



STABILO®



HAND



and
Brush

LETTERING

GUIDE

designed by:



Rabenstein



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Foreword

With this hand & brush lettering guide, I would like to bring you one step closer to the wonderful world of lettering. With a comprehensive material overview, valuable expertise, tips & tricks for starting out, a wide range of fonts and alphabets and a big dose of inspiration, I hope that you can have as much fun with writing as I do! This guide is suitable for both beginners and experienced writers. One thing is particularly important to me:

Find your own style! Try new things, experiment, mix up your colors and writing tools. Try to think



outside of the box and take unusual paths. And: don't be afraid of making what you might think are mistakes! Because they aren't just part of it, they are also extremely important for our own process. We learn from them and that's the only way we can develop – and even something that seems "wrong" to start with can have a charm of its own. And when it comes to creativity, there is no right or wrong.

So I want you to be confident! The world of hand lettering is a beautiful, exciting cosmos – it's so much fun to dive into it, challenge your own imagination and discover new things. And that's the main thing: having fun! So I hope you have fun, and I hope you like this guide and find it helpful.

Thank!
You!

Hannah

Materials

On this page I would like to start by giving you an overview of the pens and pencils that are perfect for hand and brush lettering. A short description next to each of the pens and pencils will explain its individual properties. What's particularly great is that all of these writing tools can be combined wonderfully! This will allow you to create an array of effects, fine color blending and watercolor techniques.



STABILO woody 3 in 1 | 18 colors
The woody 3 in 1 is a watercolor pencil, coloring pencil and wax crayon in one. You can use it on almost all smooth surfaces: glass, metal, mirrors, blackboards, porcelain and, of course, paper, card and cardboard!



STABILO Pen 68 | 47 colors
This wide range of colors gives you plenty of opportunity to find the perfect color combination for your lettering! Color blending and watercolor techniques are easy with this pen.



STABILO pencil 160
This pen is one of the essentials: for sketching and drawing the outlines of your lettering and layouts. You can add guide lines and try out different styles to start with.

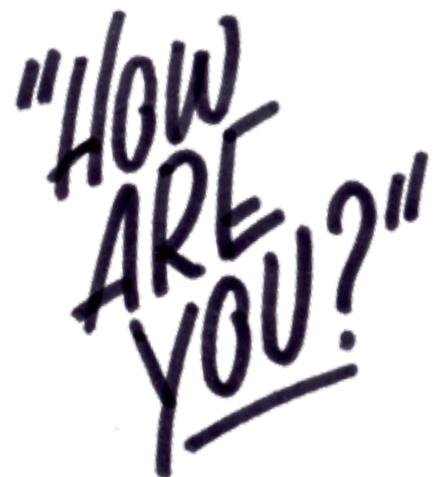


STABILO point 88 | 47 colors

The universal fineliner for colorful writing, illustrations and sketches. Its fine tip is perfect for details and the wide range of colors offers something for everyone!



STABILO pointMax | 24 colors
Its sturdy nylon tip makes it perfect for block letters, thicker lines and faux calligraphy.





STABILO Pen 68 brush | 19 colors

This premium fibre-tip pen with a flexible tip makes brush lettering fun! Its water-based ink guarantees beautiful color blending. The tip is robust and thus particularly suitable for beginners as well as experienced writers.



**STABILO Pen 68 metallic
8 colors**

In classic gold, silver or copper, or in blue, green, light green, purple and pink – these metallic colors really come into their own on dark paper!



STABILO SENSOR fine & medium | 8 colors

With its cushioned tip and smudge-proof ink, you can use the sensor to draw up precise outlines and fine details. The SENSOR medium is suitable for thicker lines, for filling in smaller areas and for fine writing.



STABILO BOSS ORIGINAL | 19 colors

The BOSS highlighter is particularly suited to highlighting and shading. You'll be spoilt for choice with all the bright neon and fine pastel shades!



Know-how

HAND LETTERING

At its very basic level, hand lettering is essentially handwriting. But its key characteristic is certainly the drawing of decorative and artful letters and words.

The basis of hand lettering is typography, which is the study of or arranging of fonts. It is from this that we get the wide range of fonts we then draw and illustrate by hand. With a little bit of basic knowledge (page 10), you'll learn important details, discover the anatomical characteristics of letters from different types of fonts and know what you need to look out for.

Hand lettering is an art form – because when paired with your imagination, a few tricks and added elements, the world of letters is virtually endless.



