

lettering week

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE



· SHARISSA ·

APPLYING PRESSURE IN BRUSH CALLIGRAPHY

Sharisse DeLeon is a brush calligrapher located in Sacramento, California. She enjoys engaging with other calligraphers and handlettering artists and learning something new every day. When she is not chasing her toddler twin boys or working at her day job, you can find her creating, teaching or blogging about brush calligraphy.

Follow Sharisse at:



piecescalligraphy.com



[@piecescalligraphy](https://www.instagram.com/piecescalligraphy)

▲ PAGE 3 ▲



· AMANDA ·

MIX AND MATCH LETTERS

Amanda Arneill began hand lettering when her second daughter was born and she hasn't stopped since. She loves the feeling of opening a new pen and seeing the crisp black line start to play its way across the page. And then she takes her old pen and slam dunks it in the garbage can (a habit her daughter has unfortunately picked up and applies to just about anything).

Follow Amanda at:



sayitpretty.com



[@amandaarneill](https://www.instagram.com/amandaarneill)

▲ PAGE 6 ▲



· MAIA ·

BIG, BOLD AND COLORFUL LETTERING

Maia Then is the Art Director of a Publishing Agency in Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. Saying she loves lettering doesn't even come close to explaining how she feels about the art. She has been practicing for 6 years and considers herself lucky to be able to use her passion for lettering at her job every day.

Follow Maia at:



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▲ PAGE 8 ▲

lettering week

INSTRUCTIONAL GUIDE




· ABBY ·

SPACING, COLORS AND GLUE PEN FUN

Abby Guempel is a full-time Art Director for a crafting company in Dallas, TX by day, and an illustrator and hand letterer by night. She has been in the industry since she was 8 years old, but her relationship with hand lettering began in 2014. She views hand lettering like Tetris or solving a puzzle - you need to figure out what to do next while continuing to write non-stop.

Follow Abby at:

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▲ PAGE 9 ▲



· LAUREN ·

TOMBOW LIKE A LEFTY

Lauren Fitzmaurice is a left-handed calligrapher from Owensboro, Kentucky. She is also a full-time teacher, wife, and mommy to two sweet boys. Lauren enjoys a good doodle and working on lettering projects in her spare time. She believes that lettering makes life more fun and also loves to encourage and learn from other creatives.

Follow Lauren at:

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▲ PAGE 13 ▲




· MARIE ·

CONFETTI LETTERING

Marie Browning is a best-selling author and Tombow's Signature Designer. With more than 32 books in print and over 2 million copies sold, Marie has been sharing her knowledge on crafting and lettering for years. When she isn't happily crafting at her home in Canada, she is spending time with her family.

Follow Marie at:

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 [youtube.com/tombowusa](https://www.youtube.com/tombowusa)

▲ PAGE 17 ▲



· SHARISSA ·

APPLYING PRESSURE IN BRUSH CALLIGRAPHY

When creating brush calligraphy, it is important to understand when to apply pressure.

The amount of pressure you apply to your brush pen directly affects the width of each of your strokes. The more pressure you apply, the thicker your strokes will be. And the less pressure you apply, the thinner your strokes will be.

But what exactly is pressure? How do you create and control pressure? When do you apply pressure?

WHAT IS PRESSURE?

Pressure is the act of exerting force of an object (such as a brush pen) onto something else (such as a piece of paper).

Pressure can be heavy and forceful, or it can be light and gentle. The amount of pressure you need depends on the writing style and effect you desire.

When creating brush calligraphy in particular, you want to apply heavy pressure to create thick downstrokes and light pressure to create thin upstrokes. The variation of thick and thin strokes is what defines calligraphy. Therefore, knowing when to apply pressure is crucial for creating brush calligraphy.

HOW DO YOU CREATE & CONTROL PRESSURE?

As mentioned above, you create pressure by pressing your brush pen down onto the paper with force.

Before you begin writing, be sure you are holding your pen correctly and at the proper angle. Every brush pen is different in size and flexibility, which means you must spend time getting familiar with your pen.

