

The Fountain Pen Bible



Everything you ever wanted to know about the
fountain pen

The most special writing instrument that exists

Peggy Simons [version 10.0]

Dear reader,

My fascination with fountain pens goes a long way back. It's hard to explain to non-fountain pen enthusiasts, but I'll try anyway.

When I see a beautiful fountain pen there is the urge to feel the pen, touch it and experience how it writes. It is a feeling that is stronger than my rational mind. When I write with a fountain pen I can hear that it is my fountain pen. The fountain pen nib makes me happy, as well as the smell that the ink releases while writing.

In addition, research shows that writing with a fountain pen improves handwriting because you write more calmly and attentively.

A good writing instrument enriches handwriting while a bad pen ruins handwriting. A fountain pen makes it easier to steer and the ink comes out lighter. This allows you to write longer and puts less strain on your muscles than with a regular pen.

As a fountain pen enthusiast, it is sometimes difficult to understand that a lot of money is spent on computers and often no more than a few euros on a fountain pen. Make no mistake, I cannot do without a computer for my daily work as the owner of [24papershop](#), but that does not mean that I put aside the value of a good writing instrument for this.

I found a fantastic poem on the internet that reflects my feeling of what a fountain pen means to me. The poem was written by Frans Maathuis, undoubtedly a fountain pen enthusiast. The poem is unfortunately in Dutch.

Ode aan de Vulpen

*“Verlengstuk van mijn Hand”
verlengstuk van mijn Geest,
gestuurd door mijn stemmingen en gevoelens,
soms zwierige letters, uitbundige krullen,
dan weer bitse strepen, felle halen.
Dan die momenten dat hij plotseling doodvalt,
als een signaal: Mens, onthaast je!
Hij zet mij aan om na te denken over vorm en nuancering.
Hij deelt mijn emoties en
weet zich op waarde geschat.
Kortom: een metgezel, een vriend,
en wel een heel getrouwe, een heel dierbare.*

In this e-book I explain, among other things, the history, the complete working and the maintenance of a fountain pen. I hope you develop as much passion for the fountain pen as I do. I wish you a lot of reading pleasure and would love to hear what you think and/or if you have any tips.

Keep on writing ☺

With love, Peggy

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1

The origin of writing

To discover everything about the fountain pen, it is good to reflect on the beginning, where something comes from. The same is true of writing, or the written word.

The first known writing was found in southern Mesopotamia and dates from about 3,000 BC. The writing consisted only of pictures that reflected words. If we use that as a definition of the written



word, then we can go even further back in time. In fact, in the caves of France, symbols such as the outline of hands and dots, created by cavemen, have been discovered more than 20,000 years ago. We have no idea what the artist meant by it, but perhaps he was claiming the cave, or explaining a direction.

The script from Mesopotamia was further developed into a cuneiform script. With a piece of reed, wedge-shaped indentations were made on slabs of clay. This made it look like a nail, mimicking the outline of an icon. And each icon represented a syllable. A specific combination of notches formed a sign. Over time, about six hundreds of these signs have been developed.

The origin of the script can therefore be reasonably traced, but less is known about the origin of the alphabet. One thing is certain: eventually people got tired of using pictograms. They started associating sounds with letters. This way they didn't have to remember hundreds of icons.

Over the years, writing became more common, and more and more cities used writing to record laws. That, of course, took some doing, because not everyone could read it. The same applied to the recording of contracts.

When the Roman Empire emerged, the Romans wanted to have their own writing system. They used the alphabet of the ancient Greeks, modified it and this was the beginning of the Roman Alphabet. The letters of this alphabet were about the same as those we use today. There are many countries around the world that use an alphabet based on the Alphabet of the Greeks, who in turn adopted it from the Phoenicians, and which the Romans thus adapted to their taste. The current Dutch alphabet consists of 26 letters, both vowels and consonants.

Now that we know more about the origins of the written word, I will continue the history of the fountain pen in the next chapter.

2

The history of the fountain pen

During excavations from Egyptian tombs, circa 4,000 BC, round objects resembling fountain pens have been found. However, one cannot know for sure. It is also not entirely clear how they functioned. On the other hand, it is clear of the fountain pens from the Romans. They wrote with fountain pens made from a piece of bamboo with a sharp point that could be dipped in ink. To prevent the ink from running out, they had roughened the inside, so that the ink was held in by the channels and therefore drained more slowly. By applying pressure to the bamboo, the ink was pushed out. This was not always successful, however.

The most famous predecessor of the current fountain pen is the quill pen. By cutting out the log, the end of the quill pen, the thickness of the nib was formed. It was important to take one of the first five feathers from the goose's wing, as these were the only usable feathers. In addition, one had to pay attention to whether the feather came from the left or right wing of the goose. For a right-handed writer, the feather from the left wing was preferred and vice versa.

It was not until the sixteenth century that the German priest Johannes Mathesius, who lived from 1504 to 1565, thought that writing instruments needed to be improved. Letters have

been found about this, in which he talks about brass writing instruments that can be carried full of ink.