Writing tools:
STABILO BOSS Original Pastel (for „sea“),
STABILO point 88 (for faux calligraphy,
printed letters and details)

BRUSH LETTERING

As a subcategory of hand lettering, brush lettering is all about working with a specific tool: the brush pen. As the name suggests, it is designed to resemble a brush, i.e. the tip of the pen is like that of a paint brush. The brush tip is flexible yet not as soft as a normal brush, so we have more control.

The most significant feature of the brush pen is that I can change the pressure I put on the tip: putting more or less pressure on the tip of the pen creates this popular writing style. With a little bit of practice, you'll soon get a feel for the technique.



Writing tool:
STABILO Pen 68 brush

How to... do brush lettering

Positioning

The way you hold your brush pen and the angle of the paper are important when it comes to having fun with your writing.

A cramped hand or writing at an angle that is too steep or too flat will only make your work unnecessarily difficult. Holding the pen incorrectly will also damage the tip. It's best to keep a 45° angle between the pen and paper.

But nobody expects you to measure it exactly – everyone has their own personal preference. With enough practice and a feel for brush lettering, you'll quickly find a position and grip that is comfortable for you.

There is no right or wrong, these are just tips!



*The teardrop test:
Slowly roll the tip of the STABILO Pen 68 brush from the very front to the very back. This should leave a teardrop shape. The tip of the teardrop will show you the direction the pen is pointing in.*

The technique

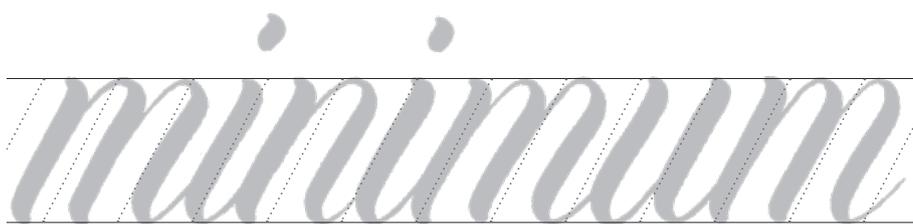
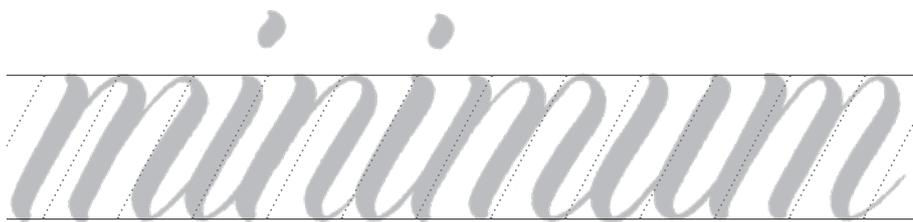
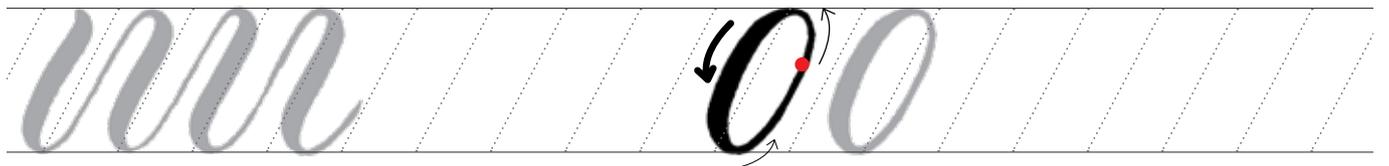
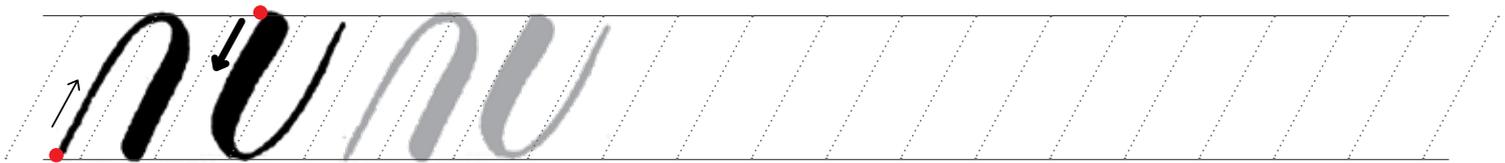
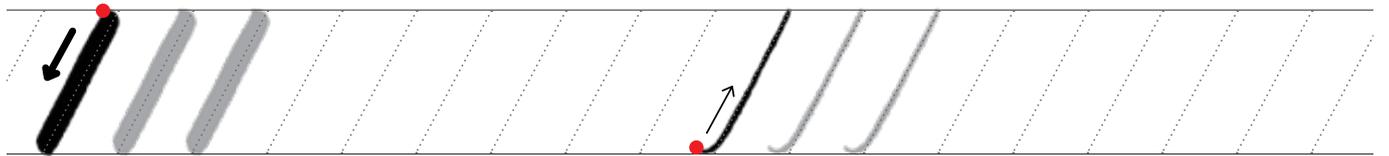
We'll start with the simple basics that are nevertheless essential for brush lettering. As I have already mentioned, working with a brush pen is all about changing the pressure. Generally you could say:

