which nearly reaches the mean line. Following this, you connect it with a small enclosed loop and finally end the “R” on the baseline with a small upward swash.

Exercise: row 1 *R*

2. Copy all of the words

*R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R R*  
*Ras, Rasen, Reifen, RiB, Rahn, Raub,*  
*Raum, Ropf, Reife, Rifter, Ruder, Rude*

L, B, H, E - L, Le, h, E

42.) L - L

*Lini*

This letter, which resembles the Latin letter “L”, is very easy to write. The upper part should be executed with energy and then taken to the baseline where it is finished off with a small left loop that curves slightly upwards.

Exercise: row 1 L

2. Copy all of the words

L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L L  
*Land, Leben, List, Lauf, Lust, Lain, Linde  
Lamin, Löffel, Lügub, Laper, Laut, Leib*

43.) B - B

*Levi*

The letter “B” should be considered carefully. It is written like an “L”; however, it features a small “belly” with an enclosed loop, as is the case with the lower case letter “b”.

Exercise: row 1 B b B b

2. Copy all of the words

B b B b B b B b B b B b B b  
*Leiten beim Luftabau B bewiten Lauf  
brauten! Leu, Levi, Leim, Leos, Levin*

44.) H - h

*hufen*

This letter will take some getting used to. You need to write it in three stages:

1. Create an upper loop by going swiftly between the ascender line and the mean line and take this to the baseline. Take the nib from the paper.
2. Enclosed loop. Take the nib from the paper.
3. Take an arc from the enclosed loop to the mean line and finish with a descender stem loop as like with the letter “g”.

Exercise: row 1 h in three parts

2. Copy all of the words

h h h h h h h h h h h h h h h h  
*Ham, Ham, hufen, hufen, huf, huf, huf,  
huf, huf, huf, huf, huf, huf, huf, huf*

# 45.) E - *E*

*Epul*

The letter “E” begins like the letter “H”. Following the upper loop, take the downstroke to the descender line and finish this stroke with a beautifully curled, right swash. Just above the baseline, place a slightly curved horizontal line, which is used to connect subsequent letters.

Exercise: row 1 *E*

2. Copy all of the words

*E E E E E E E E E E E E E E E*  
*Ein, Erz, Epul, Eisen, Epe, Euroopa, Epe, Ei,*  
*Ezullanz, Echlupitöt, Eingang, Eaman*

## V, W, Y - *V, W, Y*

# 46.) V - *V*

*VaAn*

The letter “V” begins with a “walking stick”, which is taken from the ascender line to the baseline. This walking stick sometimes begins slightly below the ascender line. An enclosed loop is then attached at the baseline (as is the case with the lower case letter “r”). Now create a stroke, which resembles an inverted “O”, up to the ascender line and back down to the baseline. It is from here that you can continue writing subsequent letters.

Exercise: row 1 *V*

2. Copy all of the words

*V V V V V V V V V V V V V V*  
*VaAn, Vvob, Vinf, Vogel, Volümen, Vell,*  
*Vannin, Vüllan, Vellümen, Vannin, Villa*

## 47.) W - *W*

*Walt*

Start this letter as you did with the upper case “S”, without a tick-like symbol - then take the downstroke, like a walking stick, to the baseline. Place an enclosed loop. Attach an inverted “O”, and take this to the baseline.

Following this, attach the letter “V”. Please note from the examples that the so-called walking stick can be longer or shorter. Continue from the baseline.

Exercise: row 1 *W*

2. Copy all of the words

*W W W W W W W W W W W W*

*Wand, Wurst, Wimper, Woge, Wut, Weide,  
Wunder, Walt, Wimper, Waffer, Wolf, Wimm*

## 48.) Y - *Y*

*Yog*

You begin this letter like with the letter “V”: take the walking stick from the ascender line to the baseline, place an enclosed loop, then take the upstroke - parallel to the downstroke - up to the ascender line, arc to the right. Now take the down stroke from the ascender line to the descender line and draw a descender stem loop - like with the letter “g”.

Exercise: row 1 *Y*

2. Copy all of the words

*Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y Y*

*Yow York, Yacht, Yankee, Yolofama,  
Yoga, Krotland Yari, Yulou, Yurrayflanzu*

49.-1) P - P

Paul

49.-2) P - P

Pa

The letter “P” begins with a “walking stick” which is taken from the ascender line to the descender line, where the inclined stroke ends. Do not curve the long stroke! Connect a large “2” to the walking stick and finish off with an enclosed loop on the baseline.