However, it turned out to be difficult to make a reliable fountain pen. This was because certain parts that are important in a fountain pen were not yet understood, such as the air pressure and the importance of ink. But mainly the way to get the ink evenly, so without smudges, from the holder at the nib.



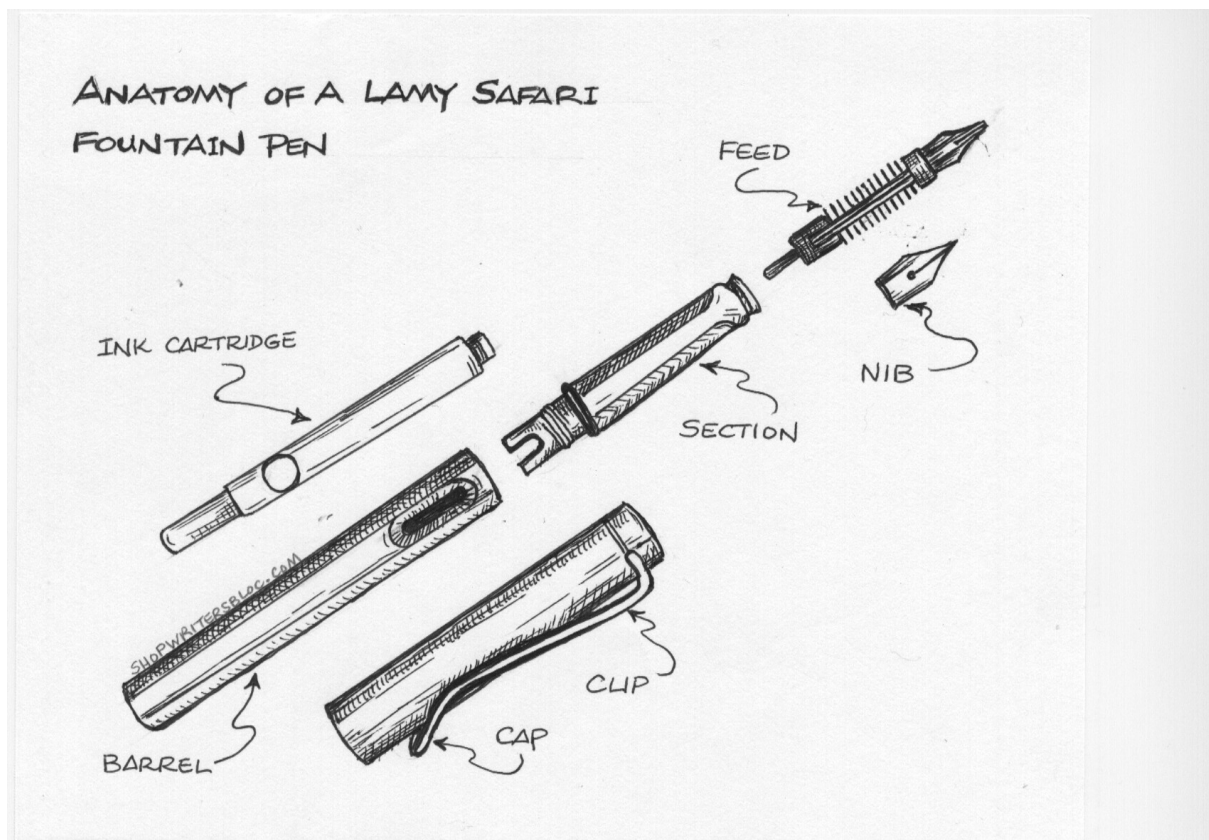
Only around 1850 it became clear how they could solve this. In that period, a mechanic built a fountain pen from horn and bronze with a goose feather attached to it. This construction is very similar to the current construction of fountain pens. The writer George Gordon Byron, known as Lord Byron, used a fountain pen-like writing device for his poems. In England this is seen as the birthplace of the fountain pen.

However, it is unclear which country is actually allowed to appropriate the development of the current fountain pen. Was it The Netherlands or England? Or was it America where Lewis Edson Waterman had applied for a patent on the fountain pen. The story goes that out of sheer anger, when he spilled ink on a precious document, he developed and marketed the first Waterman fountain pen. Initially it was not a great success. Every year he sold no more than 100 fountain pens. But this changed in the third year when he launched an advertising campaign, for which he had to borrow a lot of money. From that moment on, the company grew steadily, and Waterman is still an important player in the market today. Since then, more manufacturers such as [LAMY](#), [Noodler's Ink](#), [Otto Hutt](#), Mont Blanc, [TWSBi](#), [Esterbrook](#), [Diplomat](#), etc. have started producing fountain pens.

In today's modern world with computers, mobile phones, etc, writing seems like a thing of the past but nothing could be further from the truth. Writing with a fountain pen is on the rise, also among young people.