downward strokes are made with more pressure, upward strokes with less.

Here are shown the first simple exercises to give you a feeling for this change in pressure. With numerous examples, tips, and expertise, I'll show you how to approach brush lettering!

Downwards = more pressure Upwards = less pressure

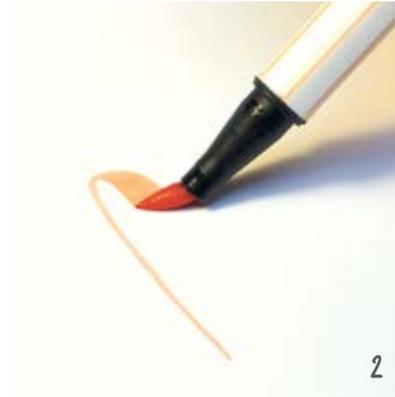
● Starting point(s)
↘ More pressure
↗ Less pressure



The word "minimum" is great for practicing the upward and downward strokes that are typical of brush lettering! You can find more exercises at www.stabilo.com/handlettering



Upward stroke = less pressure



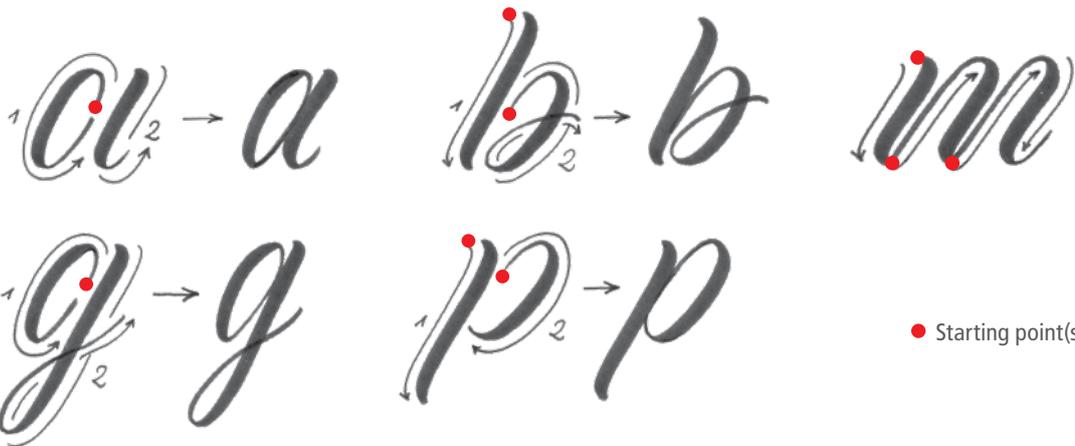
Downward stroke = more pressure



Sequence 1 + 2

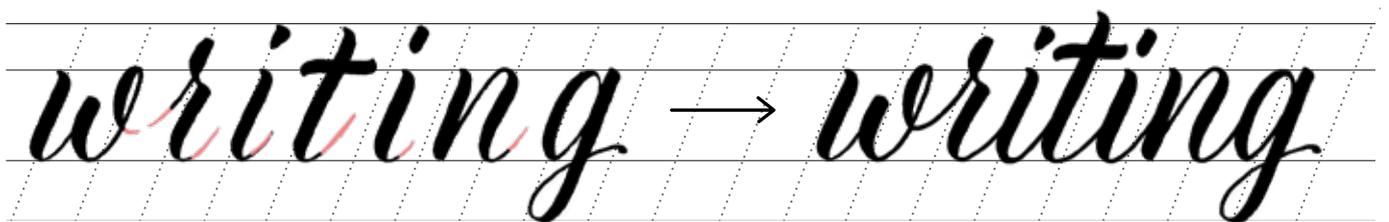
The anatomy of letters

When brush lettering, most letters are built the same way: they are made up of the stem (= vertical stroke) and a counter (also known as a bowl, like in a, b, g, p) or an arcade (such as with m, n, w, u).

