Writing is usually categorized as being done with either a broad edged tool or a pointed tool. Most of us now, if we write by hand, are using a pointed tool. Ball-point pens & pencils are pointed writing implements, and the writer doesn’t need to worry about how the tip of the tool is oriented to the line of writing. Much historical formal writing seen in books and in modern “calligraphy” is done with a broad edged tool & the writer needs to hold the tool at a certain angle to the writing line. The Broad edge is responsible for the thick and thin shapes we see in these letters and can tell us a lot about how a scribe actually did their work.

**Seven steps for analyzing a hand**

1. **Weight of hand** pen width to letter height

   ![Pen Width](image)

   The a is 5 pen widths high

2. **Pen Angle** determines distribution of weight in the letter

3. **Shape of basic letterform** start with o or n.

   - **On** italic parallelogram or slanted rectangle
   - **On** foundational circle
   - **On** engraver’s script oval
   - **On** textura rectangle

4. **Number of strokes**
5. **Order of strokes**
6. **Direction of strokes**

   These three form the ductus

7. **Speed** (and slant)

   - **Slow** more legible and standardized upright downstrokes not many diagonal joins
   - **Fast** less standardized, more personal, harder to read slanted downstrokes Letters tend to connect

Other important factors to include: **Original writing tool, writing surface, and original size of writing**
Surfaces
Alvin 10 x10 Grid for easy layout
Vellum (calfskin)
Arches 90 lb hot press or other machine made papers
Well sized handmade paper
Papyrus

Writing Implements
Speedball and Brause nibs and holders
I tend to like Speedball nibs for bigger writing and Brause for smaller writing
In this project I’m using Speedball C-1 and C-4
& a Brause 1mm
Sakura Micron pens (always handy esp. sizes 0.05 and 0.1)
Revel Derwent Watercolor pencils (grass green?)
Regular HB Ticonderoga pencil
Pointed pens and holders (for pressure pen writing)
Broad edged brushes
Springy pointed brushes
Ruling pen

Paint:
Windson & Newton Jet Black gouache
Windson & Newton Olive Green gouache
Windson & Newton Spectrum Red
Watch out for Alizarin Crimson! Expensive and hard to write with
Finetec Mica artist Color set
“Walnut” Ink

General Supplies
Slanted, padded work surface
Sharp ex-aeto knife
White eraser
Fine Sandpaper
Cork backed metal ruler
Ruling pen
Nice to have a Drafting Bar
Carmex jars
Compass

Suppliers
Pergamena  www.pergamena.net
John Neal Books  www.johnnealbooks.com
Paper and Ink Arts  www.paperinkarts.com

Cheryl Jacobsen  cheryljacobson.com  2718 East Court St. Iowa City, IA 52245  319-330-5334