

Our Top Tips!... Handwriting

Handwriting is a really complex task and often lots of practice is needed to be able to learn to write. Some of these tips might be a good place to start...

Pencil control

Can you easily draw shapes such as triangles, diagonal lines, squares? It is important to be able to draw basic shapes to prepare you for handwriting. Look out for puzzle books with simple shapes to copy, trace and draw. If you can draw basic shapes, look out for trickier puzzles such as mazes and dot-to-dots.

Colouring-in

Colouring-in is an easy and fun activity to help develop your pencil skills. Think about staying in the lines, as well as how heavy or light you press your pencil. Begin with pictures with big shapes and then progress to those with lots of small details to colour as you improve. See our 'useful websites' page for details of websites with free downloadable colouring-in pages.

Have a hand

If you are struggling to draw shapes or write letters neatly, it might be useful to find an adult to do some 'hand over hand' practice with you. Using any kind of media, ask the adult to hold your arm and guide you when you draw or write. Lots of practice like this will help you to 'feel' how the shape or letter should be.

Get talking

Talk about the shapes and letters as you write them. For example, say out loud, " 'a' goes around, up, then down". Come up with your own instructions for each letter or shape.

Check your workstation

When handwriting, it is useful to have a stable base of support. If you are sitting at a desk or table, make sure the chair is supportive, the desk is at the right height and that your feet are flat on the floor.

Pencil grip

Have a look at your pencil grip. Are you holding it near enough to the tip to get control? A grip with an 'open web-space' is best, i.e. your thumb is not closed next to your index finger. Look on our 'useful websites' page for details of pencil grippers.

Get organised

When handwriting, always use lined paper and try to sit your writing on the line. You could make yourself a 'spacer stick' from a lollipop stick to help you to remember word spacing. Try drawing a green 'go' margin on the left of the page and a red 'stop' margin on the right, to remind you where your writing should start and finish across the paper.

I.T. solutions

Typing is less physically demanding than handwriting. If you are older or finding that handwriting really isn't working for you, it may be useful to begin to type your work. You would need to talk to your school about this too. On our 'useful websites' page, there are details of internet sites with free games to practice your typing skills.