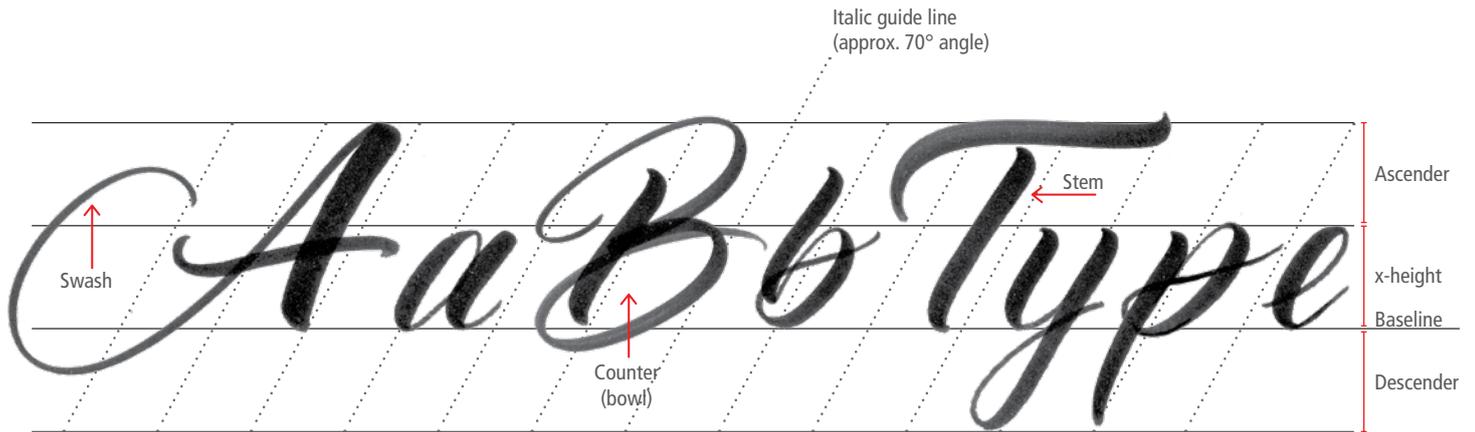


Words

We can use small upward strokes all drawn at the same angle to join up the individual letters and form words:



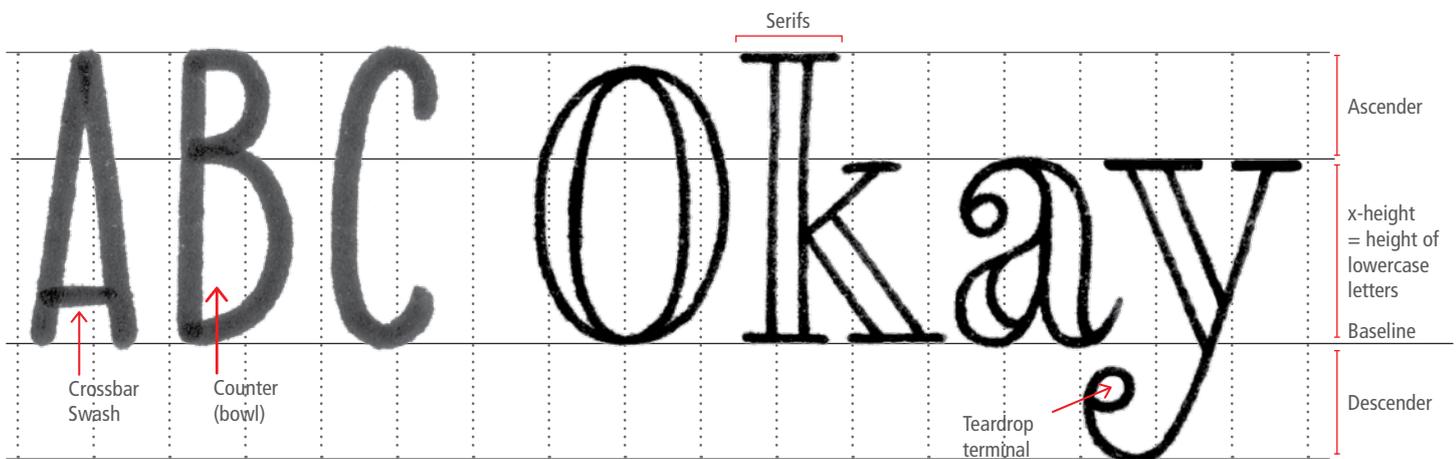
Line system 1: italic, brush, faux calligraphy