Hold your pen at an angle to avoid fraying the tip of your pen and to also optimize the flexibility of the tip. It may take some time getting used to the brush pen, as it is very different from a regular marker or writing tool. (If you are left-handed, you can achieve the proper angle, too! Hold the brush pen using an overwriter grip, which will allow you to hold the pen at the same angle as a right-hander.)

When exerting pressure, you must maintain control over the brush pen and continue holding the pen at the proper angle. Your angle may adjust slightly with each stroke. Over time, you will find yourself adapting your own unique grip and hand/finger position around your brush pen to adjust for your own writing style.





SHARISSA

APPLYING PRESSURE IN BRUSH CALLIGRAPHY

USING PRESSURE TO CREATE THIN AND THICK LINES

Once you are holding your pen with a comfortable grip and at the proper angle, bring the pen to the page and begin by barely touching the tip of the paper. When creating thin strokes, you do not need to apply much pressure, if any at all. Once the tip of your pen touches the paper, slowly and carefully draw a line at an angle, and do not exert much force with the pen.



To create a thicker stroke, apply more pressure to the pen. Press your brush pen onto the page (maintaining the proper angle) and watch as the tip flexes or slightly bends, allowing more of the tip to touch the page. Keep this pressure, or amount of force, on the pen, and draw a stroke. If you are holding your pen at the right angle, you'll see that the stroke is significantly thicker than your previous upstroke. You can experiment with different amounts of pressure and observe the varying stroke widths each amount of pressure creates.

HOW DO YOU CONTROL PRESSURE?

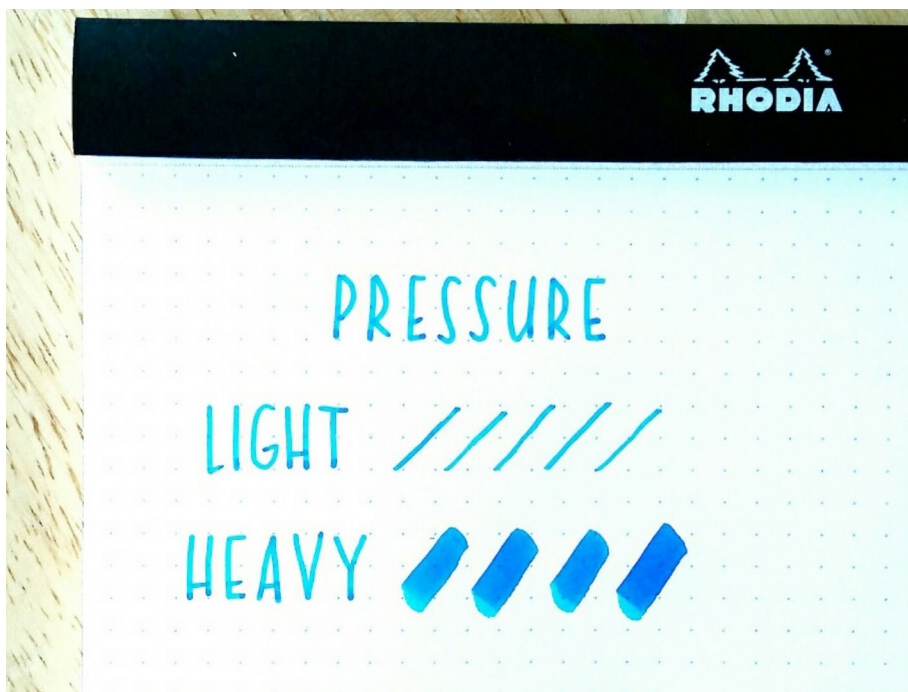
Controlling the pressure can be tricky when you are first learning brush calligraphy. A huge part of gaining control is knowing your pen. Be sure to get familiar with your pen and learn how to hold it correctly.

To control the pressure you exert, practice varying amounts of pressure for long periods of time. In other words, PRACTICE!

The biggest advice that has helped me develop a good sense of control is to break down my words and letters and go slow. If you get too much ahead of yourself and try to write long paragraphs before you master basic strokes, you will find it difficult and frustrating to master control over your pen. Do not rush or else you risk compromising quality and the ability to improve your strokes based on the pressure you exert.