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The operation of the fountain pen



(source: shopwritersbloc.com)

A fountain pen has relatively few parts and is therefore a fairly simple writing instrument. The difference between fountain pens is not so much the construction, but more the design and decorative elements of the fountain pen.

The casing of the fountain pen usually consists of 2 parts: the **body** and the **cap** (sometimes there is also an intermediate

part). These two parts can be screwed together or clicked together. These also ensure an airtight seal. This prevents the ink from drying out, even when the fountain pen is not in use. There are also fountain pens with a retractable nib, just like a ballpoint pen with a click system. The nib retracts into a space that is sealed airtight to prevent it from drying out, f.e. [Pilot Vanishing Point/Capless](#) and [Platinum Curidas](#).

Most fountain pens work with a loose cap, which should be large enough so that the nib does not touch the rim when the cap is tightened or clicked on, as this could damage the nib. The exception to this is the aforementioned retractable fountain pen, where the nib disappears into the pen.

In the fountain pen with a loose cap, there are a number of vent holes in the cap between the inner cap and the outer cap. The air holes are not connected to the outside air. This allows air to flow when the pen is twisted or snapped shut. The small holes on the inside of the fountain pen cap ensure that there is no vacuum in the cap, thus preventing the ink from drying out. You can also see it yourself if you shine a sharp light into the cap.

The **clip** on the cap is usually screwed to the inside of the cap but does not connect to the inside of the cap where the air holes are. This is to prevent an air flow to the outside. And therefore, the ink can dry out.

An ink cartridge or a converter can be placed in the body of the fountain pen. Most fountain pens can hold two ink cartridges: one that is directly connected for use and one spare cartridge. And a converter can also be placed in most fountain pens. A converter is basically an empty ink cartridge with a suction mechanism that allows ink to be sucked into it.

The intermediate part can differ per fountain pen. With some fountain pens you can separate this part, with other fountain pens it is one whole. The feeder of the fountain pen is stored in this intermediate part. The feeder, a plastic tube with three thin channels running down it, is connected to the nib. The feeder works like a capillary system, conforming to the blood vessel system in our body. Read more about the capillary system below.

How does the capillary system work with the fountain pen?

Capillary action or capillarity is a physical phenomenon. It takes place, among other things, in the human body in the blood vessel system, but is also important for the water balance in plants. Various products make use of this physical phenomenon, including the fountain pen.

The ink drains from the cartridges or converter into the feeder of the fountain pen. The feeder consists of three small channels for the ink and a larger channel for the air. The combination of capillary action and gravity allows the ink to flow to the nib. The principle behind capillary action is that a liquid in a thin tube rises higher than the surrounding liquid level. The thinner the tube, the higher the liquid rises. The other phenomena that

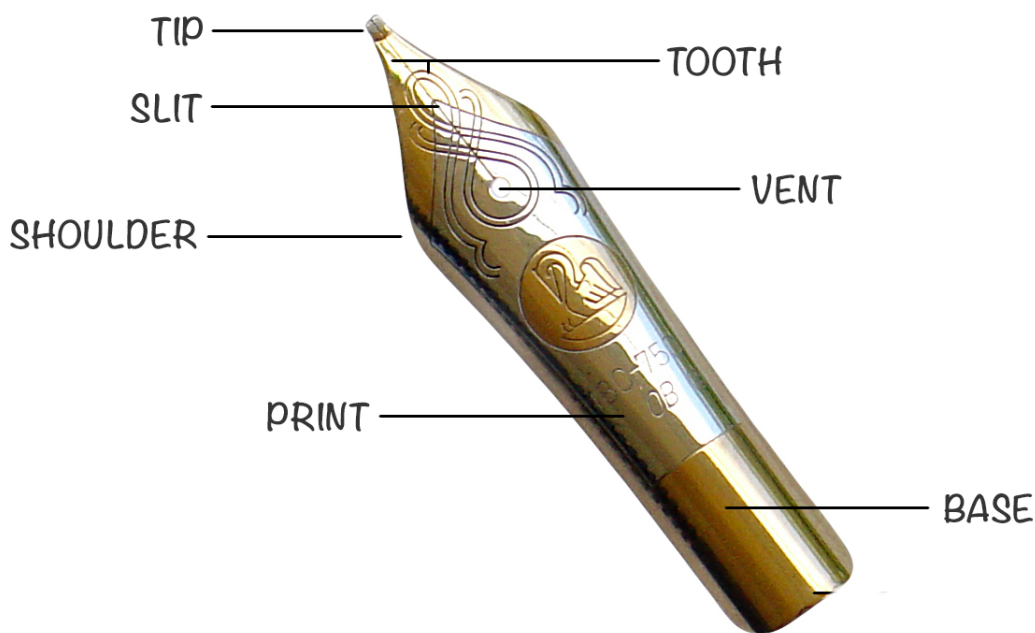
support the process are cohesion, adhesion and surface tension.