A second type is possible. This begins with a swash like with the letters “T”, “J” and “T”. The down stroke is also taken straight down to the descender line. A generously sized “2” with an enclosed loop should follow this.

Exercise: row 1 P P

2. Copy all of the words

P P P P P P P P P P P P P  
Paß, Putz, Politik, Plaut, Pferd, Pfife  
Pfifil, Pfilsarmonia, Plalat, Pifa, Pnil

## C, K, - L, D

50.) C - L

Läufer

The letter “C” begins on the ascender line. A slightly curved line is then taken to the baseline. Pay attention to the angle of incline of the letter! An enclosed loop is attached to the left side. The letter ends with a small swash on the baseline. It is only at this point that a small tick is placed on the upper part of the letter.

Exercise: row 1 L L

2. Copy all of the words

L L L L L L L L L L L L L  
Lora Lola, Lfab, Lfamin, Lliy, Lforlnitar,  
Lüt, Larmu, Larcarab, Lrunu, Lfuf, Lfina

# 51.) K - *K*

*Kuß*

As is the case with the letter “C”, this letter begins on the ascender line. The stroke is then taken down to the baseline, directly followed by a left arc that goes up to between the mean line and ascender line, which then sweeps back to the baseline. Following this, draw a tiny enclosed loop and a small upstroke. Do not forget to connect the small tick-like symbol on the ascender line – as is the case with the letter “C”.

Exercise: row 1 *K*

2. Copy all of the words

*K K K K K K K K K K K K K K*  
*Kamin, Kamin, Klima, Koffen, Küssen, Kai,*  
*Kunst, Klaff, Kollagen, Krampfen, Kruid*

# 52.-1)F - *F*    52.-2)F - *F*    52.-3)F - *f*

There exist several variants of the letter “F” stemming from different eras. The first one is part of the Kurrent font I use here. You will recognize that I have mixed these fonts because of the inaccurately written examples.

*You may use all three variants of the letter “F”.*

This *first* type starts with an energetic sweep like with the letter “L” and finishes with a firm downstroke on the descender line. Subsequent letters are attached to the curved horizontal stroke above the baseline. I use only this variety in my work.

The *second* type starts in the same way as the *L - F*, however, it is finished with a left swash on the baseline and without an enclosed loop. Do not forget the small tick at the top of the letter! A small horizontal dash is taken right above the mean line. Subsequent letters are connected on the baseline.

The *third* type (dating back to 1814) starts on the ascender line like the letter C, and is taken down to the descender line and finishes with a lower loop on the baseline. It is here that you draw a small enclosed loop. Do not forget the small tick-like symbol at the top of the letter!

Exercise: row 1 features F in various styles

2. Copy all of the words

*F F f F F f F F f F F f F F*  
*Faß, Fuß, fuff, Fuff, Fluß, fül, Fran*  
*Furn, furen, Fluß, Früße, fluffe, Foffen*

## 53.-1) D - *D Da*

## 53.-2) D - *D Dofu*

Draw a “serpentine line” between the baseline and mean line. Looking at the letter “D” in more detail, the beginning of the letter shows an upswing and a downswing on the baseline – this is followed by an upward stroke extending all the way to the ascender line. It is at this point that one should draw an almost circular arc to the left – then cross the upstroke and draw an upward swash. There are two ways to join subsequent letters to the letters “D” and “d”.

1. One begins on the baseline. This is always correct as well as easy.
2. One takes the upper loop so far down that that you can join subsequent letters. Single-stage letters: a, e... - will still look good. However: “endlos” (continuous)! In order for you to be able to read the old scripts, you must always take the two styles of the letter “D” and “d” into consideration.

Exercise: row 1 *D D*

2. Copy all of the words

*D D D D D D D D*  
*Daß, Daif, Diab, Dorf, Düft, Dill, Dünn*  
*Drofen, Drall, Doly, Dofzingel, Düst*

## 54.) X - *X*

*X X X X*

This letter is often confused with the Latin letter “H”! As is the case with the letter “M”, one begins below the ascender line, drawing a rightward arc, which is taken down to the baseline where one draws a left curving stroke. This is then taken diagonally up to ascender line forming loop. From this point, it goes back to the baseline, like with the letter “l”, which is taken close to the first downstroke; draw the swash on the baseline just like with the letter “l”. The intersections should be just above the mean line.

Exercise: row 1 *X*

2. Copy all of the words

*X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X X*  
*X X X X, X X X X, X=Xenn, X=Xinfrit, X=Xengab*  
*Xylogfon, Xylograyfin (Holzpfennidüft)*

# 55.) Z - z

Zafl

Beginning between the ascender line and mean line, the initial stroke is a rightward arc. One then draws a *suggested small closed loop* between the mean line and baseline. This is followed by a lower loop which crosses at the baseline. Please draw a sweeping stroke that is nicely inclined!

