Formation of letters

The following pages contain charts that explain the formation of letters and numerals in the South Australian style of handwriting.

Key information
A dot illustrates the starting point. An arrow indicates the direction to follow when writing the letter or numeral. A cross represents the end point.

In cases where a letter or numeral contains two or more individual strokes (where the pencil/pen must leave the page) numbers indicate which stroke is to be written first, second and so forth.
UPPER-CASE
Three Movements
• Two diagonal strokes followed by a horizontal bar at height of a lower-case ‘o’.

Note
• Commence at the top. Height of the bar.

LOWER-CASE
One Movement
• An oval completed by a downstroke.
• Commence at the 2 o’clock position.

Note
• Not joining the oval causes illegibility.

LINKED
One Movement
• An oval completed by a downstroke and a kick.

Note
• Correct starting point, and development of exit point.

UPPER-CASE
Two Movements
• A downward stroke.
• Two outward swings.

Note
• The outward swings are equal.
• The outward swings start and end with horizontal strokes.

LOWER-CASE
One Movement
• A downward stroke twice the height of a lower-case ‘o’, completed by an oval.

Note
• Emphasise the starting point to minimise reversal.
• Practise starting and completion points.

LINKED
Note
NOT b or b
**UPPER-CASE**

One Movement
- A segment of an oval.
- Commence at the 2 o'clock position.

**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- A segment of an oval.
- Commence at the 2 o'clock position.

**LINKED**

Note
- Lengthens for exit.

**UPPER-CASE**

Two Movements
- A downstroke.
- A horizontal line, a segment of an oval, a horizontal line.

Note
- Avoid squashing due to omission of horizontal strokes.

**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- An oval completed by a downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.

Note
- Not joining the oval causes illegibility.
- Failure to retrace causes illegibility.

**LINKED**

One Movement
- An oval completed by a downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o' with a kick.

Note
- May develop a pen lift before downstroke (it then becomes two movements).
No Change

UPPER-CASE
Three Movements
• A downward stroke and horizontal bar.
• Top and central horizontal bars.

Note
• Continuous movement for first section.
• The three bars are of equal length.
• The middle bar is at the height of a lower-case 'o'.

LOWER-CASE
One Movement
• A slanted upstroke completed by a segment of an oval.

Note
• Failure to join oval segment to initial stroke causes illegibility.

LINKED
Note
• Lengthens for exit.

UPPER-CASE
Three Movements
• A downstroke.
• Top horizontal bar.
• Central horizontal bar.

Note
• The two bars are of equal length.
• Central bar is at height of lower-case 'o'.

LOWER-CASE
Two Movements
• An oval segment completed by a downstroke.
• A horizontal bar.

Note
• Bar becomes exit.

LINKED
Two Movements
• An oval segment completed by a lengthened downstroke.
• A sloping bar.

Note
• Link the cross bar for double f.
**UPPER-CASE**

One Movement
- A segment of an oval followed by a downstroke.

Note
- The short downstroke conforms to the slight diagonal slope.

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**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- An oval completed by a downstroke and a hook.

Note
- Lower case 'o' fits into the hook.
- The downstroke must be consistent with the slope.

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**LINKED**

Note
- Do not link from the hook.

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**UPPER-CASE**

Three Movements
- Two downward strokes.
- A central horizontal bar.

Note
- The two sides are equal.

---

**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- A downward stroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o', completed by an arch.

Note
- Too much retracing results in a rounded style.
- Confusion with 'n' if downstroke is too short.

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**NOT LINKED**

One Movement
- A downward stroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o', followed by an arch and ended with a kick.

Note
- Exit is a kick.
No Change

**UPPER-CASE**
- Three Movements
  - A downstroke.
  - Two separate horizontal serifs.

  **Note**
  - Addition of serifs avoids confusion with lower case 'l'.
  - Serifs may be removed as children get quicker.

**LOWER-CASE**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke.
  - A dot directly above the downstroke.

  **Note**
  - Dot at same height as top of 't'.

**LINKED**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke with a hook.
  - A serif.

  **Note**
  - Exit is a kick.

**UPPER-CASE**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke with a hook.
  - A serif.

  **Note**
  - Serifs may be removed as children get quicker.

**LOWER-CASE**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke.
  - A dot directly above the downstroke followed by a kick.