Cohesion is the attraction of like molecules and adhesion is the attraction of dissimilar molecules. It depends on which force is stronger whether the liquid is pulled up or down. The surface tension is the tension prevailing at the surface of a liquid, which causes the liquid to form a droplet.

By using this principle, it is possible to bring small amounts of ink through the channels to the nib in a controlled manner. By lightly pressing the nib, the correct amount of ink is dispensed. Even though a fountain pen consists of few parts, it is ingeniously put together.

The anatomy of the nib

Anatomy of the nib



The nib is a trade-off between aesthetics and functionality. It has a characteristic shape, which, with minor exceptions, has remained unchanged for years. The body of the nib provides the shape and rigidity around the teeth, the two sides of a nib, that hold the nib in place as you write. It ensures the release of the ink and the return of air through the channel in the feeder. The wider part at the top is used to indicate the manufacturer's logo and/or point width. Sometimes two colors are used for the appearance, such as platinum with gold. The shape of the body is made by stamping and rolling the metal.

The base, the thinnest part of the nib, has a crescent shape. It closes perfectly over the feeder, the tubular part through which the ink flows and the air is sucked up. The length of the base differs per fountain pen brand and therefore you cannot use the nibs of another brand for your own fountain pen.

The vent, a small visible hole, allows air to flow into the feeder to replace the ink that is consumed. The other function of the opening is that it is the end of the split in the nib, which consists of two halves. If this hole were not there and a lot of pressure is exerted on the nib, the nib could split open too far. To assess the quality of the nib, you can check the vent for scratches and cracks. If there are many small scratches or cracks, you have to pay attention to whether the two halves do not tear further apart and the nib becomes unusable. The vents come in different shapes such as heart-shaped, cone-shaped, six-pointed star, horseshoe-shaped, and round. This depends on the brand but has no further purpose. It's purely for show.

The shoulders

The shoulders of a nib are the widest part and gives the teeth their strength. The fact that the narrower the shoulders are, the more flexible the nib is.

The teeth

The teeth are the two sides of a nib that are divided by the gap (music nibs have three teeth, by the way). They are relatively longer with flexible fountain pens and shorter and thicker with stiff or hard nibs. A fixed, irreplaceable nib is often shorter and therefore stiffer.

The slit

The slit is the space through which the ink flows to the paper, starting at the nib and ending at the vent hole. The correct gap between the gap is an important element for the perfection of the overall nib. The sides of the Extra Fine and Fine Nib should be closer together than with a Broad Nib because the latter requires more ink. Very logical, the wider the slit, the more ink.

The tip

This is the part that contacts the paper. Welded, soldered and/or fused with gold, this part is made into a hard material. Over the years, various compositions of materials have been combined to create the ideal nib. The current modern nibs (from 1930) are made of iridium or osmium. Every manufacturer tests the nib by adding small new metal parts. Another important aspect of the tip is the design and finish. There is still a lot of manual work involved, especially with the Extra Fine nibs. What the tip is made of, the design and the finish determine how the fountain pen writes.

For me, the nib is the most important part of the fountain pen. It has to be the perfect combination of the composition of the metal and the design. It is the nib and looking at the nib that evokes a sensation in me. When you write you often look at the nib, so it must also have a beautiful appearance in addition to good quality.

Size of the nibs

The nib is rounded off with a tip and as previously written, it is made of iridium or other metals. Straight nibs write easier than angled nibs. Slanted nibs do offer more room for more expressive writing. Nibs are produced in different sizes:

- XF (Extra Fine): 0,25 – 0,30mm
- F (Fine): 0,35 – 0,40mm
- M (Medium): 0,65 – 0,70mm
- B (Bold): 0,75 – 0,85mm
- DB (Dubbele) B: 0,95 – 1 mm

With the more expensive fountain pens, the nib is often made manually and therefore they can show small deviations from each other. The dimensions between the different brands may also differ slightly. Just like with clothes, one Medium is not another Medium.

The choice of a nib is personal, but there are some guidelines that can help you with this. If you have small, fine and precise handwriting, the best choice is to choose an F or EF nib. If you have an exuberant handwriting, it is wiser to choose sizes M, B or DB. If you don't know yet, because it might be the first time you write with a fountain pen, choose the Medium Nib.

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Guide for choosing a fountain pen

The reason why I am such a big fan of fountain pens is primarily because they are so beautiful. I often catch myself staring at the nib while writing. That fascinates me enormously. In addition, I can enjoy the light scratching sound that some fountain pens make on the paper. Not everyone wants to pay a lot of money for a fountain pen if you don't have much knowledge about it. That is why it is good to start with a 'starters' fountain pen.

Of course, I am not entirely impartial and that is why I have done research. There are many good fountain pens available under €30, but the three pens that are especially recommended to start with are the [Platinum Plaisir](#), the [Pilot Metropolitan](#) (MR) and the [LAMY Safari](#). I know all pens personally, and I have tested them. The final choice from the three brands depends on which design you like, because all pens are of equal quality. The Platinum Plaisir, the Pilot Metropolitan and the LAMY Safari are made in different colors. And sometimes there are also limited versions on the market in an exclusive color.