For starters, begin with the lightest amount of pressure you can exert, one in which you are barely touching the page. Create strokes with this amount of pressure only and fill an entire page with that stroke. Then, increase the amount of pressure slightly, and fill a new page with that stroke. Drills, or practice sessions, in which you work on creating thin and thick lines will best help you develop control over pressure.

Here are some example strokes to practice >





APPLYING PRESSURE IN BRUSH CALLIGRAPHY

USING PRESSURE TO CREATE THIN AND THICK LINES

Try these simple drills to get familiar with your brush pen, experiment applying various amounts of pressure, and identify the areas in which you need further practice.



Left: The lowercase “i” repeated over and over and connected to the next.

Below: Lowercase letters containing more advanced strokes. Remember to hold your pen at the proper angle as you write the entire letter.



View a short video on how to apply light pressure for achieving thin strokes, and heavy pressure for downstrokes for achieving thick strokes here: <https://youtu.be/A17OOx8egYg>.

These strokes are great for practicing control over the brush pen, which in turn contributes to better control of your brush calligraphy.



MIX AND MATCH LETTERS

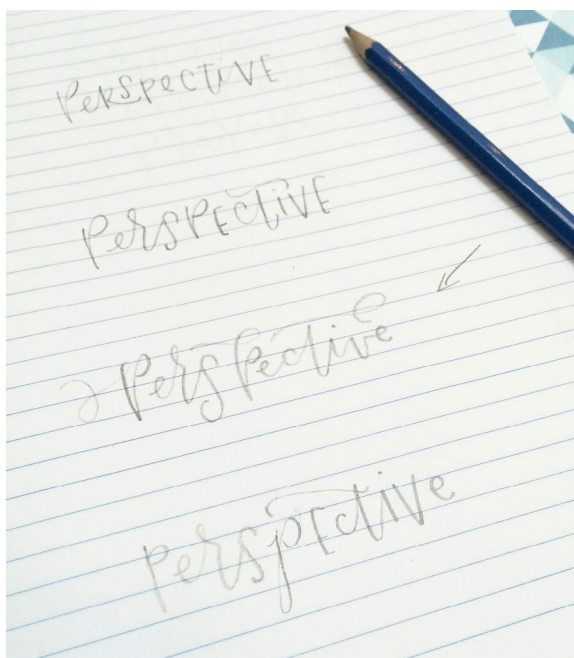
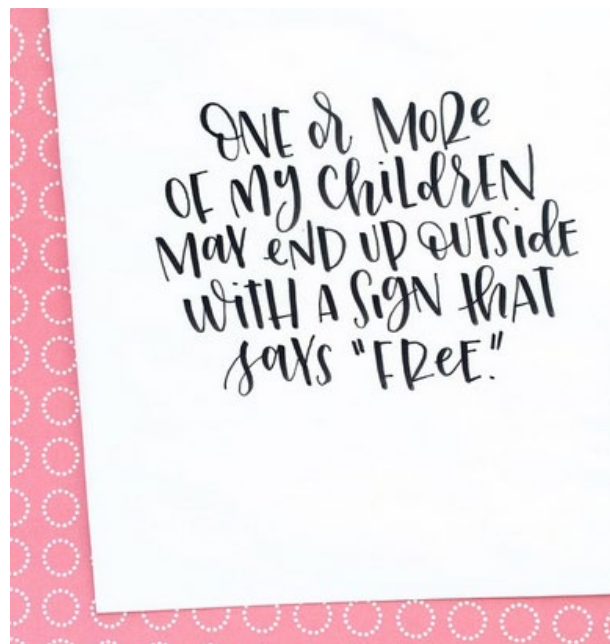
One of the lettering styles that I really enjoy using is a mixed script and print style that uses the letter styles interchangeably. I get lots of people asking if it is a font but, nope, it's just something that flows out of my pen. I don't have a special alphabet that I practice to write this, I just use the letters that I know and mix and match them together, rather than only using one style at a time. I thought I would give you a few tips on how make your own mix and match lettering.