  **Note**
  - Dot at same height as top of 't'.

**NOT LINKED**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke.
  - A dot directly above the downstroke followed by a kick.

  **Note**
  - Exit is a kick.

**UPPER-CASE**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke with a hook.
  - A serif.

  **Note**
  - Finish letter is twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.
  - Pay attention to the starting point at a word's beginning.

**LOWER-CASE**
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke.
  - A dot directly above the downstroke.

  **Note**
  - Does not link to the following letter.

**NOT**
- jam
- Jam
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UPPER-CASE</th>
<th>LOWER-CASE</th>
<th>LINKED</th>
<th>LOWER-CASE</th>
<th>LINKED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One Movement</td>
<td>One Movement</td>
<td>One Movement</td>
<td>One Movement</td>
<td>One Movement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• A downstroke with a horizontal base.</td>
<td>• A downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.</td>
<td>• A downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.</td>
<td>• A downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.</td>
<td>• A downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o'.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Pen stays on paper until completion of letter.</td>
<td>• The arrowhead intersects the height of a lower-case 'o'.</td>
<td>• The arrowhead should remain sharp to be distinguishable.</td>
<td>• Arrowhead begins at height of lower-case 'o'.</td>
<td>• Exit is a kick.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:** The arrowhead begins at the height of a lower-case 'o'.
UPPER-CASE
Two Movements
• A downward stroke.
• Two diagonal strokes commencing at the top of the downstroke.
Note
• Outside strokes are equal and parallel.

LOWER-CASE
One Movement
• A downstroke completed by an arch.
Note
• Top of arch is a segment of a circle.
• Sprawl must not be too wide.

LINKED
One Movement
• A downward stroke.
• Two diagonal strokes commencing at the top of the downstroke.
Note
• Outside strokes are equal and parallel.

NOT
• Pen lift inhibits fluency.
• Failure to retrace leads to illegibility.
• Emphasise regular size and movement.

NOT or LINKED
One Movement
• A downstroke followed by an arch and ended with a kick.
Note
• Take notice of where the downstroke should begin.

m or M

N

n

h
**UPPER-CASE**

One Movement
- An oval commenced at the 2 o'clock position.

Note
- The 2 o'clock starting position promotes the oval shape and slope.

**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- An oval commenced at the 2 o'clock position and continued in an anti-clockwise direction.

Note
- Correct anti-clockwise movement can be reinforced through games, stirring etc.

**LINKED**

One Movement
- An anti-clockwise oval commenced at the 2 o'clock position and ending with a hook.

Note
- Exit may develop at speed.

**UPPER-CASE**

Two Movements
- A downstroke.
- An outward swing.

**LOWER-CASE**

One Movement
- A downstroke twice the height of a lower-case 'o', completed by a clockwise oval.

Note
- Emphasise starting point to minimise reversals.
- One continuous movement to aid fluency.
**UPPER-CASE**

**Two Movements**
- An oval.
- A short angled downstroke.

**Note**
- The 2 o’clock starting position promotes the oval shape and slope.

**LOWER-CASE**

**One Movement**
- An oval, a downstroke twice the size of a lower-case ‘o’ and a kick.

**Note**
- Not joining the oval causes illegibility.
- Emphasise one movement to avoid reversal.

**LINKED**

**One Movement**
- An oval, a downstroke twice the size of a lower-case ‘o’ and a kick.

**Note**
- Not joining the oval causes illegibility.
- Emphasise one movement to avoid reversal.

**UPPER-CASE**

**Two Movements**
- A downstroke.
- An outward swing and an angled downstroke.

**Note**
- The outward swing commences and ends with a horizontal stroke.

**LOWER-CASE**

**One Movement**
- A downstroke completed by a rounded arrowhead.

**Note**
- Sprawled and no retracing leads to illegibility.

**LINKED**

**One Movement**
- A downstroke completed by a rounded arrowhead and a slight hook.
No Change

One Movement
- Commences at 2 o'clock and curves anti-clockwise to 10 o'clock, curve and cross down to 4 o'clock, curve clockwise to complete ending at 8 o'clock position.

