

from Ann Camp, Pen Lettering

Fig. 15 shows the construction of the small Roman letters. The dotted lines have been added to give a clearer indication of the solid pen form and the way in which strokes unite with each other.

The body height of the letter is four and a half times the width of the pencils. To measure this height turn the pencils so that they make their thickest stroke horizontally; make a series of "steps" similar to those shown beside the letter a. Having established the body height, rule a page with lines three o spaces apart; see Fig. 8. Leave a margin each side of the page.

The lower point of the triangular serif in ascending strokes is the same height as the capital letters, i.e. seven times the width of the pencils; see Fig. 19 and top left of Fig. 21. Ascenders and descenders are equal in height. The beginner may like to indicate these sizes by making slight pencil marks at the beginning of each line, but as soon as possible he should learn to rely on the judgement of the eye, which with practice should become very accurate.

The arrows and numbers in Fig. 15 show the order and direction of all the strokes which go to make the finished letter. It is difficult to push a broad pen upwards or backwards against its thickest edge; there is too much resistance and the ink might splutter, therefore most strokes are pulled downwards and forwards. Study Fig. 15 carefully but before attempting to copy it turn to Fig. 16 which shows the construction of a serif. On a separate unruled sheet of paper practice the serif, making sure that the strokes unite satisfactorily and that the angle of the pencils is correct. It is important to be able to make a serif properly before copying the alphabet.

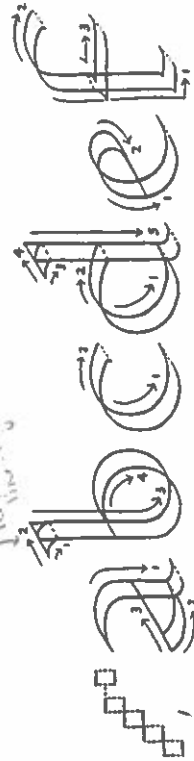


Fig. 15

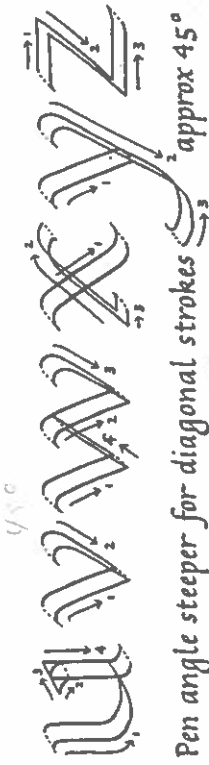
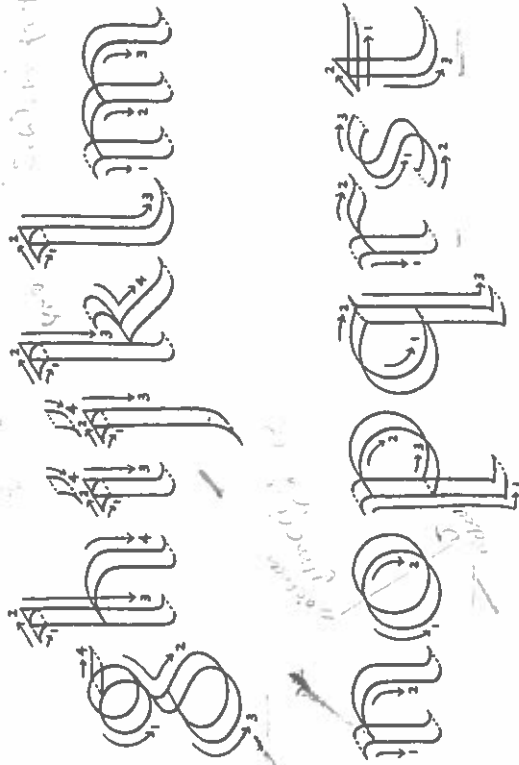


Fig. 15 cont.

he descends with
white lines
set in the

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

FIG. 38

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

FIG. 39

with Fig. 39. No exact rule can be followed for the proportion of compressed capital letters, and careful judgment is necessary

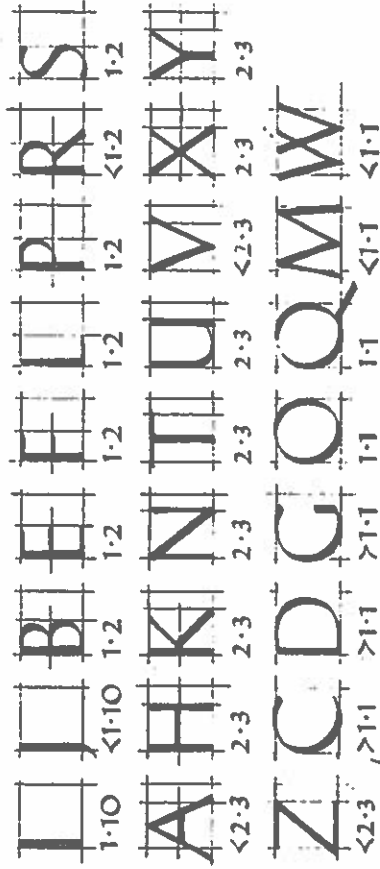
The beauty of Roman majuscules (capitals) is due to the perfect proportions of the letters. Developed in the first century, they have been immortalized by stonecarvers throughout the ages. Roman capitals are one of the most important and challenging styles to master.

The skeletal forms of these letters are based on geometric proportions, and fall into several different groups:

1. Round letters: C, D, G, O, Q
2. Rectangular letters: A, H, K, N, T, U, V, X, Y, Z
3. Narrow letters: B, E, F, L, P, R, S
4. Extremely narrow letters: I, J
5. Wide letters: M, W

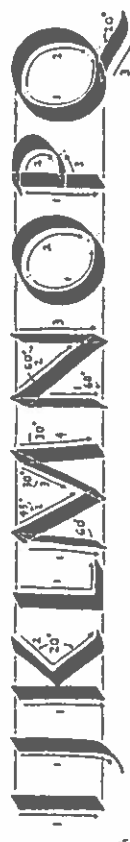
To write Romans use a broad-edged tool (such as a Speedball® C-series nib, Panache® fountain pen, or Elegant Writer® marker) and hold it at a 30° angle. Steepen the angle to 45° when forming the bold diagonal strokes of the V, W, X, Y so that they will not look too thick. When writing the K, Q, R and Z the pen angle needs to be flattened for the same reason. The nib width ratio can be varied from 5 for heavy letters to 10 for tall elegant forms. Roman capitals can be written by themselves, or combined with many minuscule (lower case) styles, but they are most frequently used with Foundational. (See pages 24 - 25.)

ROMAN CAPITALS — PROPORTIONS



Figures above represent width to height ratio < - greater than > - less than

Pin Scale Without Serifs



With Slab Serifs



Some Serif Variations



Numbers



FORMAL ITALIC CAPITALS with lower-case
written with a medium (approximately 1½ mm) nib.

caps 15° lower-case 45°

Aa Bb Cc Dd Ee

MEDIUM NIB

Ff Gg Hh Ii Jj Kk

Note: Horizontals on E and F are only half as wide as the height of the letter.

Ll Mm Nn Oo Pp

Do not overlap strokes 2 and 3:

Qq Rr Ss Tt Uu Vv

Maintain strong horizontal on T.

(avoid T')

Ww Xx Yy & Zz

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

From John Stevens,
Scribe, Artist of the
Written Word, 2013

Brush-written Imperial Roman Alphabet (1995)