101 Alphabets

By

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The Bruce Publishing Company
Milwaukee
INTRODUCTION

The reception given to the authors' two previous books, *60 Alphabets* and *Lettering of Today* has made it clear that students, artists, designers, advertising men, teachers, and many others interested in lettering constantly are looking for inspiration and new ideas. This is as it should be. There always was and always will be a need for well-designed hand lettering.

With these ideas in mind, and to help the artist get variety in his work, this book has been produced. In it the best material from the earlier books has been included, plus many new and unusual alphabets, over one hundred in all.

All lettering stems from the four basic alphabets, Roman, Block, Script, and Old English, Plates 1, 27, 38, and 46. These are ageless. But from these basic forms many derivations are possible. The following plates are the results of the authors' many years of lettering experience. Some of these alphabets were created through necessity to fit a definite need; others were inspired by seeing just one or two unusual characters. Still a few are the result of just plain doodling, such as novelty alphabets reflecting the spirit of the times. All in all, it is felt that an alphabet for almost every need has been supplied.

Each alphabet is complete. This is to help both the beginner and the artist in being consistent in their lettering. Too often, a line of lettering is made up of one or more characters of different alphabets.
Since this is not a history of lettering or an instruction book, the text accompanying each alphabet has been kept to a minimum. If the authors' own experience can be trusted, the average artist gets more help from seeing an alphabet than from reading about it.

Finally, because the Roman alphabet is so basic and so widely useful, a geometrical analysis of it has been included.

To their fellow artists and all lovers of good lettering, then, the authors offer 101 ALPHABETS. They hope that it will be a real help to them, and that it will give them the basis on which to design at least 101 more alphabets.
PLATE 1

This is an excellent example of the accepted Roman alphabet of modern times. There are innumerable variations of this basic alphabet, several of which are shown on later plates. However, it is the one alphabet that the beginner should master before going on to other styles of lettering.
PLATE 2

This alphabet was used in the inscription on the base of Trajan's Column in Rome, erected about 100 B.C. It is a beautiful letter, always in good taste, and can be used wherever a dignified or conservative style is desired. The individual letters can be condensed or expanded slightly without losing their charm.
PLATE 3

The letters in the Architectural Outline Roman alphabet are based on old Roman inscriptions in stone, and are used mainly for architectural work. They also are useful for titles and book covers, and look well when used in solid color.

The specimen below shows how this alphabet can be handled to give an incised effect.

PUBLIC LIBRARY

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ABCDEF

GHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

QRSTUVWXYZ

RVRS

EMER
PLATE 4

This Latin alphabet is a companion to the Old-German lettering and numerals in Plate 59. It is taken from old hand-cut type used by Melchior Lotther (Leipzig — 1536). The combination letters are interesting examples of abbreviations copied by the early printers from the old scribes. The capitals J, U, and W have been supplied to complete the alphabet.
PLATE 5

This is a modern adaptation of the original Trajan. It shows how an alphabet can be modified by changing the weight of the letters while still retaining the basic form.
PLATE 6

This ornamental Roman alphabet is rather ornate with a touch of Gothic curves. The letters are not appropriate for mass or page-work lettering in which legibility is a factor.
PLATE 7

Another modern variation of Roman capital letters is shown here. It is especially suitable for headings, titles, and letterheads where a modern touch is desired.
PLATE 8

This plate shows a modern Roman alphabet which is easy to space and therefore easy to use. It is suitable wherever legible lettering is wanted for headings, titles, letterheads, captions, and logotypes. It also is very legible in mass lettering.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

mnopqrstuvwxyz

&
PLATE 9

This is a shaded Roman bank note style. Craftint paper is used here to achieve the background and shading.