Exercise: row 1 

2. Copy all of the words

                      
Zafl, Zeit, Ziel, Zoll, Zug, Zorn, Zigarette, Zigarette  
Zucht, Zügel, Zaubern, Zorn, Zügel, Zügel

The old German orthographic conventions - the special type of "s"

1.) b at the end of a word = b

Gra**b**, Ga**u**b, Ra**u**b, La**u**b, a**u**b, lo**b**, li**b**, i**u**b,  
i**a**b, w**a**b, Le**u**b, M**u**b, fi**u**b, mo**r**ga**u**b, mo**n**tag**b**,  
wa**r**ft**b**, ni**u**ft**b**, ma**f**ama**b**, a**b**, Ga**l**b, Fu**b**

2.) b within a word and in the case of compound words

Ga**u**b=~~tu~~, a**u**b=~~fu~~fen, Gra**b**=~~fa~~lm, a**u**b=~~fa~~fen,  
li**b**=~~wi~~lan, lo**b**=~~la~~ufen, i**u**b=~~w~~gan, Le**u**b=~~w~~Lu**f**

3.) b for joining = b two words

U**b**erit=~~z~~it, U**b**la**u**d=~~w~~is**f**, Zi**t**ung=~~b~~ote**n**  
W**u**Lu**f**=~~w~~u**u**in, W**u**u**u**in=~~b~~mit**g**li**u**d, G**u**t=~~b~~of

4.) b used with genitives

Ma**t**er**b** U**u**to, U**l**la**b** L**u**uf, Fi**a**b D**u**nig**a**,  
Da**b** Ra**u**fen i**u**b Ma**l**u**b**. W**a**b L**e**ot i**u**f u**f**,  
i**u**b L**u**u*d* i**u**f f*u*ng.

5.) „Wo*r* u, l, m, n, u*u*d w = wir f*u*f u,  
fa**b** da**b** u*u*in b mu**f** fa**f** u!“

Wo**b**=~~la~~u, Mu**b**=~~la~~t, Mu**b**=~~la~~l, Wo**b**=~~li~~te,  
D**u**b=~~u~~u, M**u**b=~~ma~~r, U**u**Lu**b**=~~w~~ig, g**ro**te**b**l,  
W**u**b=~~w~~u, Mu**b**=~~la~~u, M**u**in**l**, L**b**=~~li~~mo,  
L**b**=~~lo~~u, L**b**=~~la~~gan, ma**b**=~~lu~~lin

6.) Nor Kurrent: =fan, =lin, =lif, und =tun,  
forin nor =fast, =bar, =frit, und =müb  
hab rüin b stut stufen müß!

Gäb=fan, Mäüb=lin, graüb=lif, König=tun  
 bob=fast, Lob=frit, Realib=müb, lub=bar,  
 Margib=müb

7.) A rounded b following an apostrophe, when the letter "e" is omitted.

May ~~ab~~ günt - may 'b günt!      Mar' b hab?  
 Mar ist' b?      Min gupfuf' b?      Min stut' b?  
 Gib' b fur!      Hol' b zürück!      Wird' b bald?

**Attention!** über das=übers, auf das=aufs, durch das= durchs, für das= fürs

„O pfänrig ist' b, überb Moor zu gupf u“  
 Din gupf aufb Gymnasium, nor für sin inreißb  
 Lünen. Man lerne fürb Leben, sagen Lufen.

When the e is omitted, an apostrophe takes its place; if 'das' is omitted, there is no apostrophe replacing it. At the end, there is always *b*

8.) Rounded b used with prefixes of foreign words.

ibkout, ibkriminalen, ibfarmen,  
 ibinfektion, iborientiert, ibintresse,  
 inibkret, ibgonnt, Traubgort, Übkülay,  
 Traubfikirifsa Lifunbafu, Übkufa, Traubaktion  
 Traubatlantif, Traubgarnt

Attention! This is a challenging rule. One must take the origins of the particular word into consideration. Knowledge of Latin is an advantage in this case.

Old writing rules for the letter “ß” - This should always be used in the  
Kurrent script!!

When writing the letter “ß”, one should always determine if it follows a long or short vowel.

In the case of hyphenation, if the letter “ß” follows a short vowel it becomes s - s

Müß: Müf=fn, Tyfloß: Tyflöf=fn\*, Leapß: Leäf=fn  
Riß: Rif=fn, Düß: Duf=fn, Tyfüß: Tyfüf=fn

Following a long vowel or diphthong the letter “ß” does not change.

