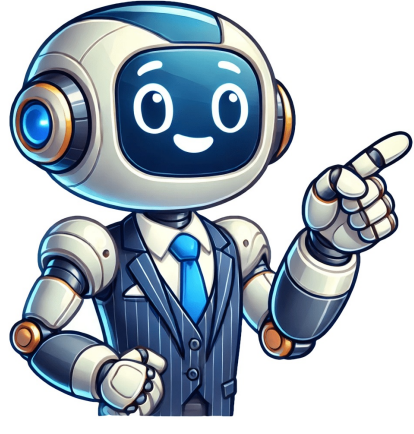


I'm human





Light boards can be a convenient tool for avoiding drawing guidelines on paper. However, when working with large, thick, or dark materials, light boards may not be feasible. This is where the Ames Lettering Guide excels! It allows you to create perfectly spaced parallel lines at any interval up to 2 inches. The guide has more functionality than we need as calligraphers, but for our purposes, we'll focus on using the evenly spaced holes in the disc. Here's a simplified anatomy of the tool. To use the Ames Lettering Guide, follow these steps: 1. Secure your paper to the work surface with low-tack artist tape. 2. Draw any necessary margins for your piece. 3. Place the T-square on top of your paper and rest it on the ledge. Your goal is to create evenly spaced lines for your guidelines. To set the guide, rotate the inner circle/disc to align the tick mark (Index Alignment Point) with the index marker number that corresponds to your desired line height. To keep things simple, I prefer lettering at x-heights easily divisible by 1/8th. Here are some common x-heights and their corresponding index markers: You can adjust the inner wheel of the guide to vary the distance between lines or skip holes for a wider spacing. Remember that you can also use this technique with two examples noted below. 1. Adjust the Ames Lettering Guide to your desired line width by lining up the corresponding index marker. 2. Place the Ames guide on the T-square, ensuring the first hole aligns with your margin line. 3. Insert a mechanical pencil in the 2nd hole down and gently drag the guide across the T-square to create your first line. 4. Continue drawing lines as before until you reach the last hole. 5. Move the T-square down so that the top hole in the guide aligns with the last line drawn, then use the second hole down to continue creating lines. Note: The above image is not to scale. Needed until you reach the end of the page, but don't worry, it's easy to grasp once you understand the basics. For those who crave more technical details, I'll provide links below that dive deeper into this tool's intricacies. Just keep in mind that these documents might not be optimized for calligraphy. I've recorded videos illustrating the steps above and will link to them as soon as they're uploaded. Keep an eye out for my return from Austria tomorrow; I promise to post them then. Additional resources for further understanding: · · · For fun, check out some large-scale projects where the Ames Lettering Guide saved me hours of layout work! To stay updated on future tutorials and avoid missing any helpful tips, feel free to sign up for my newsletter on the home page and I'll keep you in the loop. To get started with the guide: 1. Set your Ames guide to size "5". 2. Locate the 2/3 row (the bottom row of three rows) and look at the holes carefully. 3. Notice that some holes are linked by parentheses, which indicate sets of lines to use together. 4. Tape a piece of Bristol board to your worktable and place your T-square or ruler horizontally across it. 5. Place the Ames guide on top of the T-square or ruler, near the left side of the paper, and insert your mechanical pencil in the top hole of the 2/3 row (the one without parentheses). 6. Drag the Ames guide along the top edge of the paper with your pencil until you reach the other end, then move down to the next hole and repeat. 7. Continue using each hole in the 2/3 row, ending up with a set of parallel lines. Once you have these lines, draw the parentheses on your paper to link the corresponding sets of lines together. Take a look at the resulting lines: notice that the sets within parentheses are not all the same distance apart. This is because you'll often need different heights for upper- and lower-case letters. Practice lettering with a pencil first, then move on to nib pens like bowl-pointed nibs. Use the illustration below as a guide to help your letters fit properly on the lines. Remember that the Ames guide is designed to create space between lines of lettering, which can also be used for letters with descenders like p, g, or q. If you're using up all available space, you're not utilizing the guidelines effectively. Double-check your parentheses to ensure they match up according to the Ames guide. If three lines of lettering aren't sufficient, you can create more by utilizing a trick built into the guide itself. You'll notice that you've drawn ten lines with your Ames guide, but only nine are connected by parentheses - the remaining line is left blank for future use. With your paper still taped in place, adjust your T-square to position it below where it initially was (if using a ruler instead of a T-square, be cautious not to let the ruler deviate from its original parallel alignment). Position the Ames guide so that its top hole aligns with the bottom line you've already drawn. Hold down the T-square while running another set of lines utilizing the same diagonal row of holes used previously. To create all upper-case lettering, simply disregard the x-height line and follow these guidelines: You can ignore the x-height line to achieve classic comic book lettering style. Alternatively, use the center row of evenly spaced holes by using two lines for your row of lettering and leaving one blank between rows. Crafting word balloons involves two steps: First, ink your lettering and then quickly sketch an oval around it, ensuring there's sufficient space surrounding the words. Next, carefully ink the balloon in short, overlapping strokes (if using a template, always start by lettering first). To set up your drawing guide for comic book lettering, flip the Ames guide over and align it with the "slope" of italic characters. The H One Eighth Holes Draftsman tool is useful for creating grid lines, section lining, and dimension line spacing, but not ideal for comic book lettering. Set up your paper, t-square, or Mainline as shown, using a combination of Ratio and Scale settings to achieve the desired Ames setting. For standard comic lettering, set the Ames guide to a 3.5 Scale by rotating the disc to align with the Frame Index Mark between the "3" and "4" Disc Numbers. Use this setting for creating guide lines for three rows of letters, one hole at a time, skipping unmarked holes. The recommended ratio/scale setting has been two-thirds/3.5 since 1967 for mainstream American comics. However, some artists prefer using the Equal-Spaced Ratio for its balanced spacing and reduced leading, making it more suitable for younger readers with larger font sizes.

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