

12 Handwriting Characteristics

In forensic handwriting analysis, there are twelve characteristics to be considered when analyzing a handwriting match.

Line quality is the thickness, strength, and flow of the letters. Some factors are if the letters are flowing, shaky, or very thick.

Letter spacing is the amount of space put between letters. The letters could all be connected or spaced drastically.

Height, width, and size of the Letters is very self-explanatory; this simply analyzes the proportions of the handwriting. Is one letter unusually tall or short?

Pen Lifts and Separations is the way the person writes. Do they stop before writing a new letter, or do they connect the letters? People usually use the same pen lifts, and so a forgery may stand out if all the letters are separated when the real signature connects them.

Connecting Strokes is similar to pen lifts and separations. This analyzes whether or not the capital letters are connected to lowercase letters and if words are connected.

Beginning and Ending Strokes looks at how the writer begins and ends their words. Do they end with a curl, and on an upstroke or a downstroke?

Unusual Letter Formation takes note of any peculiar, unique capital or lowercase letters. Does the writer add any extra curls or loops where the average author would not?

Shading (Pen Pressure) analyzes where the writer presses their writing utensil down the most, either on the upstroke or the downstroke. Where the most pressure is applied is where the script is thickest.

Slant looks at which way the letters tend to slant, either to the left, right, or no slant at all. The most average slant is to the right.

Baseline Habits is where the writer tends to write. It could be above the line, below the line, or on the line.

Flourishments and Embellishments are large loops and swirls in handwriting. The most common flourishment is on letters such as lowercase "G", "J", and "F" - anything that involves a loop!

Diacritic Placement is the way the author crosses their t's and dots their j's and i's.