Graph-Paper Handwriting Drills for Spacing and Alignment

Rubric key

Qualitative rubric; no numeric inputs beyond those in the source.

All x-height letter bodies sit between baseline and midline; ascenders and descenders follow the chosen convention.

At least three of four gaps match the chosen spacing unit when counted in small squares.

The measured row span matches the planned span within one square, or the difference is explained by a measured letter width.

Letter style may vary; validity depends on placement and spacing, not on one universal shape.

The row advances only after the check is met; repeated failure is corrected by repeating the row.

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Complete worked example / separate answer key

A five-letter word uses one-square letter bodies and a one-square gap. The first letter starts at square 1. Where should the last letter start, and what is the planned row span?

Answer: Starts are at squares 1, 3, 5, 7, and 9. The planned span is five letter squares plus four gap squares, which equals nine squares from the first letter's left edge to the last letter's right edge.

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Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A four-letter word uses one-square letter bodies and a one-square gap. The first letter starts at square 2. List the start squares and compute the planned span.

Answer: Starts at 2, 4, 6, and 8. Planned span is four letter squares plus three gap squares, which equals seven squares.

Reason: Each start moves by letter width plus gap, so add two squares per letter. The span counts letter squares and gaps separately.

Check: Count the listed starts and verify the span by measuring from the first left edge to the last right edge; compare with seven squares.

Task 2

A row of six letters is planned with one-square bodies and one-square gaps. The measured span is twelve squares. By how many squares does it differ from the plan, and what is a likely cause?

Answer: The planned span is six plus five equals eleven squares. The measured span is twelve, so it is one square too wide; a likely cause is one gap being two squares instead of one.

Reason: Use n plus (n minus one) times the unit. Six letters and five gaps give eleven. A difference of one square points to a single gap error.

Check: Recount each gap in small squares and identify the gap that measures two squares; correct that gap and remeasure.

Task 3

During a trace row, two letter bodies cross above the midline and one crosses below the baseline. Using the rubric, is the row acceptable, and what should you do next?

Answer: The row is not acceptable because x-height bodies must stay between baseline and midline. Repeat the trace row, checking after every two letters and correcting the next letter rather than erasing repeatedly.

Reason: The rubric requires all x-height bodies in the zone; crossings indicate placement drift. Repeating the row isolates the error before advancing.

Check: After repeating, count crossings again; accept the row only when the count is zero for x-height bodies.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

You measure your paper and find that one spacing unit equals two small squares, and each letter body is two small squares wide. For a three-letter word starting at square 1, list the start squares and compute the planned span.

Answer: Starts at 1, 5, and 9. Planned span is three letter bodies of two squares each plus two gaps of two squares each, which equals ten squares.

Reason: Each step is letter width plus gap, so two plus two equals four squares per step. The span is three times two plus two times two, which equals ten.

Check: Measure from the first left edge to the last right edge and compare with ten squares; recount each gap as two squares.

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Worked example, Task 1, Task 2, Task 3, Task 4 / Answer sheet: start squares, planned spans, and check counts

Hypothetical example values from the source; all numeric inputs preserved.

Task	Start squares	Planned span (squares)	Check / rubric note
Worked example: five-letter word, one-square bodies and gaps, first start square 1	1, 3, 5, 7, 9	9	Five letter squares plus four gap squares equals nine squares.
Exercise 1: four-letter word, one-square bodies and gaps, first start square 2	2, 4, 6, 8	7	Four letter squares plus three gap squares equals seven squares.
Exercise 2: six letters, one-square bodies and gaps, measured span 12	—	11	Measured 12 is one square too wide; likely one gap is two squares instead of one.
Exercise 3: trace row with two bodies above midline and one below baseline	—	—	Not acceptable; x-height bodies must stay between baseline and midline. Repeat the trace row, checking after every two letters.
Exercise 4: three-letter word, two-square bodies and two-square gaps, first start square 1	1, 5, 9	10	Three bodies of two squares plus two gaps of two squares equals ten squares.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] All x-height letter bodies sit between baseline and midline; ascenders and descenders follow the chosen convention.
- [ ] At least three of four gaps match the chosen spacing unit when counted in small squares.
- [ ] The measured row span matches the planned span within one square, or the difference is explained by a measured letter width.
- [ ] Letter style may vary; validity depends on placement and spacing, not on one universal shape.
- [ ] The row advances only after the check is met; repeated failure is corrected by repeating the row.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?