I find the mix and match style is fantastic for letting letters cuddle. That's a weird way to think about it but I always try to have my letters interacting somehow, like fitting together gently as if they are pieces of a puzzle. This is easy with single words but gets more complicated when there are multiple lines of text and they have to fit together top to bottom as well.

I think the best way to explain how to use this lettering style is to work through a piece together. I'm creating a poster for a friend that says Patience, Perspective, Prayer. Because she is awesome and has great taste, she wants them to be written in the playful mixed script style that I love so much.

THERE ARE A FEW THINGS THAT I KEEP IN MIND WHEN I'M WRITING THE LETTERS OUT:

1. Most of the letters should be approximately the same size as each other. The only letters that should be smaller are usually vowels.
2. If there are two of the same letter (or more), they should each be written in a different style.
3. There should be a random mix of script and printed style letters in roughly equal numbers.
4. ...But most importantly, I approach each piece knowing that there are no hard and fast rules to follow.



When I start on a piece, I always scribble my words out in pencil at the top of my page and go from there. For pieces with multiple words, I typically start with the middle word and letter out from there. In this case, that means that I'll be starting with the word Perspective. Still working in pencil, I usually write my first word out a few times and see which version I like the best.

Since this piece has a plethora of P's, I don't want them all to look the same which means that I'll have to get creative with them. That means I need to use flourishes and changes in size and shape. I don't want to change the angle of the letters too much because that will make them look like they aren't all a part of a cohesive piece.

Once I've picked my starting word, I build off of that, by completing the word (or words) that come before. When I write them in, I make the baselines (or bottoms) of the letters go down into the spaces left in the top of the middle word, while creating a consistent upper limit to the letters. This helps the words look like they are naturally nesting together and creates a pleasing border at the top of the piece.



MIX AND MATCH LETTERS

When I add the word (or words) below what I've already done, I make some of the letters float higher to fill in the spaces or I stretch them taller than normal like little letter giraffes. Just like when I did the word above, I'm always trying to create a straight baseline with the bottom word so that it gives a generally straight border.

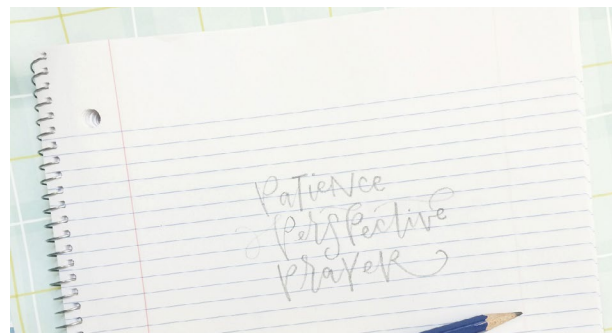
After coming up with a composition that I like, I pull out my tracing paper and my Tombow Fudenosuke and use my brush pen to write the words out.

I find that sometimes the composition looks different once I do them with a Tombow Dual Brush Pen and, before I move onto a final product, I want to make sure that I like the way that it looks in ink. Using my pen once my sketching phase is finished also helps to conserve my ink. With the number of pieces that I do, anytime I can save some ink is fantastic!

With just a few tweaks, the inked sketch is ready to go! When I scale something up for a poster, I always sketch out my design with a pencil again first. Then I grab my Tombow Dual Brush Pen, which is great for large scale pieces, and go over my lightly penciled letters (make sure the pencil is light so that it is not noticeable underneath the marker).

If the edges of my letters aren't as crisp as I want them to be, I flip the pen over and use the fine tip to touch up any edges that I'm not happy with.

This is perfect for me since I do most of my large scale work sprawled over the floor and getting up to grab another pen simply reeks of



effort.

The final product on acid free, archival quality paper with an acid free Tombow pen is something that I know that my friend will cherish for years to come and it will look just as great then as it does now.





• MAIA •

BIG, BOLD AND COLORFUL LETTERING

START WITH A SKETCH

Sketching your lettering before you get started is always a good idea. A good sketching kit can include: Tombow MONO Drawing Pencil, Tombow MONO NP Eraser, Tombow MONO Sand Eraser and of course if you want to add some color to the mix you can use Tombow Recycled Colored Pencils.