Platinum Plaisir (available in various colors)



Pilot Metropolitan (available in various colors)



LAMY Safari (available in various colors)

The most important decision is the choice of nib. If you have fine handwriting, choose an F nib. If you are in doubt or if you have a wider handwriting, choose a Medium nib, but do not go higher for the first time. Don't worry too long, it's not necessary. Whatever you choose, all fountain pens are a good introduction to the world of the fountain pen. And which you will also enjoy a lot. And with many fountain pens, such as the LAMY Safari, you can only replace the nib later and you don't have to buy a new fountain pen if you want to try a different nib.

It takes some time getting used to writing with fountain pens
As soon as you have the fountain pen, my advice is to start writing with it immediately. There is a good chance that the first experience will be disappointing: the fountain pen

scratches, and the ink does not come out evenly. You will wonder if you are doing something wrong or if the fountain pen is defective. Hold on! Because after a while you will notice that the ink will flow better and better. A fountain pen works differently than a ballpoint pen or a rollerball. With a fountain pen, the ink must travel a long way before it reaches the tip. First it must go through the feeder and channels to get to the tip through the slit. You will notice that if you persevere you will find it more and more pleasant to write with the fountain pen. The following applies here: persistence wins.

Paper

Paper is another factor that affects how pleasant a fountain pen writes. Something you don't consciously think about when you write with a ballpoint pen. The difference in paper can be large and then it can also matter which ink you use. There is a lot to be found on the internet about the quality of paper. My advice is just test it. Write on all the paper you have on your desk, in your office, in the kitchen. Use Post-it blocks, your favorite notebook, scratch paper, etc. Write on everything you come across. As a result, you will soon find out how paper can determine the difference in writing pleasure. And you find out which paper is ideal to use for your fountain pen.

Customize your writing style

You write differently with a fountain pen than with a ballpoint pen. More ink comes out of a fountain pen and the ink dries more slowly. Also, the tip of the fountain pen must be placed correctly on the paper, so that the nib can deliver the ink properly. Therefore, you may need to adjust your writing style.

If you are used to placing your fingers close to the nib, you will notice that your fingers get dirty. Left-handed people often have to adjust their writing position, otherwise their hand will smear the ink over the paper.

Use bottled ink with a converter

I started enjoying writing with a fountain pen even more when I started using a converter and therefore also ink from a bottle. A converter is an empty cartridge, but the rotating mechanism allows you to suck ink from a jar.

It gives a special feeling when you pick up the ink bottle to fill the converter. It feels like you're about to write something important.

Once you have bought a converter, you no longer have to worry about whether and which cartridges fit in your fountain pen. In addition, you can use the ink from the jar for all your fountain pens (provided they have a converter).

Some fountain pens nowadays have an integrated converter, such as the [Noodler's Ink](#) and [TWSBi](#).



The choice of different colors with ink from a bottle is also greater than with cartridges, so you can make it even more personal. It is also no problem to use ink from other brands for your fountain pen.

The first time you start working with the converter, it seems like you must cross a threshold, but there is actually none at all.

Filling the converter is not difficult and if you do it slowly you won't make a mess. It's a matter of practicing a few times. I've included a link so you can see how to easily fill a converter.

Finally, I have also included a video in which I explain how you can mix different colors of ink to your own favorite color.

Pilot Metropolitan

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n9yNpXv2HaA>

Another video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n03MGcx7CQM>

Ink

Ink is not just ink. The choice of ink bottles with different colors is large, but that is not the only difference. By using several brands of ink, you will notice that each ink has its own character. One ink dries faster, another leaves a kind of glitter, another has a warmer color, etc. Even the blue standard ink is different for every brand. So don't be too modest and try out different types and colors of ink.

The moment you watch in fascination how the ink dries, you are lost 😊

Experiment a little longer

You now have information about multiple types of ink, paper and filling methods and my suggestion is to get some experience with this. Combine the products and see how it writes and how it interacts with each other. Learn to appreciate

line thicknesses and how to adjust and use them to improve your handwriting. In short: with one fountain pen and a few additional accessories you already get different experiences.

Buy a cheap fountain pen but with a different nib

After writing with your fountain pen for a while, it may be time to buy a new one. Some choose a more expensive fountain pen; others buy the same but with a different nib size (or just a new nib). And some are so enthusiastic that they turn fountain pen collecting into a hobby.

I wrote with Medium nib for a long time because I hadn't experimented. In the meantime, I have found out that I like the Fine from LAMY, for example, but prefer to write with Medium from the Pilot. Wonderful to make such discoveries.

Try different inks

If you have purchased an extra fountain pen, invest in [different brands](#) of ink as well. You will notice by trying out different inks in your fountain pen, you will also notice a difference in writing. It's about the writing experience and you can discover it in several ways. One of my favourite inks is [Ferris Wheel Press](#).

