



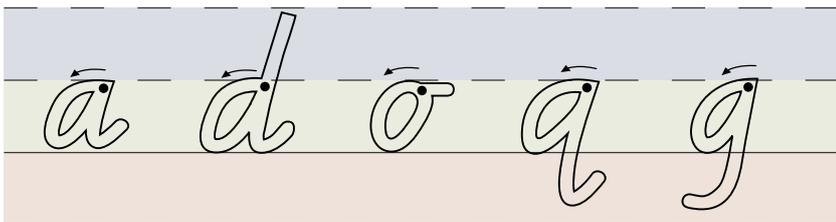
## Letter Families

Handwriting is a complex skill, but there are some ways you can make it easier. Letter families group lowercase letters in groups based on how they are formed, for example they all start and move in the same direction. Letter families help with motor planning, and fine motor manipulation skills.

Repetition of a particular letter forms a motor pattern memory, which is stored in the brain and becomes automatic. By working on a group of letters which all start the same way, the motor pattern memory is formed faster. If a child does not have to think so hard about how to form a letter, their energy can be invested in thinking about what they are writing.

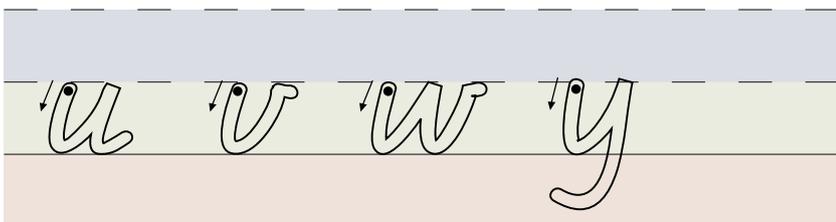
### Tips:

- Most letters start at the lower dots, so if in doubt, it's a good bet to start a letter there.
- The pencil is only lifted off for 3 of the 26 letters- t, f, i, j, and x.



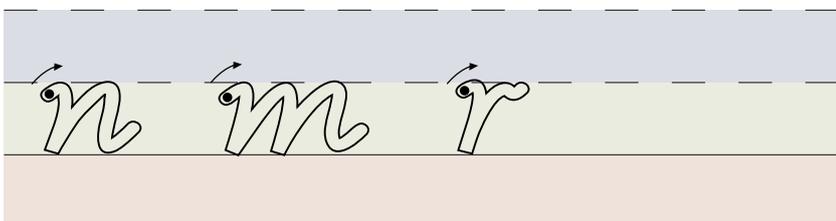
### The 'a' Family

All start with the circle, and at the lower dotted line. The circle rests on the solid guide line. Pencil is not lifted off until the letter is finished.



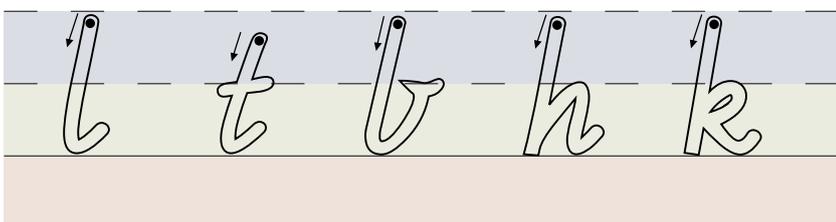
### Cup Letters

All start at the lower dots and with the curved 'cup' shape. The cup rests on the solid guide line. Pencil is not lifted off until the letter is finished.



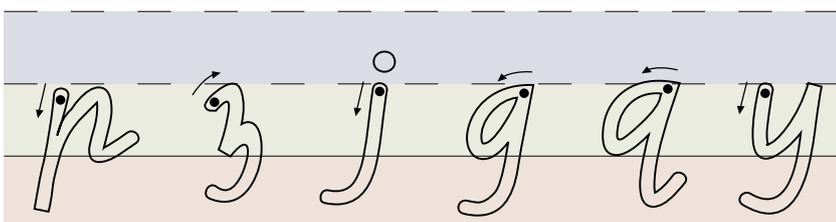
### Walking Sticks

All start just below the lower dots with an upward movement to make the 'handle' of the walking stick. Humps must touch the lower dots and sticks must touch the solid guide line. Pencil is not lifted off the page until the letter is finished.



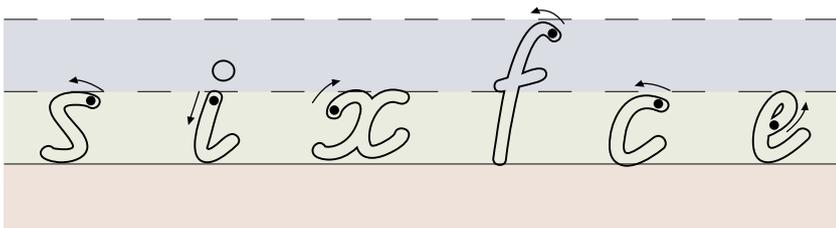
### Tall Sticks

All start at the upper dots. Pencil is not lifted off until the letter is finished with the exception of 't'.



### Tail Letters

All start at the lower dots. Letter 'bodies' rest on the solid guidelines. Tails descend below the guideline.



### Stand Alone Letters

No pattern of similarity in shape or starting point.