I love using the Black Tombow Dual Brush Pen and the Fudenosuke Pens to make my lettering and scan it to make it digital.

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH THE DUAL BRUSH PENS

Use the fine tip of the Tombow Dual Brush Pen to make little flourishes around your word.

Make your letters bold by writing over them a few times using lighter shades of one color. Refer to the Tombow Dual Brush Pen Color Selector to find which colors are in the same families.

If complicated flourishing is hard for you, try making simple lines around the letters rather than making flourishes out of letters.

To give different tones to a word, write it in the lightest color, write over them using more colors using the darkest last. You can also use a Tombow Blender Pen to blend the colors a little bit more.





· ABBY ·

SPACING, COLORS AND GLUE PEN FUN

GETTING PERFECT SPACING

Here you'll see how to achieve perfect spacing by analyzing the word you're lettering.

Below is how I analyze my word. I underline and upper line a few letters that have "tails" or can be potential flourished objects. Then, I pink-circle the empty space that can be filled out.



Once you figure everything out...

Let's do the fun part! Let's hand-letter this word using the Tombow Fudenosuke Brush Pen soft nib.

Once we figure out the basic lettering. It's time to figure out what to do to fill out our "empty" spaces. What I see here, we can definitely play around with the space below the "-inner", the top of "-eginner" and maybe next to the "B".

Therefore, I am flourishing the tail of the "g" to fill out the empty space below the "-inner."

Then, I extend the line stroke from the "B."



To fill out the space above the "-eginner", I use the new line that I create for the "B" (So, it looks like it's a continuing line from the "B") and flourish it to the top of the word. Then, I end it right on top of the "i" to create the superscript dot.





SPACING, COLORS AND GLUE PEN FUN

BLENDING COLORS WITH THE DUAL BRUSH PENS

I remember my heart skipped a beat when I saw these markers at the New York Stationery Show. I promised to myself that I would buy these markers as soon as I get back to Dallas. Of course, the wonderful people at the Tombow booth saw me drooling over these Dual Brush Pens and they were too kind to make my dream come true.

They invited me to come back to the booth and gave me these beautiful gems! Did I scream from the top of my lungs?

Of course, but silently...because I didn't want to lose my cool (yeah right!). Alright, let's do some fun stuff!!!

So, I have 2 favorite ways to do this.

Method No 1: I apply the 2 colors I like on the Tombow Blending Palette. Just literally apply them on top of each other. The stain won't stay, you can clean it.

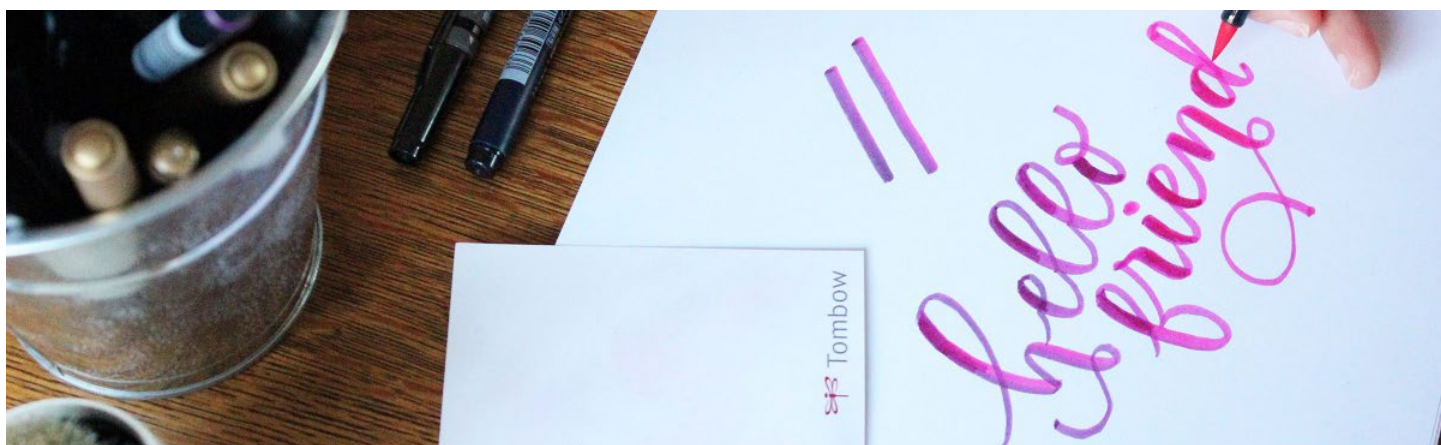
Then, I create a couple strokes just to see if the colors to my liking and then I start hand-lettering.