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Why should I write with a fountain pen?

The special thing about a fountain pen is the experience of writing, and that you can continue to use it. A fountain pen is not a disposable item, unlike some ballpoint pens and fine liners. In addition to the many types of fountain pens, there are also many accessories, such as ink bottles and filling systems. Other than that, you just have to love it.

Below I give my 8 personal reasons why I love to write with a fountain pen:

1. Smoother writing experience

The fountain pen is one of the smoothest writing instruments available. It's hard to explain without trying it yourself how pleasant writing with a fountain pen is. A big difference with a ballpoint pen is that you don't have to tense your muscles as much. Which in turn is better for your posture and the prevention of writing injuries.

A study with a carbon test (here a carbon copy is placed between two sheets of paper) has shown that the carbon copy was much more visible in ballpoint pen writers. This was hardly the case with fountain pen writers. This means that you can and need to exert much less pressure with a fountain pen and put

less stress on your muscles and joints.

2. Ink colors

There are many more types of ink for fountain pens than there are for pens, rollerballs, or gel pens. There are many brands of ink, and they all have different properties. Smoothness, saturation, sun protection, water resistance, durability, and dryness.

3. Infinite designs

There are hypermodern fountain pens, slim fountain pens, antique fountain pens from 50 years ago, in short, there are thousands of designs and there is one for everyone. There are an infinite number of colors, shapes, nibs and filling options.

My favorite fountain pens are the Noodler AHAB, Pilot Capless Decimo and Kaweco Brass. Now I am writing with the Diplomat Excellence A2. Often I write with one fountain pen for a while and then suddenly I want to write with another fountain pen. I always clean my fountain pen thoroughly before I put it away.

4. Better for the environment

According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans alone throw away 1,600,000,000 (1.6 billion) ballpoint pens each year. Society is obsessed with convenience, which unfortunately goes together with disposable items and environmental pollution. You will not easily throw away a fountain pen unless it is broken. A fountain pen creates memories about where you wrote what. In addition, fountain pens will continue to write well for years and years with proper

maintenance (see chapter 7). A fountain pen from 1950 will still write like the day it was bought. Writing with a fountain pen is writing with pride. A fountain pen is therefore certainly, in addition to the many advantages of writing itself, also a conscious choice for the environment.

5. Special feeling in your hand

Unlike the simple, plastic office ballpoint pens, the fountain pen provides a special feeling in your hand. In one way or another you are more aware of what you write down. My touch feels the perfectly balanced weight of the fountain pen, my gaze automatically goes to the beautiful nib, my hearing hears the specific sound it makes when I write with it, I smell the ink and I see a beautiful color appear on the paper. I have never experienced this experience with a ballpoint pen or rollerball. Are you already convinced? 😊

6. Improve your handwriting

Writing with a fountain pen is not automatic. You must learn to write with it. To do this properly, you need to write more slowly. This forces you to take time with every letter you write and think about how you write it down.

In primary school, a lot of time is spent on learning to write and developing your writing style. I think many of us recognize that over the years your writing deteriorates. If you have sloppy handwriting and want to improve it, start writing with a fountain pen and force yourself not to give up. I am the classic proof. When I write with a ballpoint pen, I am ashamed of my handwriting. If I write the same text with a fountain pen, it is

more beautiful and easier to read. And above all, keep practicing.

7. Very cool

Maybe it's the pen geek that I am, but I love that the fountain pen has different parts. I don't hate topping up my converter. I also don't hate cleaning my fountain pen because I'm going to use another fountain pen (or do regular maintenance). Because then I can twist the fountain pen apart and see all the loose parts. That is much more interesting than a ballpoint pen.

8. Also a fun hobby

Writing with a fountain pen is wonderful, but collecting fountain pens is perhaps even more fun. There are so many beautiful affordable fountain pens that you can collect. On the internet you will find plenty of information pages about meetings for fountain pen enthusiasts. And it's a fun world to be in. In the last chapter I go into more detail about collecting fountain pens.



Maintenance of your fountain pen

Just like your car, a fountain pen also needs to be maintained. Fountain pens need to be cleaned regularly to keep them writing well. An important part of the fountain pen is the capillary system. Over time, the channels can collect dust, fibers, and flakes of dried ink. If the flow of ink through the channels is not smooth, the pen will falter. Signals to clean the pen are if the ink comes out irregularly, or parts are skipped while drawing lines. It is important to maintain your fountain pen so that you can enjoy it for years to come.

It is advisable to clean a fountain pen regularly, at least every four to eight weeks. Even if you change ink, clean your fountain pen first. Now four to eight weeks seems excessive, but cleaning a well-maintained fountain pen does not take much time. Follow the steps below for cleaning.

Step 1



Remove the cap from the fountain pen and unscrew the intermediate part. Remove the cartridges or converter. If there is still ink in the cartridge or converter, tape the opening to prevent the ink from drying out.