A tip before you get started: drawing a grid or lines is tremendously helpful! Not just a baseline, but also (especially when brush lettering) italic lines that show you the angle of the letters. With enough repetition and sufficient practice, you'll

be able to keep them even and develop a feel for italic script. An angle of approx. 70° is best for beginners; approx. 50° is suitable for experienced brush-letterers.

Line system 2: Serif & sans serif



The line system for all upright fonts such as serif or sans serif might be simple, but it will help you draw vertical and horizontal lines as straight as possible. Because it's not easy in the beginning!

These line systems will help you get a feel for the arrangement, structure and correct position for the individual letters and fonts!

Basics & warm-Up

Although we might not be doing exercise in the traditional sense of the word, you'll find that warming up your hand makes the work easier and more fun!

With a few simple tips and tricks, it takes no time at all. But keep in mind: it doesn't all have to be a work of art – quite the opposite! The point here is to warm up your hand.

Here are a few tips and exercises:

- Draw lines (horizontal and vertical), circles, curves and ellipses in different sizes and widths with different writing tools.
- The word “minimum” is particularly good for practicing and warming up for brush lettering. With this sequence of very similar letters, you'll get the hang of the upward and downward movement in no time!
- Write out the alphabet from A to Z several times. Doing this in different fonts and styles will give you a surer hand and you'll quickly get a feel for the shapes and structures of the letters.
- Lines from songs, names, words and even your favourite quotes are also suitable for this.



Speaking of paper!

As a rule I recommend trying out a variety of types of paper – experiment with them and find your favourite!

Normal printer paper is great for warming up, but if you're using the Pen 68 brush I recommend that you use the smoothest possible paper to protect the tip. If you want a particularly clean result, e.g. for lettering with a lot of filigree details, I recommend using substantially thicker (from

approx. 120g), coated and smooth paper that will not cause the colors to “bleed” (also known as bleedproof paper). So all kinds of drawing, layout and sketching paper.

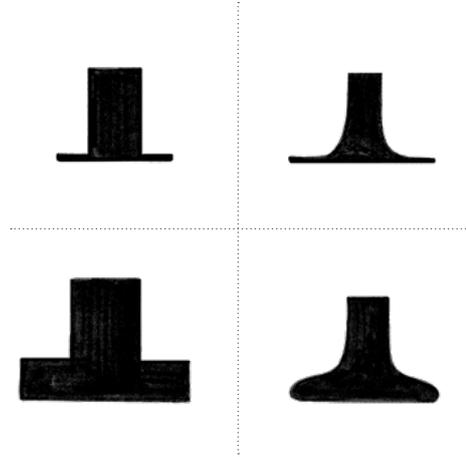
For example, you can experiment with card in different colors, with uncoated or recycled paper, with significantly rougher surfaces or textures. You can also create unique effects and looks with different types of paper and different pens!

Fonts

These examples should give you a quick overview of the best known fonts and their characteristics:

I like Serifs!

The small strokes at the foot or head of the letters are called serifs. This type of font is called Antiqua. Here I've drawn a very simple but classic serif font. Serifs can look very different:



BUT of course ALSO SANS SERIF!

"Sans" (French for "without") serif is kind of the opposite of Antiqua and includes Grotesque fonts. We have quite a lot of freedom in our design – for example, the letters can be very narrow or can have a greater distance between them, you can squeeze them or stretch them out. Exaggeration is definitely permitted: put the crossbar as high or as low as you like, make the letters extra narrow or extra wide. This way you will quickly develop a different look and style! The most important feature: no serifs, no contrasting thicknesses, just linear writing.



And I love some smooth curves.

A good-looking writing style also known as "script". It looks a lot like the style you are taught in primary school. Unpretentious and also linear (known as "monoline").

The first and last letters offer an opportunity to play around, like the extra swash on the "s" or the "s" sitting a little lower, providing a visual finale to the sentence.