(Craftint is available in most art stores or can be ordered directly from the Craftint Co., Cleveland, Ohio. It comes in a wide variety of patterns and screens, and will be found useful not only in this style of alphabet but also wherever a shaded effect is desired.)
PLATE 10
A rather unique handling of the Roman alphabet may be achieved with Ben Day or Craftint. A second color also may be used in place of the shaded portions.
PLATE 11

A delicate Roman adaptation with a modern touch is shown here. It is useful wherever grace or femininity is desired.
PLATE 12

This delicate lightface letter, with which many liberties may be taken, reflects some of the best spirit of the so-called modern movement in lettering. Lower-case letters may be treated like the caps where only a few words are used. The alphabet is appropriate for jewelry, ladies' wear advertisements, etc., and for captions, running heads, and titles.

for the
JUNE BRIDE

at Malanes

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
PLATE 13

This extremely delicate Roman adaptation is useful where femininity is desired.
PLATE 14

The two-tone effect in this Roman alphabet can be achieved with Chinese white or scratch board. The shaded portion also can be the second color.
PLATE 15

This Roman italic alphabet can be used almost anywhere to emphasize a word or draw attention to a point. The following plates (16, 17, 18, 19, 20, and 21) are all slight variations of this basic alphabet. Careful study will show individual characteristics in each one.
PLATE 16

This is another Roman italic alphabet slightly more ornate than the preceding one on Plate 15.
PLATE 17

This Roman italic alphabet was inspired by hand-cut type examples of the sixteenth century. It is a very graceful letter with which liberties may be taken, such as extending the swings of the letters K, R, and Q.

Happiness grows at our own fireside and is not to be picked in strange gardens.

—Jerrold

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
IJJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
QQRSTU

ÆŒÆŒæœ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
nopqrstuvwxyz

123456789
œŒœïœœœis
PLATE 18

Another Roman Italic alphabet which may be made even heavier than shown.
This is one of the more flexible Roman Italic alphabets which often is used for one or two words requiring accentuation.

The History of Archery
PLATE 20
You probably wonder why so many Italic alphabets, but it will be noticed that they are all different in one way or another.
PLATE 21

One of those ornate Roman Italics which comes in handy for ads of frivolous things. Can be drawn heavier also.

Beauty

ABCDEF

GHIJKLMNOP

QRSTUVWXYZThe

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
PLATE 22

This cursive alphabet is very useful where a loose, free letter is desired. It is quickly drawn with a flat-nib pen and is equally effective in headings, spots, or mass lettering.
PLATE 23
This squared italic letter is useful in modern advertising.
PLATE 24

A bold Roman italic which lends itself to poster work or where heaviness or strength is desired.
PLATE 25

Many liberties can be taken with this alphabet with its Oriental feeling. It is not good for mass lettering.
This is an interesting alphabet with a great deal of character. Liberties can be taken with both upper- and lower-case letters.
PLATE 27

A conservative, well-proportioned Gothic alphabet. Always in good taste where legibility and neatness are desired. Many liberties can be taken with these basic forms as shown in the five plates following.
PLATE 28

This style letter is used for poster and sign work.
It may be drawn with serrated or smooth edges with equally
good results.
As an eye-catcher it works well in a word of few letters in
newspaper and trade-paper advertising.

OIL HEAT

Clean Carefree Economical

TEXAS FUEL OIL CO.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
PLATE 29

This is a squared Gothic alphabet. To be assured of an even thickness of line, the use of a flat-nibbed pen is suggested.
PLATE 30

A unique alphabet made with a ball-point pen is shown here. It is strictly an eye-catcher where only a word or two need emphasis.
PLATE 31

Here is another ball-point Gothic alphabet with a Chinese touch. The ends of the lines are finished with a pointed lettering pen.
PLATE 32

This is a good example of what can be done by varying the strokes in two alphabets with similar characteristics.

A REAL BUY FOR UNUSUAL PROFITS

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
HIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
HIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
OPQRSTUVWXYZ
PLATE 33

A bold German Gothic alphabet which can be drawn entirely with a ball-point pen is shown here.

Plan on CANADA this fall

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
PLATE 34
This single-stroke ball-point alphabet permits many variations.
PLATE 35

This irregular poster alphabet can be used where ruggedness and force are desired.

VACATION TIME

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

M N O P Q R S T U V

W X Y Z

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0
PLATE 36

As mentioned in the text on page 58, many treatments are possible with the Gothic alphabet. In fact, on this plate will be found the inspiration for twenty-six alphabets. Many more can be created.