Et Voila!!! I love the subtle color changing from purple to the pink. However, if you like something bolder, then it will lead us to the method no. 2.

Method No. 2: For this approach, I usually add more colors onto the palette and mix them. Then, I apply the colors literally on to the artworks that need darker colors.

I usually do top to bottom, darker to light. You can apply it several times until you reach your favorite dark levels.

Mine is ready! I applied the colors for about 3-4 times. I only apply it on to the top part of the letters.





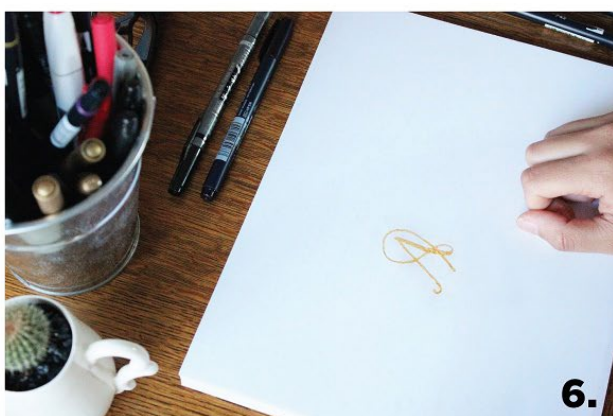
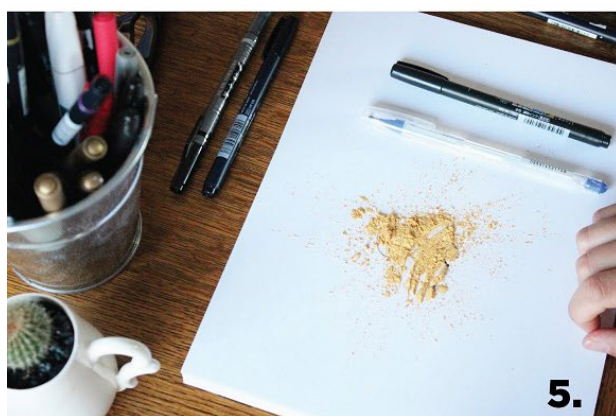
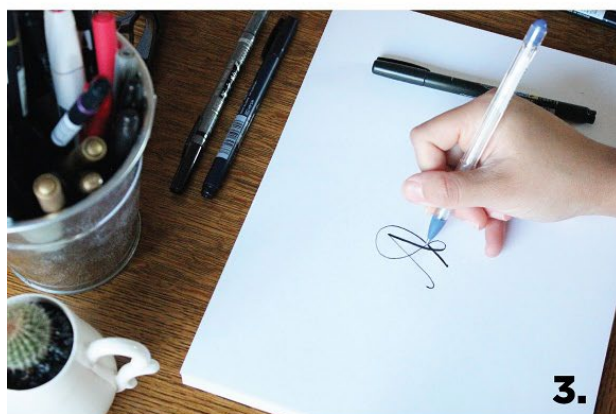
SPACING, COLORS AND GLUE PEN FUN

USING THE TOMBOW MONO GLUE PEN FOR LETTERING

I love mixed media or experimenting with different mediums and tools. So this is a perfect pen for me. First, I sketch using the Tombow Fudenosuke soft nib pen. The MONO Glue Pen ink is transparent, just in case you are wondering why there's nothing on the paper.

I used this pearl ex gold color powder to make it gold. This can be substituted with fine glitter (if you love glitter and unicorns), which is what I would prefer, but I'm out of glitter so... I used my husband's painting supply.