Lüß: Lü=ßn, Kra=ßn, bü=ßnn, a=ßnn  
gin=ßnn, grü=ßnn, mü=ßig, flui=ßig, grö=ßnn

Rules for hyphenating ligatures (ligature – grouped, connected)

Ligatures are sequences of letters that are written together. In the old art of printing, such sequences were cast together onto the old printing blocks with lead. The old rule is literally translated to: never separate “st” because it causes pain! (Trenne nie st, denn es tut ihm weh!)

If you have installed the old German cursive or block letters on your computer, you need to know where these ligatures are. (You will find them by using the tab: INSERT – SYMBOLS and here you should search for the desired font, highlight the letter and press: INSERT)

You should never separate: ft, ff, ff

For example: ft kn=ftn=fn, Um=ftand, Fun=ftnn  
ff ran=ffn, Ra=ffn, for=ffn,  
ff auf=ffni=bn, fü=ffn, fi=ffn

You can separate: ff, ll, tz, yf, fy

For example:

ff: f=f Maß=fn, Duf=fn, Maf=fn\*  
ll: l=l Lüß=ln, Loß=ln, Ll=ln  
tz: t=z Tat=zn, Dat=zn, Bit=zn,  
yf: y=f Uy=ful, Hoy=fn, Töy=fn  
fy: f=y Dnof=yn, Luff=ynnn, Maf=yn

Attention: fff or llb do not exist in the Kurrent script!

Letters are indexed under the following numbers:

|                        |         |            |       |                    |
|------------------------|---------|------------|-------|--------------------|
| a - 12,                | A - 30  | a, A       | ..... | alla Affen         |
| b - 2,                 | B - 43  | b, B       | ..... | bunte Blätter      |
| c - 8,                 | C - 50  | c, C       | ..... | clara Cinnam       |
| d - 17,                | D - 53  | d, D       | ..... | das Dorf           |
| e - 14,                | E - 45  | e, E       | ..... | eine Eisen         |
| f - 5,                 | F - 52  | f, F       | ..... | frühe Früchte      |
| g - 19,                | G - 31  | g, G       | ..... | grüne Gärten       |
| h - 6,                 | H - 44  | h, H       | ..... | hohes Himmel       |
| i - 13,                | I - 34  | i, I       | ..... | im Innern          |
| j - 13,                | J - 34  | j, J       | ..... | ja, Jung           |
| k - 4,                 | K - 51  | k, K       | ..... | kleine Kinder      |
| l - 1,                 | L - 42  | l, L       | ..... | liebe Leute        |
| m - 10,                | M - 38  | m, M       | ..... | meine Mama         |
| n - 9,                 | N - 39  | n, N       | ..... | nur Nacht          |
| o - 11,                | O - 29  | o, O       | ..... | ohne Opa           |
| p - 24,                | P - 49  | p, P       | ..... | per Post           |
| q - 20,                | Q - 32  | q, Q       | ..... | quillt Quelle?     |
| r - 25,                | R - 41  | r, R       | ..... | reist Regen?       |
| s - 7, ß - 22, b = 18, | S - 37  | s, ß, b, S | ..... | süßes Kästlein     |
| st - 6                 | St - 40 | st, St     | ..... | stolz Hart         |
| t - 3,                 | T - 36  | t, T       | ..... | tote Taube         |
| u - 15,                | U - 33  | ü, U       | ..... | unter Umständen    |
| v - 26,                | V - 46  | v, V       | ..... | viel Vögel         |
| w - 27,                | W - 47  | w, W       | ..... | weiße Wäpfe        |
| x - 23,                | X - 54  | x, X       | ..... | regulärer Kasten   |
| y - 28,                | Y - 48  | y, Y       | ..... | symmetrische Yonke |
| z - 21,                | Z - 55  | z, Z       | ..... | zum Zoo            |

Here are the sources I used for this writing course:

Der große Duden, Leipzig, 11th Edition Leipzig 1934.

Harald Süß: Deutsche Schreibrift – Lesen und Schreiben lernen [*German Handwriting – Learning to Read and Write*], Munich, 2002

The fonts I used on my PC:

Delbanco Frakturschriften: DS Kurrent and others

[www.fraktur.com](http://www.fraktur.com)

Will Software GmbH: Medieval fonts and others

[www.will-software.com](http://www.will-software.com)

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[www.hoonsh.de](http://www.hoonsh.de)

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