

# 14 States That Require Cursive Writing

# States that do (and don't) teach cursive writing



ALABAMA (3rd Grade)

ARIZONA (3rd Grade)

ARKANSAS (3rd Grade)

DELAWARE (3rd Grade)

FLORIDA (5th Grade)

GEORGIA (4th Grade)

INDIANA (Undefined-Elementary)

ILLINOIS (Undefined-Elementary)

KENTUCKY (Grade not defined)

LOUISIANA (3rd - 12th)

MARYLAND (5th Grade)

MASSACHUSETTS (Elementary)

MISSISSIPPI (3rd - 8th)

NORTH CAROLINA (5th Grade)

OHIO (Undefined)

OKLAHOMA (5th Grade)

SOUTH CAROLINA (5th Grade)

TENNESSEE (5th Grade)

TEXAS (3rd Grade)

VIRGINIA (5th Grade)

WEST VIRGINIA (4th Grade)



ALASKA

CALIFORNIA

COLORADO\*

CONNECTICUT

HAWAII

IDAHO

IOWA

KANSAS

MAINE

MICHIGAN

MINNESOTA\*\*

MISSOURI

MONTANA

NEBRASKA

NEVADA

NEW HAMPSHIRE

NEW JERSEY\*\*

NEW MEXICO

NEW YORK

NORTH DAKOTA

OREGON

PENNSYLVANIA

RHODE ISLAND

SOUTH DAKOTA

UTAH

VERMONT

WASHINGTON\*\*

WISCONSIN

WYOMING

\*Local school districts make the decision to teach cursive writing or not.

\*\*Legislation has been recently introduced and could soon be passed to require cursive.

**14 states that require cursive writing** have sparked considerable debate in education circles about the relevance of cursive handwriting in today's digital age. While many people may argue that cursive writing is becoming obsolete due to the rise of typing and digital communication, several states maintain its importance in their educational curricula. This article explores the states that require cursive writing, the reasons behind its inclusion in the curriculum, and the implications for students and educators.

## Understanding Cursive Writing's Importance

Cursive handwriting, a style in which letters are connected, has been a traditional form of writing for centuries. Advocates for cursive writing argue that it has several benefits:

- Cognitive Development: Writing in cursive can enhance fine motor skills and improve brain development.
- Literacy Skills: Learning cursive may aid in the development of reading skills, as it helps students recognize words more easily.
- Historical Significance: Cursive is essential for reading historical documents and understanding our cultural heritage.
- Personal Expression: Many people believe cursive allows for more personal and creative expression than print writing.

Despite the growing trend of digital communication, cursive writing remains an integral part of education in various states.

## States That Require Cursive Writing

As of now, 14 states have mandated the teaching of cursive writing in their educational systems. Below is a list of these states, along with details regarding their policies.

### 1. Alabama

In Alabama, cursive writing is a necessary component of the curriculum. The state law mandates that cursive be taught from the second grade onwards. The goal is to ensure that students can write in cursive by the end of third grade.

### 2. Arkansas

Arkansas has also implemented a requirement for cursive writing. The state's educational guidelines emphasize that cursive should be taught from grades K-5, ensuring that students can read and write in cursive by the end of fifth grade.

### **3. California**

California encourages the teaching of cursive writing but does not mandate it. However, many school districts have chosen to include cursive handwriting in their curriculum, particularly in elementary schools.

### **4. Florida**

In Florida, cursive writing is a required part of the curriculum. The state's educational standards stipulate that students must receive instruction in cursive handwriting from grades K-5, with the expectation that they will master it by the end of third grade.

### **5. Georgia**

Georgia has adopted a policy that mandates cursive writing instruction in elementary schools. The state aims for students to learn cursive by the end of third grade, allowing them to develop their personal writing style.

### **6. Indiana**

Indiana law requires that cursive writing be taught in schools. The state's educational standards specify that students must be proficient in cursive by the end of third grade.

### **7. Kentucky**

Kentucky mandates cursive writing instruction as part of its academic standards. The requirement states that students should learn cursive writing in elementary school, with an emphasis on developing legible handwriting.

