

Handwriting Practice Templates

Developmental stages, readiness signs, and practice space for emerging writers

PROPER GRIP

Dynamic tripod — thumb + index finger hold, resting on middle finger

POSTURE

Feet flat, hips back in chair, forearm resting on desk, non-writing hand stabilizes paper

PAPER POSITION

Tilted 20–30° left for right-handers, right for left-handers

STAGE	AGE RANGE	WHAT IT LOOKS LIKE	WHAT TO DO
Random scribbling	12–18 mo	Large arm movements, marks have no form	Provide thick crayons on large paper. Celebrate all marks.
Controlled scribbling	2–3 years	More deliberate strokes, some circles, child watches hand	Offer variety (chalk, markers, finger paint). Model simple strokes.
Pre-letter shapes	3–4 years	Copies lines, circles, crosses. Draws recognizable shapes.	Practice vertical lines, horizontal lines, circles, crosses. No formal letters yet.
Letter imitation	4–5 years	Copies letters from model, often reversed or oversized	Start with uppercase (easier). Use multi-sensory approach (sand, shaving cream).
Letter formation	5–6 years	Writes letters from memory, size more consistent, some reversals	Teach consistent starting points. Address reversals gently. Lined paper now appropriate.
Fluent writing	6–8 years	Automatic letter formation, focus shifts to content over mechanics	Gradually increase writing volume. Introduce cursive if school requires.

Handwriting Readiness Signs

- Can copy basic shapes (circle, cross, square, triangle)
- Demonstrates hand dominance
- Uses a functional pencil grip (not full fist)
- Can sit upright independently for 5+ minutes
- Shows interest in writing or imitating letters

- Can cross midline consistently
- Adequate hand strength for sustained pencil pressure
- Able to follow simple multi-step directions

Practice Space

Handwriting practice
