

Twelve rules of legibility

Children sometimes find it helpful to have specific rules they can refer to when trying to establish neat handwriting.

1. Letters must be the correct height in relation to each other.
2. Letters that are meant to be closed must look closed.
3. Letters that are meant to be open must look open.
4. Straight strokes must look straight.
5. Curved strokes must look curved.
6. Parts of letters meant to be joined together must be joined, e.g. k not l
7. All parts of letters, such as loops and circles, must appear, also cross-bars and dots on i.
8. There should be a difference between over-curves and under-curves.
9. Letters must be spaced so that it is obvious where one letter ends and another begins.
10. Finish one letter before starting the next.
11. The joining strokes must be indicated, or enough space left, to show where one letter ends and the next begins.
12. The joining stroke must not distort a letter so that it looks like another or suggest an extra letter.

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