Step 2



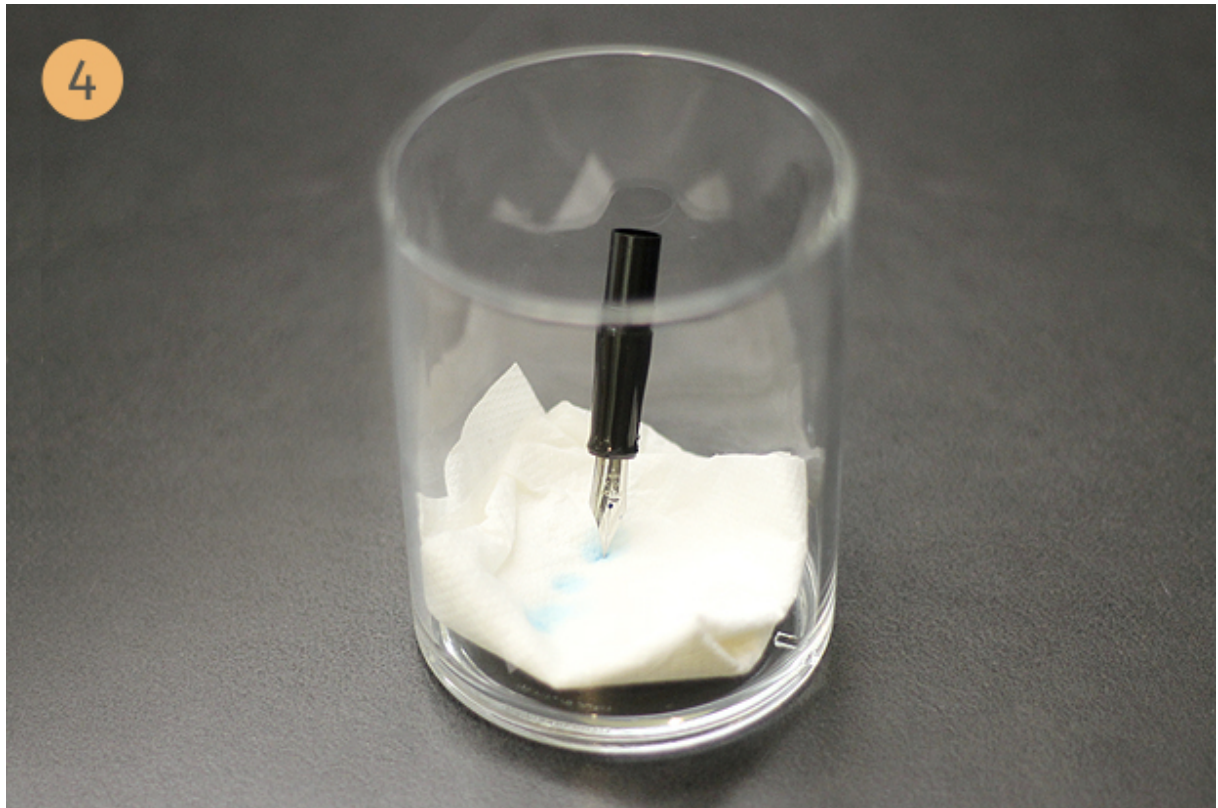
Hold the intermediate part with the nib under running water for a few seconds. The nib points downwards. Make sure you only use cold water. Warm or hot water may damage some components or warp material.

Step 3



Fill a cup with clean water and insert the intermediate part with the nib down. Keep changing the water until no more ink is visible. How quickly a pen is clean depends on which ink you used. Some inks, especially those with high saturation or water resistance, take longer to drain all the ink from the pen. Tap water generally works fine, but distilled water may be safer if the tap water has a high mineral content.

Step 4



If the water remains clear, remove the spacer, and let it dry for 24 hours. A simple way is a cup with a paper towel in it, which helps to draw out the water. Place the intermediate part with the nib down in the paper towel.

Step 5



When the nib is dry, the pen can be reassembled.

There are also special [cleaning fluids](#), which dissolve the ink faster and easier. J. Herbin and Diamine, among others, have good cleaning fluids and Platinum and Sailor have cleaning kits that are useful. And you don't have to have a fountain pen from one of these brands to use the cleaning fluids.

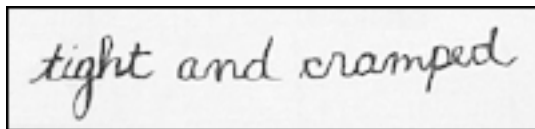
Maintaining a fountain pen is essential to enjoy it for many years to come. The writing pleasure grows over the years and eventually you don't want to lose your fountain pen anymore.

7

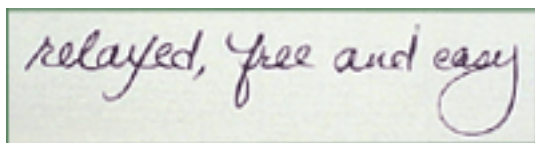
Tips to improve your handwriting

Writing with a fountain pen will slightly improve your handwriting. But to optimize it further you need to pay attention to your grip.