Creating Beautiful Flourishes

Here I have been far more elaborate with the italic handwritten script: a lot of pronounced swashes and little teardrop terminals at the ends give it a playful yet harmonious overall look. This style is great for practicing ligatures.

Think about where it might make sense to join up two letters. Here I've chosen to use a ligature between "t" and "f" in "Beautiful", and between "F" and "l" in "Flourishes".

hey, ^{*}no worries!

One good trick if you're not so familiar with the brush pen: "faux calligraphy". The idea is to start out writing the letters or words normally in monoline and then widen all the

strokes (all of the areas with more pressure) afterwards with an extra outline. Tip: do not write too close together! Otherwise the wider areas won't have enough space at the end.

* The black line shows you what I wrote first, the grey line is the extra outline that I added in the second step.

BRUSH ^{OR} *Brush*

The STABILO Pen 68 brush can do more than just the upward and downward strokes that we already know. An example is a style that is recreated from classic sign painting, known as a "sign painter" font. It may be an almost forgotten career, but it's tremendously inspiring

and exciting with regard to letter shapes and fonts! Sweeping swashes are always an option, in particular at word endings. The only important thing is that the overall picture is harmonious and is not overdone.

Brush lettering styles

Here are some more styles written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush. You can practice directly on the page opposite!

create

Very round letters that are written upright and are relatively narrow.

create

Very narrow, upright letters, not joined up.

CREATE

Very distinctive, bold uppercase letters that resemble the style of sign painting.

create

Significantly smaller letters that are very spread out. You can go ahead and ignore the baseline for this one.

Create

A truly classic handwriting style, loosened up with a few playful flourishes. Ligatures, the link between two letters, (here: C and the t-crossbar) can make a pretty, decorative element!

Create

For the brave: this style has a captivating, strong dynamic. It is set at a very steep angle, the letters are very close together and the sweeping swashes create an exciting overall picture!

create

create

CREATE

create

Create

Create

Alphabets - At a glance

After quickly going over various fonts and styles, I would now like to show you a few complete alphabets. They show all the letter structures, shapes and details at a glance. From page 20 onwards you will find several pages on which you can practice and copy letters directly into this guide!

a b c d e f g h
i j k l m n o p
q r s t u v w
x y z

STABILO Pen 68 brush
script alphabet,
lowercase letters

A B C D E
F G H I J K
L M N O P Q
R S T U V W
X Y Z

STABILO Pen 68 brush
script alphabet,
uppercase letters

A B C D E F G H
I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W
X Y Z

STABILO Pen 68
sans serif alphabet,
uppercase letters

A B C D E F G H
I J K L M N O P
Q R S T U V W
X Y Z

a b c d e f g h i j k l
m n o p q r s t u v w
x y z

STABILO point 88
serifs (Antiqua) alphabet,
upper & lowercase letters

Brush lettering alphabet: To copy

Written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush.

A A A

B B B

C C C

D D D

E E E

F F F

GGG

HHH

III

JJJ

KKK

LLL

MMM

Brush lettering alphabet: To copy

Written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush.

N N N

O O O

P P P

Q Q Q

R R R

S S S



Brush lettering alphabet: To copy

Written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush.

