



# Letters

Letters are the most common form of glyph that we use. Most of the letters we read are printed on paper using fonts. Fonts are entire catalogues of glyphs designed by someone for printing. The way fonts look has developed from calligraphy over hundreds of years, starting with the first printing press in the 1440s. Below are the most common styles of fonts we use today.

**Design your own letters for each different kind of font! A ball point pen can be used to draw out the shapes.**

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Roman (serif)** - This is the most common style of glyph. It developed from the inscriptions on towers and palaces in ancient Rome. The *serifs* are the feet and burrs on letters like f and b.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

**Italic (serif)** - Italics are based on cursive handwriting and calligraphy. They get their form from cursive handwriting with a broad nib pen.

Handwriting practice lines consisting of a solid top line, a dashed midline, and a solid bottom line.

abcdefghijklmnop

**Sans Serif** - Sans serif (or san serif) fonts are more simplified versions of the serif fonts. *Serifs* are the little feet and burrs on the end of letters, and *sans* means “without”. Sans serif fonts do not have any embellishments, and typically have the same thickness throughout every part of the letter.

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abcdefghijklmnop

**Blackletter**- This is the earliest style of printed letters and is the easiest to draw. The Gutenberg bible was printed in blackletter. It is made up of simple strokes with a broad nib pen.

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