ABCD
EF
GH
IKJ
LMNOP
QRSTU
VWXYZ

VARIOUS TREATMENTS OF BLOCK LETTERING
PLATE 37

This plate shows twenty-six variations of the Gothic alphabet. All were done on Craftint paper.
PLATE 38

This is Engraver's Script — what more need be said? It is a basic alphabet, graceful and everlasting. Although one of the hardest to draw, once mastered, it has unlimited use.
PLATE 39

This Bold Script alphabet differs from Engraver’s Script in the method of bringing the shaded portion around the bottom of each rounded letter, giving more color and strength.

Tonawanda
AUTOMOTIVE EQUIPMENT

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

123 YZ 456

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

mnpqrstuvwxyz
PLATE 40

This is a modern script with interesting capital letters. The lower-case letters are similar to the lower case used on the preceding plate.
PLATE 41

A modern italic with many possible uses, especially in advertising headings, is shown here. The horizontal terminals on the lower-case letters can be extended if desired.
These are script capital letters.
PLATE 43

Where flourishes are desired, this alphabet is recommended. There is hardly any limit to what can be done with this style script, but please keep the flourishes graceful.

New Greeting Cards for any occasion

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ

1234567890

abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
This is ball-point script.
PLATE 45

In this ball-point italic, note the squared ends of the strokes. The illustrations below show how this is done, either with a pen or with Chinese white.
“Old English” is one of the most beautiful and yet the most abused of all the alphabets. Extreme care should be taken when drawing these letters, as they are easily distorted. The letters in this plate form a beautiful alphabet and may be used for a great many purposes — headings, covers, titles, greeting cards, diplomas, etc., and for illuminated work. The capital letters never should be used to letter entire words or sentences.
Celtic lettering and motifs taken from old tenth-century manuscripts are shown in this plate.
PLATE 48

The alphabets in this plate were carefully copied from old hand-cut type used in ecclesiastical books in the early part of the sixteenth century.

Letters having a dot below them could not be found in the manuscripts consulted and were designed by the authors to harmonize with the other letters.

These alphabets are beautifully adapted for mass lettering. However, when used for book titles or where only a few words are required, it would be well to see if the particular caps to be used are legible enough to insure easy reading.
PLATE 49

This is an alphabet of capital letters developed for its decorative beauty. For lower-case letters, use standard Old English. See Plate 46.

Staff Doctors Section

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
PLATE 50

These letters are drawn from an early hand-cut font of type. The capitals may be illuminated for beginning chapters or paragraphs. As is the case of most Old English and Gothic lettering, this alphabet is suitable for mass work. The alphabet lends itself especially well to ecclesiastical work.
PLATE 51

This variation of Cloister initials can be drawn with a flat-nib pen if a freer effect is desired.

[Alphabet and numbers]
PLATE 52

This severe German Text can be drawn with a wide flat-nib pen. It looks especially good in mass lettering.
This alphabet with a distinctive character can be drawn with a flat-nib pen if desired. It is good for mass lettering or engrossing.
PLATE 54

This black Initial Text alphabet may be combined with the lower-case letters on Plate 46.
PLATE 55

This is a German Uncial Gothic alphabet of both capital and lower-case letters. The capitals may be used for initials and illuminated letters. This alphabet is well suited for ecclesiastical, greeting-card, and manuscript work.

Art is a jealous thing; it requires the whole and entire man.

Michael Angelo.
PLATE 56

These are decorative Cloister initials. Note that each line of letters has a different motif — flowers, animals, vegetables, etc. This idea also can be used with different styles of lettering.
PLATE 57

This combination Text alphabet is made with flat-nib and fine lettering pens.
PLATE 58

This alphabet is based on the letters of a modern English missal. It is a readable and graceful letter, well adapted for ecclesiastical or greeting-card work.
PLATE 59

This alphabet is derived from a hand-cut type used by Melchior Lotther of Leipzig in 1536. It is recommended for ecclesiastical work in which mass lettering is necessary. Very few, if any, liberties should be taken with these letters.

ABCD

EFGH

ILJMN

OPQR

STUV

WXYZ

123456789

abcdefghilmn

opqrstuvw

xyz - fghst
PLATE 60

A rather ornate Text alphabet is shown here. Note that the flourish on the upper left of each capital letter is practically the same, giving this alphabet an interesting character.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
HIJKLMNOPQRSTUVW
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz
nopqrstuvwxyz

1234567890
PLATE 61

This alphabet is particularly adapted to stonemasons and wood carvers. The curves have been straightened wherever practicable in order to simplify cutting.
PLATE 62

This ornamental alphabet is very effective when used for book titles, initial letters, etc. Liberties may be taken with these letters to simplify or to elaborate them.