Note
- Emphasise starting point.
- Letter fits inside an oval.

Link
- If you link to an 's' you don't link from it.

Two Movements
- A downstroke.
- A horizontal bar.

Note
- Two Movements
  - A downstroke 3/4 the height of tall letters.
  - A horizontal bar, height of a lower-case 'o' followed by a kick.
One Movement
• An inverted arch commenced with a downstroke.

Note
• Base is a segment of an oval.
• Sides are parallel and level at the top.

One Movement
• An inverted arch completed with a downstroke.

Note
• No retracing leads to incorrect formation.

One Movement
• An inverted arch completed with a downstroke and a kick.

Note
• The first stroke appears more upright.

One Movement
• Two diagonal strokes.

Note
• One motion, no lifting of writing tool.

One Movement
• Two diagonal strokes finished with a hook.

Note
• NOT
UPPER-CASE
One Movement
• Four diagonal strokes commencing with a downstroke.

Note
• No lifting of writing tool.
• The two base points are where the direction changes.
• Three top points are level.

LOWER-CASE
One Movement
• Four diagonal strokes commencing with a downstroke.

Note
• Sprawling may cause illegibility.

NOT \w

LINKED
Two Movements
• Crossed diagonals starting at the top.

Note
• The top points are level.
• The base points are level.
• Intersection of diagonals occurs at height of lower-case ‘x’.

NOT \w

UPPER-CASE
Two Movements
• Crossed diagonals starting at the top.

Note
• Does not link to other letters.

LOWER-CASE
Two Movements
• Crossed diagonals starting at the top.

Note
• Does not link to other letters.
**UPPER-CASE**
- **Two Movements**
  - A short diagonal downstroke.
  - A long diagonal downstroke.

**Note**
- The short downstroke meets the midpoint of the long downstroke at the height of a lower-case ‘o’.

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**LOWER-CASE**
- **One Movement**
  - An inverted arch and a downstroke with a hook twice the size of a lower-case ‘o’.

**Note**
- A lower-case ‘o’ fits into the hook.

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**LINKED**
- **Note**
  - Does not link to other letters.

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**UPPER-CASE**
- **One Movement**
  - A horizontal bar, a diagonal downstroke and a horizontal bar.

**Note**
- The horizontal bars are of equal length.

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**LOWER-CASE**
- **One Movement**
  - A horizontal bar, a diagonal downstroke and a horizontal bar.

**Note**
- Points should be sharp.

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**LINKED**
- **Note**
  - Does not link to or from other letters.

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**NOT**
- Does not link to or from other letters.
LEFT-HANDED LETTERS

Left-handed writers often find it easier to use right-to-left (away from the body) horizontal lines in the following letters.
NUMERALS

0
One Movement
• An oval commenced at the 2 o'clock position.

Note
• All numerals are at a height of a lowercase ‘t’.
• All numerals have a slight right hand slope.

1
One Movement
• A down stroke.

2
One Movement
• An oval segment, a diagonal and horizontal line commenced at the 10 o’clock position.

Note
• Emphasise correct slope.

3
One Movement
• An oval segment, two diagonal curves, and an oval segment commenced at the 10 o’clock position.

Note
• Emphasise correct slope.

4
One Movement
• An oval segment, two diagonal curves, and an oval segment commenced at the 10 o’clock position.

Note
• Emphasise correct slope.

Two Movements
• A downstroke and a horizontal bar.
• A downstroke which bisects the horizontal bar.

Note
• Emphasise correct slope.

NOT 4
NUMERALS

Two Movements
• A downstroke and an oval segment.
• A horizontal bar.

Note
• Emphasise correct starting point to prevent breakdown at speed.

One Movement
• A segment of an oval, a curved downstroke and an oval.

Note
• Start at the 2 o’clock position.

One Movement
• A horizontal bar and a diagonal downstroke.

Note
• Horizontal bar is the same width as a lower-case ‘o’.

One Movement
• A oval segment and diagonal curve followed by another oval segment and diagonal curve.

Note
• Emphasise starting point.

One Movement
• An oval and a downstroke commenced at the 2 o’clock position.