

Copperplate Calligraphy

An Ultra- Fancy Document Script

Presented by James (Jim) Bennett

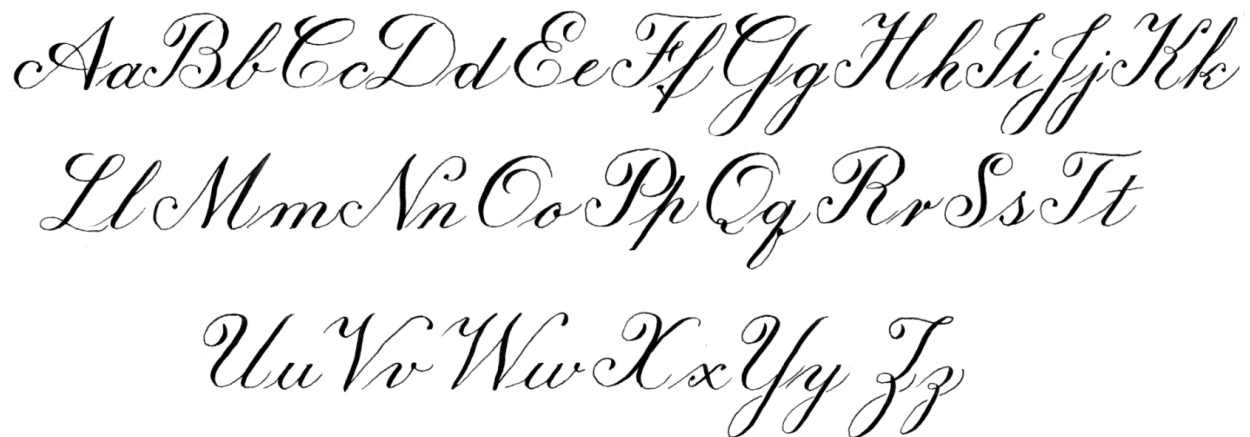
Copperplate, also known as Engraver's or Engrosser's Script or English Roundhand, originated in the seventeenth century and continued as the dominant style of lettering during the nineteenth century. It was used for engraving and for formal documents, and is a style where the pen duplicates the appearance of the script that was engraved into copper plates used for printing – hence, the name, Copperplate.

It is a very ornate style and requires an altogether different kind of pen and technique from other calligraphic styles which use a broad-edge pen such as the very popular Italic style.

Spenserian is a variation of this style. You probably recognize Copperplate as the style used on many diplomas and invitations (especially traditional wedding invitations) as well as on the U.S. Declaration of Independence and Constitution.

Copperplate has several variations but all of them have the distinctive thick and thin strokes as well as the extreme slant of the letters.

Here is an alphabet chart showing the version of Copperplate that I teach:



Materials needed for our first class: a sharp, soft-lead pencil or two.

This handwriting practice sheet features ten numbered examples of cursive letters and strokes, each with a directional arrow indicating the starting point and direction of the pen stroke. The examples are arranged in two columns on a set of horizontal lines with dashed diagonal guides.

- 1:** A short horizontal stroke starting from the left and moving right.
- 2:** A diagonal stroke starting from the top right and moving down and to the left.
- 3:** A cursive letter resembling a '7' or 'v', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 4:** A cursive letter resembling a 'u', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 5:** A cursive letter resembling a 'w', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 6:** A cursive letter resembling an 'o', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 7:** A cursive letter resembling a 'j', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 8:** A cursive letter resembling a 'p', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 9:** A cursive letter resembling a 'q', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.
- 10:** A cursive letter resembling a 'y', starting from the top left and moving down and to the right.

Below the examples, there are several sets of empty horizontal lines with dashed diagonal guides for independent practice.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
i n v o s i

1+6+4
o a

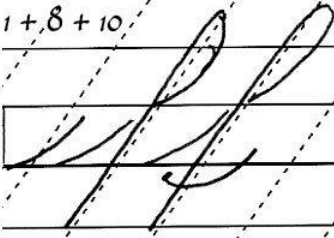
1+8+1+10
b b

1+6 (left half) + dot
c c

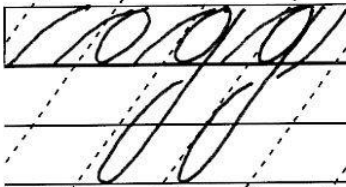
1+6+2+4
o a

1+8 (small) + 6 (bottom half)
e

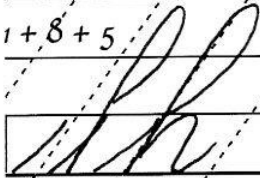
1 + 8 + 10



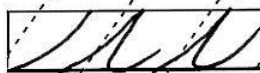
1 + 6 + 9 + 1



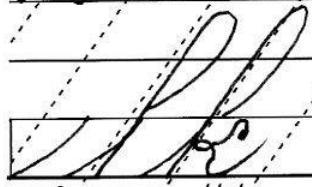
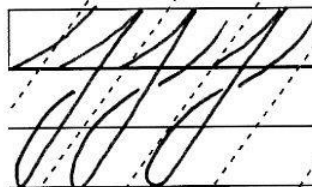
1 + 8 + 5



1 + 4 + dot

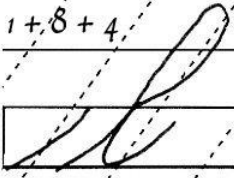


1 + 9 + 1 + dot



1 + 8 + 7 + small loop + 4 + dot

$1 + 8 + 4$



$3 + 3 + 5$



$3 + 5$



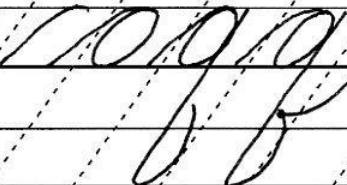
$1 + 6 + 10$



$1 + 2 + 5$



$1 + 6 + 2 + 10$



1 + 10 + 4

rrr

1 + 7 + 10

sss

1 + 2 + 4 + horizontal line

ttt

1 + 4 + 4

uuu

5 + 10

vvv

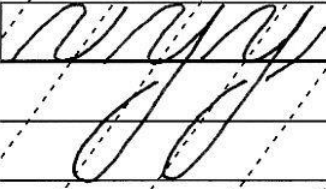
1 + 4 + 4 + 10

www

5 (angle changed) + 7 (angle changed) with dot at ends



5 + 9 + 1



3 (end by curving to the left) + a small loop + 9 (curved slightly) + 1