aaa

bbb

bbb

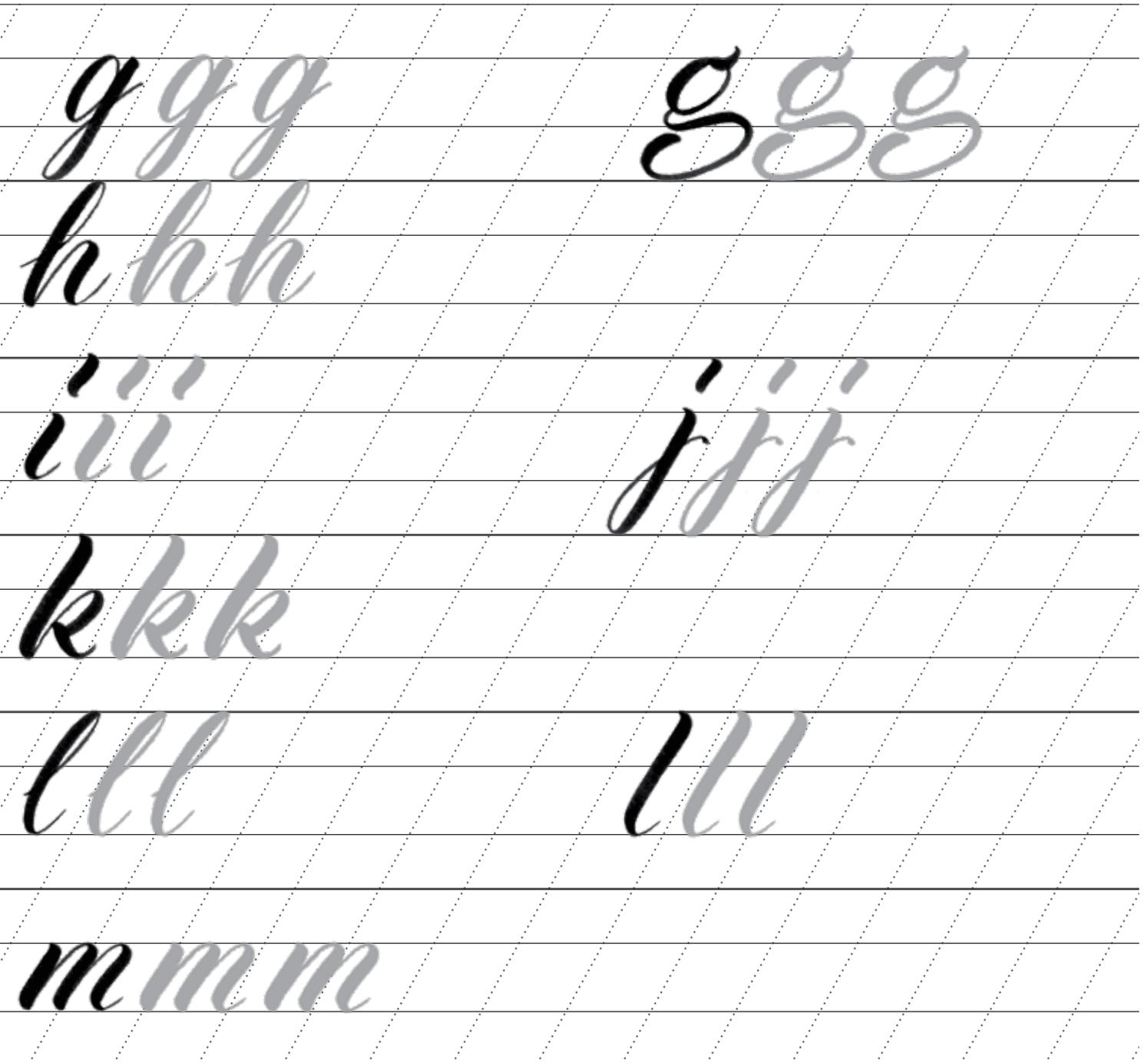
eee

ddd

eee

fff

fff



Brush lettering alphabet: To copy

Written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush.

nnn

ooo

ooo

ppp

ppp

qqq

rrr

rrr

sss

t t t

u u u

v v v

w w w

x x x

y y y

z z z

z z z



Effects & decoration

When you're hand lettering, you can practically let your imagination run riot. By using various colors, illustrative elements, geometric shapes and other design details, you can embellish, decorate and jazz up individual letters, words and even entire texts. But don't forget: less is more!

Otherwise finished lettering can soon seem overloaded and forced.

On the following pages I will show you some ways you can decorate your words and letters. As was already mentioned in the materials section, you can create great effects, shading and different looks by mixing or combining different pens and pencils.



YES



TRY IT!

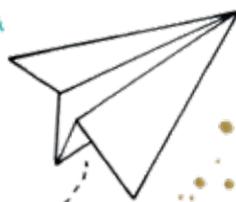
LET'S celebrate!

GOOD
Luck!



FOR
you

I TO
Create



good
night

HELLO

Effects & decoration

Here are a few more options for decorating your words and visualising their meaning. In the texts to the left I will explain the technique and writing tools used.

1 The STABILO BOSS ORIGINAL lets you create great, wide 3D effects on lettering written with the STABILO Pen 68 brush!

smile

2 To go with the word "sparkle", I have used STABILO Pen 68 metallics in gold and copper to draw little groups of dots that thin out towards the top of the word. This effect also reflects the meaning of the word.

sparkle

3 The word "floral" is practically crying out for flourishes and swirls! Here's I've selected four colors from a STABILO point 88 color family. To ensure the word doesn't get lost in the embellishment, I've made it slightly bolder. My tip: try to ensure your flourishes go with the flow of your letters. This way, they appear harmonious rather than over the top.

floral

4 "Color blending" is a popular technique and easy to do thanks to the water-based colors in the STABILO Pen 68 brush! Choose two pens, for example two from one color family (here: light pink and dark red), hold the tips together so that the dark color transfers onto the light tip.

beautiful

Color blending technique



Hold the tip of the lighter pen against the tip of the darker pen to transfer the color.