ABCDEF

GHIJK

LMN

OPQRS

TUV

WXYZ
PLATE 63

This is a modern flat-nib script.

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

Flat-nib Y Z Script

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
This is a modern flat-nib Text.
PLATE 65

This alphabet reflects the gingerbread architecture and type of the gay 90's. It is very effective when filled in with color.
PLATE 66
This is another old-style alphabet of the gay 90's period.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
IJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

123456789

The Gay Nineties
PLATE 67

These ornamental Initial letters were very much in vogue about fifty years ago. In this plate, six different treatments of the same motif were used.
This alphabet was created by a need for an alphabet with a Persian feeling.
This rustic alphabet will come in handy for camp or outdoor advertising. While cord holds these letters together, nails could be used instead.
PLATE 70

Here again is an alphabet to fit a definite need. Six different treatments of the beads are shown. The authors got bleary eyed drawing this but it was lots of fun.
PLATE 71

The authors were at a loss to give this alphabet a name except that it is different. It was made with a ball-point pen.
PLATE 72

It probably would be easier to make this alphabet out of strips of metal but it will come in handy some time. The shading was done with an airbrush.
PLATE 73
This effect was achieved with crayon on a rough antique paper.
PLATE 74

This is an unusual treatment of an alphabet where color is desired.
PLATE 75

This is a suggested method of treating not only this but most any lettering to get an unusual effect. It is done with Chinese white after lettering has been completed.
PLATE 76

This is an interesting alphabet that can be drawn with a ruling pen, or, if more freedom is desired, it can be drawn freehand.
PLATE 77
A strong alphabet of capital letters suitable for headings, posters, etc., is shown here.
PLATE 78
This is a good poster letter where strength is desired.
PLATE 79
This is shadow lettering for an interesting effect.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
1234567890
PLATE 80

This jigsaw alphabet is suitable for headings and posters. In fact, this type of lettering can be cut out of plywood and mounted on a panel to make an interesting sign.
PLATE 81

This diversion from the customary straight line is suitable for spots, headings, posters, etc.
PLATE 82

This alphabet can be made with either a flat-nib pen or a square-end lettering brush.
PLATE 83

This unusual poster letter also can be cut out of plywood with a jig saw to make interesting signs.
This is a good poster letter that adapts itself to a variety of treatments as shown in the center of the plate.
PLATE 85

This modern poster letter, being so very bold, should be used only for short names or captions.
PLATE 86

Serifs are the bugaboo of many an artist. For that reason fourteen of the standard serifs used in Roman type lettering are shown on pages 177 and 179.
PLATE 87
This is the second plate of standard serifs.
PLATE 88

These three alphabets are the customary types used for mechanical drawing. An ordinary ball-point writing pen works best for this weight of letter, and a ball-point lettering pen for heavier lettering.
The apparently simple one-line Architectural alphabet provides almost unlimited opportunity for the expression of personality. Any one of the light modifications shown in the plate may be used with gratifying results. The letters are best adapted to architectural and mechanical work.
PLATE 90
This plate shows the direction and number of strokes generally used in drawing single-stroke alphabets.

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ
abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz

PLATE 91
This plate is self-explanatory.
PLATE 92

Architects, artists, and draftsmen frequently are called upon to lay out the lettering for inscriptions to be used on buildings, memorials, bronze tablets, and the like. For work of this kind, the geometrical analysis of the Roman alphabet will be found helpful. The letters analyzed have been modernized to some extent, but in the main, adherence to the fine Old Roman has been aimed at.

The individual letters may be drawn with pointed or squared serifs. This may be done by merely moving the centers from which the various radii are drawn as shown on the letters C and E.

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<td>II</td>
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<td>40</td>
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<td>50</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>XXIII</td>
<td>10000</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples:
- 28 = XX (20) VIII (8) written XXVIII
- 463 = CD (400) LX (60) III (3) written CDLXIII
- 1492 = M (1000) CD (400) XC (90) II (2) written MDXCII