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Ornamental Penmanship

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Ornamental penmanship is a beautiful art. While few persons can write beautiful ornamental penmanship, most people admire it. It is an accomplishment worthy of the efforts of the most ambitious.

Without a doubt, ornamental penmanship will increase your skill and enable you to do better business writing. There is much in common between business and ornamental writing. In fact, business writing is an outgrowth of ornamental penmanship. Many of the letters still remain the same in shape. On others the flourishes and shades have been eliminated. Anyone who wishes to be a skilled penman can well afford to spend some time on the practice of ornamental penmanship.

The position for ornamental penmanship is much the same as that described for plain business writing. Sit well back in the chair, leaning forward, with the elbows evenly on or 'off the desk. Hold the paper directly in front of you tilted slightly to the left. The penholder, which should be an oblique, should be grasped lightly between the first and second fingers and thumb. Let the fingers be curved gracefully with the weight of the hand resting on the third and fourth fingers.

Use only the best paper, pens and ink. Write for a list of proper supplies and a correctly adjusted oblique holder. There are penholders on the market, which are high in price but are not well balanced.

It is necessary to develop a light, touch and a free motion. All of the various general exercises given in business writing can be practiced for ornamental writing. It is advisable to make large two space ovals without any shades. Make them as a solid running oval or as retraced ovals, about ten to the line. Use a Fine Writer pen point flexible enough to make shades and light lines. You will have to be careful not to press on the down strokes when shades are not desired.

These exercises (continuous multiple shaded ovals) were favorites of Madarasz and most penmen. Learn to swing them freely and very lightly. The hairlines should be light and the shades snappy. The shades are made by quickly pressing down with the first finger. The more you practice these exercises the more skill you will acquire and the easier letters will be to make.