Check out the process below :





· ABBY ·

SPACING, COLORS AND GLUE PEN FUN

FLOURISHING WITH CONFIDENCE

Flourishing will look flawless if you understand your spacing. You don't want to have too many swirly lines because you need to make sure your words are still recognizable and readable. Always sketch it before you ink it. DON'T BE SCARED to make mistakes because that's the start of AWESOMENESS!

Alright, below are a few letter examples that I usually "decorate."



When flourishing, it's important to be confident. Your confidence in creating lines is shown in your strokes. Practicing making straight lines is a great way to improve your confidence. I do it all the time.

These are a few letters after I flourish. I usually do heavy flourishing for the first or last letters. Also, for letters that have bottom loops, such as "g", "y", "j".

Another thing I usually do when I have free time at home and nothing good on Netflix or if I had finished watching all the TV shows in the world is practicing my flourished ending lines. These are a few lines that I usually use to end most of my words.





• LAUREN •

TOMBOW LIKE A LEFTY

Dear Lefty Friends, the first time that I ever picked up a brush pen, my left hand and brain had no idea what they were doing. I was totally discouraged and wanted to put it down and never come back... but I didn't! After lots of practicing and trial and error, I was able to see that lefties can definitely "Tombow" like our righty counterparts! The key is to stick with it and understand how to use being a lefty as a strength, rather than a weakness.

I am excited to share 5 ways that you can #tombowlkealeftly ... yes, I'm talking in hashtags.

The teacher inside of me just had to use an acronym with the word "LEFTY" to illustrate these 5 things that lefties can do to feel comfortable with the brush pen, and lettering in general, and let their strengths and uniqueness shine through.



"L" IS FOR LEARN THE BASICS

The first step to feel confident as a lefty letterer is understanding how you grip the pen and write.

There are two different kinds of lefty grips. Left-handed letterers are either underwriters, who write with their wrist straight, or overwriters, who curl their wrist.

There is no right or wrong grip for calligraphy, however, it's important for you to understand what kind of lefty you are so that you can have the best results with your pen.

I am an underwriter for pointed pen and a slight overwriter with the brush pen. My wrist stays mostly straight but curls a little as I apply pressure to write my down strokes.

One weakness of overwriting is that your hand can go through what you are writing, smearing and smudging your creations.

To fix this, turn your paper to the right about 45 degrees and only curl your wrist enough to apply the pressure needed for thin upstrokes and thick downstrokes, comparable to those of a right-handed letterer. This definitely takes practice, but seems to help!





LAUREN

TOMBOW LIKE A LEFTY

“L” IS FOR LEARN THE BASICS

Once you understand grip, take baby steps! Start with strokes, then work on letters, words, and eventually sentences. It takes a lot of time and tons of practice. I found great success with the brush pen after taking a modern calligraphy class with the pointed pen.

Learning the strokes of copperplate calligraphy helped me understand how to apply pressure on down strokes, release pressure on upstrokes, and how each letter feels when written correctly. Though the grip is completely different from the brush pen, my pointed pen base really helped me carry over the skill to the brush pen. There are many great resources online to learn calligraphy, and I recommend learning as much as you can!



“E” IS FOR EVEN WHEN IT DOESN'T WORK, DO WHAT WORKS

At the beginning, at least for me, it felt like there was only one way to write, and I couldn't do it. Almost every letter didn't look like I thought it should or the copperplate version. It was incredibly frustrating!

The best advice I ever got was to write and form letters in the way that works best for me. When you get to a letter that is difficult, write it out several times and try to find a way that feels comfortable and still looks right.

I've always heard that left-handed people are creative because they are “right-brained” (don't worry I'm not going into a long speech about brain research), however, lefties can totally use this to make a style all of their own.

Be creative. If it doesn't work, stick with it, think out of the box, and don't give up. It will work eventually, and when it does, you will truly start tapping into a style all your own!



“F” IS FOR FIND YOUR STYLE

Finding your style is not an overnight thing... it can take months and even years to ultimately find who you truly are as a letterer. Trust me, I'm still in the process. The best way to do this is to practice, practice, and practice some more.