Alternatively, use the darker pen to color a small area on some foil or a clear plastic folder and then use the tip of the lighter pen to pick up the color from the foil. The pens will automatically write themselves clean!

Watercolor technique

The STABILO Pen 68 brush lets you create beautiful watercolor effects, for example as a background!



1. Step: For this you need two or more colors, watercolor paper, water and a brush.



2. Step: Color areas of different sizes with the pens. Tip: use gradually darker colors as you move towards the outside and leave some white!



3. Step: Now paint the areas with the wet brush. You can go back and correct individual areas or edges, add more color and leave a few drops here and there around the outside. Let the paper dry well!



4. Step: Afterwards you can add your lettering or a passage of text over the top. Your lettering with watercolor background is now complete!

Example lettering: structure

I'd like to use this motif to show you how to combine different fonts in a text: I'll take you through my process step-by-step, explain what you should keep in mind and show you how I finally embellish and decorate it.



1. Scribbling

Instead of going directly to drawing the letters, I first write out the text by hand one or more times. Here I determine a rough layout, arranging the individual words in the format.

2. Preliminary drawing

For this we need (jotting) paper, a pencil, a ruler and an eraser.

One important question that you need to answer before you start: which words are particularly distinctive, important or need to be highlighted?

Every word has a meaning, look and feel that you can present wonderfully using certain fonts. Think about how the words could look to bring that across!



3. Final artwork

Now it's time to do the major work. First of all, I erase the pencil lines until they are almost completely gone so that nothing shines through. I get a few pens ready for the final artwork and think about the colors I wish to use. Here I've decided upon colors from one color family.

I use them to highlight the three most important words; I keep the smaller filler words (the rest) in black.



4. Details

When the artwork itself is finished, I can start with the details! Which effects, decorative elements and illustrations suit which fonts?

Here you can let your imagination run riot. If you're unsure, start by adding details in pencil so you can erase them if you don't like them or they don't match.

Example lettering: materials

So you can see exactly which tools I have used for the example lettering on the previous page, I'll list them all here again. In the description next to the tips of the pens you'll find all of their features and the things for which they are particularly.



STABILO Pen 68 brush
for brush lettering
and color blending



STABILO point 88
for colorful writing,
illustrating and sketching

STABILO pointMax
for headlines and
filling in smaller areas

**STABILO BOSS
ORIGINAL Pastel**
neon & pastel colors for
highlighting and shading

STABILO Pen 68
for coloring, sketching
and taking notes

STABILO SENSOR fine
for filigree lines and contours

STABILO woody 3 in 1
for creating
watercolor effects



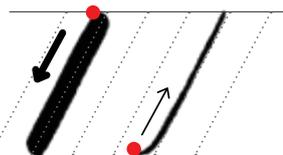
Inspiration

Finally, here are a few lettering examples to inspire you and to copy!
Have fun!

Here's another reminder of brush lettering basics:

Downwards = more pressure

Upwards = less pressure



"CREATE
DON'T
HATE!"

THINK
→ outside
-THE-
BOX. ←

HOLA

Ciao

BONJOUR

HEY

Aloha

Mihao

SELAMAT DATANG

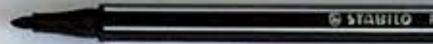
Hello

good THINGS ACTUALLY
TAKE *Time's* YOU *can*

Create
Positivity

I TO
Create

Eat
DRINK
and be h.a.p.p.y!
Amor
» YOU
ARE MY
TYPE



Thin
BIBI

Happy
New
YEAR!

Verloft
VERLOFT
Verloft

create
~~STRET~~
REPEAT...



mi

YOU CAN DO

Madie

THAT
escalated
QUICKLY.



Pen 58

nk

Freiheit



Comme ci
Comme ça



Kind
people
are my
kinda
people.

Das Exzellen

In need
OF
VITAMIN
Leaf





STABILO®

BYEBYE

Adios.♥

au
»REVOIR«

Adieu!

ARRIVEDERCI

Sayonara

"Ciao!"