Look at the examples below and see if you recognize yourself in them.



The above is the style of people who write with their fingers instead of using their whole arm. It is often irregular handwriting because they rest the entire weight of their hand on the paper and must lift their hand while writing.



The above is the style of people where their hand rests on the paper, but they move their forearm and shoulder while writing. They do not draw the letters with their fingers, the fingers only serve as a guide.

It will take time to adopt a different writing style. You train muscles that you don't use now and unlearn old habits. Writing with your fingers is not "killing", but it is slow and often painful, especially if you need to write a lot and for a long time. What is especially important is patience and determination.

Most writers hold the pen between the index finger and thumb, then the body of the pen rests in the middle of your hand between the thumb and index finger separation. The pen rests on your middle finger (see photo 1).



Photo 1

Other writers hold the pen between the index and middle fingers and rest the pen on the ring finger. The body of the pen is in the middle of your hand between the thumb and forefinger separation (see photo 2)



Photo 2

You get better control and a better writing angle when the body of the pen rests on the knuckle of your index finger. The thumb and index finger enclose the pen, and the body rests on the middle finger. The fingers are relaxed and hardly bent (see photo 3).



Photo 3

Pen position is less important for neat handwriting than for calligraphy. I recommend writing from your trusted position unless it really feels bad. It is more important that it feels comfortable, and the pen is balanced. You should not feel any tension in your hand. The little finger is slightly curled and rests on the leaf, just like part of your palm.

Hold the pen loosely and do not squeeze it. Pretend the intermediate part is rubber and when you squeeze it a big ink blot comes out. Sit upright but not too stiff, slightly bent but not slumped. The most important thing is that you sit relaxed and feel comfortable. Your writing arm must have sufficient freedom of movement. Concentrate on the shoulder girdle, it should do the heavy lifting. That is a large muscle group, and you can train much more than the muscles of your fingers.

To practice your new writing style, write BIG. Practice by making big curls, writing the letter "s" several times, and drawing lines. Once you have mastered all that and it feels comfortable, write the words and sentences in large format. Gradually, as control increases, you start writing smaller and smaller and in normal size. You notice yourself when you are there. By then it won't cost you any extra effort or concentration because it happens on autopilot.

In short, your fingers hardly move during writing and your wrist even less. It's your forearm that steers while your shoulder does the muscle work.

8

Collect fountain pens

Collecting fountain pens is more than a hobby of stationery. Fountain pens can have historical, technical, or aesthetic significance. Many fountain pens are for writing while others are just for the enjoyment of looking at them. Collecting fountain pens does not have to be an expensive hobby because old pens are still being found that are sold for relatively little money.

But on the other hand, the sky is the limit when it comes to high-end fountain pens. A lot of money is offered, especially for limited editions. Most collectors want most or preferably all pens. The more rare and older fountain pens are often in less good condition, but they can often still be used for writing.

The rule for older pens is that it must be an original pen, that is to say: as it was made seventy or eighty years ago, with a good clip, not discolored and without damage. And preferably also with the original packaging. A nice pen with a broken cap is of little use because you can no longer find an identical cap.

Collecting fountain pens is becoming more and more popular because there is still supply. Plus, it's also cool to write with. Many people, especially the elderly, have a fountain pen

somewhere in their home. Perhaps defective, or it no longer writes because the ink has dried up. It is an object that was often last used a long time ago but is not thrown away. Stored in a drawer, because it won't get in the way there. Maybe it was a souvenir from a bygone era. And who knows how many shopping lists have been written with it, or job applications or love letters. You just don't throw away a fountain pen.

Some advice for when you start collecting

- Determine what your budget is. There are fountain pens for a few euros to thousands of euros.
- Determine whether you will collect old or new pens. Collecting modern pens is easier, but antique pens offer more variety and often have historical significance. The collector must be willing to invest time in it.
- Stationery stores or web shops are fine for modern and new pens, but you won't find many antique pens there. Older/antique pens are mainly available from dealers, eBay and collector's clubs. Specialized pen shows are also organized, which are also suitable for buying modern pens, such as limited editions.
- If you are looking for fountain pens because of their quality, buying used models on eBay is not always a good move. Pay particular attention to whether you like the pen and whether the price is right. And the latter is sometimes quite difficult because there is little material for comparison.



Personal Closing Word

A fountain pen is a special writing instrument. It creates an emotional feeling when writing. The design, the shape, the 'scratching', the filling, in short, writing with a fountain pen is special. And also think about special occasions:

- Signing your signature during the wedding ceremony
- The signing of your child's birth certificate
- Signing the deed of sale of your house
- Signing a condolence register
- The signing of an important (business) agreement
- A personal love letter or poem

Which writing instrument would you like to use?

If you have any questions after reading the e-book or are about to [purchase](#) a fountain pen, you can always contact me.

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Peggy