As you practice and find what works best for you, your style as an awesome lefty will start shining through! Turn to Instagram and blogs to find inspiration. Engage in conversation with other calligraphers and learn as much as you can about the craft of lettering.

Find what you like and what you don't like and let your style emerge! Don't be afraid to be different or think outside of the box. Leverage your leftiness and find a style all your own.



• LAUREN •

TOMBOW LIKE A LEFTY

“T” IS FOR TRY DIFFERENT TOOLS

It is so much fun to add variety to your creations by utilizing different tools. There are so many great Tombow products to use for lettering. The cool part is, if the Tombow Dual Brush Pen isn't working well, you can always try out some faux calligraphy using the AirPress pen, colored pencils, or MONO Twin Permanent Marker.

Write out a letter or word with the tool of your choice and thicken the downstrokes. To do this, trace over the word again and when you get to a downstroke, thicken the downstroke portions of the letter.

My absolute FAVORITE tools to use are Tombow Dual Brush Pens. The dual brush pens and the Fudenosuke Brush Pens are absolutely great for lefties, because the ink dries very quickly and the pens are very easy to control.

The Tombow Dual Brush Pens are also super fun to mix with the Blending Palette! In many of my pieces, I layer the different brush pens and they complement each other very well.



“Y” IS FOR YOU CAN DO THIS!

I am here telling you (and myself) that we totally can do this. Is it always easy being a lefty? NO.

It often seems like it's a righty world and we are living in it, but this isn't true! Being a lefty can be a gift if you learn to use it to make your work unique. And when you fail, have a back up! What is it they say, "You cannot have success without failure?"

Let's face it, we are all going to fail every now and then. Sometimes things go very smoothly when lettering and other times, it can be a struggle. Start out by using a pencil. Sketch out designs and make sure that they are exactly how you like

them before you start "inking up" the final page. Many of my pieces are created by using a light pad.

I create several rough drafts on grid paper. When I find the design I like, I do it in ink on the grid paper. Then I use the light table to complete the final copy of my piece on the paper I choose, whether it be mixed media, vellum, or watercolor paper. I love them all!



LAUREN

TOMBOW LIKE A LEFTY

“Y” IS FOR YOU CAN DO THIS!

What happens when you mess up? Well, if you are working on a piece and mess up, the Tombow Sand Eraser is totally going to save the day. It erases color pencil and ink. I also use it often to fix mistakes on envelopes when using the pointed pen! It is so great!

Click here to watch this video to see me using the Fudenosuke Brush pen in real time: <https://youtu.be/8oywPiZuPts>.



And that is how you “Tombow” like a lefty! I hope you finish this post encouraged and with the realization that no one is perfect and we all have to start somewhere.

If you aren’t a beginner lefty, I hope I did our “little club” justice in this post and maybe gave you a new perspective about some aspect of our super awesome hobby!

The cool thing about being a lefty is that it is unique, but you are never alone! There are so many lefty letterers out there. So, are you ready to start? Join me in using the hashtag #tombowlkealefty.



CONFETTI LETTERING

Use this lettering technique to add some whimsical confetti to your lettering with the Tombow MONO Glue Pen. This technique is great for creating unique party invitations, decor and more! All you need are some Tombow Dual Brush Pens in varying shades, a Dual Brush Pen Colorless Blender, MONO Glue Pen, and some mixed media paper! Let's get started!

STEP 1

Write out your word ("party," for example) with the brush tip of your blue Dual Brush Pen.

Use heavy pressure to create thick lines on your downstrokes, then ease up on the pressure as you create your upstrokes.



STEP 2

Using the Glue Pen, draw dots in clusters on your lettering. Let the glue dry completely. The Glue Pen will act as a resist, so where you have drawn the dots, the color will not change.



STEP 3

Add in other words with your purple Dual Brush Pens, then apply dark shading on top of each letter in the word "party." Blend the colors together using the Colorless Blender. As the ink begins to dry, you will see the blue dots from the Glue Pen appear on the letters.



STEP 4

Using the fine tip of your blue Dual Brush Pen, add additional dots around those on your letters for a fun confetti effect.