### **8. Louisiana**

Louisiana has made cursive writing a requirement in its educational system. The state's curriculum guidelines ensure that students learn cursive from grades K-3, focusing on both reading and writing in cursive.

### **9. Mississippi**

Mississippi has a strong emphasis on cursive writing, requiring instruction from the first grade onward. The state has recognized cursive as an essential skill for students, promoting its use throughout

elementary education.

## **10. North Carolina**

North Carolina has included cursive writing in its standards for elementary education. Schools are encouraged to teach cursive in grades K-5, ensuring that students acquire this skill by the end of their fifth-grade year.

## **11. South Carolina**

South Carolina mandates cursive writing as part of its educational curriculum. The state requires that cursive instruction begins in the second grade, with the expectation that students will be proficient by the end of third grade.

## **12. Tennessee**

In Tennessee, cursive writing is a required component of the curriculum. The state emphasizes the importance of cursive and mandates that students should learn it by the end of third grade.

## **13. Texas**

Texas has included cursive writing as part of its educational standards, requiring that students learn cursive in elementary school. The state recognizes the importance of handwriting for personal expression and literacy development.

## **14. Virginia**

Virginia mandates cursive writing instruction in its elementary schools. The state's guidelines specify that students should learn cursive by the end of the third grade, promoting its importance in communication.

## **Reasons for Mandating Cursive Writing**

The decision to require cursive writing in these states stems from various factors, including:

- Cognitive Benefits: Research has shown that handwriting, particularly in cursive, activates different parts of the brain than typing does. This can lead to improved memory retention and understanding.
- Cultural Literacy: Understanding cursive writing is essential for reading historical documents, letters, and other materials that are typically not printed in a modern font.

- Skill Development: Cursive writing aids in developing fine motor skills, which are crucial for various day-to-day tasks.
- Legal Documents: Cursive writing is still widely used in legal documents and personal signatures, making it an important skill for students to learn.

## Challenges and Criticisms

While many states continue to advocate for cursive writing education, there are notable challenges and criticisms surrounding the practice:

- Digital Age: Critics argue that the rise of technology makes cursive writing less relevant, as typing has become the primary form of communication.
- Curriculum Overload: Some educators feel that the emphasis on cursive writing takes valuable time away from other essential subjects, such as math and science.
- Varying Standards: The inconsistency in cursive writing requirements across states can lead to disparities in student skills and knowledge.

## Conclusion

The 14 states that require cursive writing highlight the ongoing importance of this skill in the education system. While the debate over its relevance in a digital world continues, these states recognize the cognitive, historical, and personal benefits of cursive handwriting. As educators and policymakers navigate the complexities of modern education, cursive writing remains a significant topic of discussion, underscoring the need for a balanced approach to teaching both traditional and contemporary skills. The future of cursive writing in education will depend on the evolving needs of students and society, as well as the ability to adapt while preserving valuable skills from the past.

## Frequently Asked Questions

### **Which 14 states currently require cursive writing to be taught in schools?**

The 14 states that require cursive writing to be taught include Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Louisiana, Missouri, Nebraska, North Carolina, South Carolina, Texas, Utah, and Virginia.

### **What are the main reasons for states requiring cursive writing in schools?**

States require cursive writing to preserve a traditional skill, improve fine motor skills, enhance cognitive development, and ensure students can read historical documents.

## How has the teaching of cursive writing changed in recent years?

In recent years, many schools have reduced or eliminated cursive writing from their curriculums due to the increasing focus on digital literacy and standardized testing.

## What grade levels do states typically introduce cursive writing?

Cursive writing is generally introduced in elementary school, often starting in the second or third grade, depending on the state's educational standards.

## Are there any notable benefits of learning cursive writing?

Yes, benefits include improved handwriting, better retention of information, and the ability to write quickly and fluently, which can be helpful in various academic and professional settings.

## What challenges do teachers face when implementing cursive writing in the classroom?

Teachers often face challenges such as limited instructional time, lack of resources, and varying levels of student interest and ability in learning cursive writing.

## How do parents and educators feel about the requirement of cursive writing in schools?

Opinions vary; some parents and educators believe cursive is a valuable skill that should be preserved, while others argue that it is less relevant in a digital age and should not take priority over other subjects.

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