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Writing and Drawing

This chapter teaches you how best to write and draw on the MessagePad 2100. There are several methods and tools you can use to enhance recognition, correct mistakes, and manipulate text and drawings. Go through the chapter to find the best tools for your needs.

If you want to go through a brief tutorial about writing, you can use the Handwriting Instructor. To access this, tap Extras  to open the Extras Drawer, tap the folder tab and in the list that appears, tap Setup. Then tap HW Instructor .

About recognition

This section offers a general description of handwriting recognition used in the MessagePad and discusses some of the factors that may affect how well it recognizes your handwriting.

When you write on your MessagePad, you write in normal printed or cursive characters, as well as numbers, punctuation, and gestures. Often you write English words, but not always.

The MessagePad tries to detect when you are writing English words, abbreviations, and common expressions. It uses a large dictionary to aid in recognizing these things quickly and accurately. When you write things that are neither simple numbers nor English words (such as initials, dates, telephone numbers, file names, or serial numbers) your MessagePad tries to match the characters you write to the common patterns of these entries. If no such pattern can be discerned, your MessagePad does its best to recognize the characters individually.

Generally speaking, your MessagePad is somewhat better at recognizing poorly formed characters if they are part of English words (or other items that are in the MessagePad's dictionary). When you're writing things such as license plate numbers, you'll find that extra care in forming your characters neatly contributes to improved accuracy.

Your MessagePad distinguishes characters and words in part by detecting pauses in your writing. It's a good idea when writing to complete each character without pausing too long before it's finished, and similarly to complete your words without pausing in the middle.

Your MessagePad is also sensitive to the way your writing is spaced. In normal writing or text there is a clear difference between the amount of space separating letters within words and the amount of space separating words themselves. The more distinct and consistent you make this difference when you write on your MessagePad, the better recognition tends to be. A control in the Handwriting Recognition slip allows you to let your MessagePad know whether your writing tends to be widely spaced or more tightly crowded. Experimenting with this setting may result in improved accuracy.

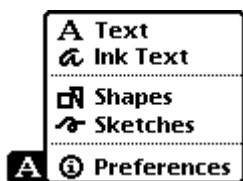
Generally, the MessagePad tends to deliver the best overall recognition accuracy if you select Printing as your handwriting style. This means you must print using separate letters only, taking care to lift the pen between characters when you write.

If you write in cursive style (always joining letters) or mix cursive and printed styles, you should select Cursive as your handwriting style. Both styles are then recognized, even when mixed, although overall accuracy may decrease somewhat.

Selecting a handwriting recognition setting

In some areas of the MessagePad, such as the Notepad, you can choose a handwriting recognition setting to help your MessagePad interpret what you are writing or drawing.


The Recognition button on the bottom left of the MessagePad screen controls the way the MessagePad recognizes your writing and drawing. Tap the Recognition button and a pop-up list appears.





Tap your choice and the picture in the Recognition button changes to the new setting.

Choose	Purpose
A Text	To have your words and numbers recognized as text.
a Ink Text	To take notes quickly and keep your handwriting as is in electronic ink.
▣ Shapes	To draw and have the MessagePad smooth curves and straighten lines.
~ Sketches	To keep your drawings as is; the MessagePad does not smooth curves or straighten lines.
i Preferences	To modify preferences for the way your MessagePad recognizes and works with text, draws shapes, and displays electronic ink.

Setting your handwriting recognition preferences

Using the Recognition button , you can also set the way your MessagePad recognizes your handwriting.

To set your handwriting preferences:

- 1 Tap the Recognition button  and, in the list that appears, tap Preferences.
- 2 In the slip that appears, select the appropriate settings, then tap  to close the slip. The settings are discussed in further detail in the following pages.



Handwriting styles: Printing and Cursive

The MessagePad uses different methods to recognize printing and cursive writing. It is important that you choose one style and write that way consistently. When you change your writing style, you must also change the style setting in the Handwriting Recognition slip.

The highest overall recognition accuracy is achieved when you print, using separate, unconnected letters.

- Select Printing as your style when you often write information that is not whole words or common abbreviations. If you select Printing, you must lift the pen between characters so that characters are separated and easily distinguishable from one another.

This is printing

- Select Cursive as your style when you join some or all of the characters you write.

This is cursive

Word spacing

When you write, your MessagePad must decide which groups of pen strokes to interpret as words, along with what words these strokes represent.

You can improve your MessagePad's ability to distinguish words by writing your characters somewhat close together and your words somewhat far apart. Use the slider in the Handwriting Recognition slip to set the distance between words. This helps your MessagePad recognize words more easily.

Tips on word spacing

- If your MessagePad tends to run your words or expressions together, try writing them farther apart.
- If your MessagePad tends to break apart your words or expressions, try writing the characters closer together.
- If you want to deliberately combine two separate words into one, write the second word extremely close to the first word.
- If you want to separate a string of characters into two words, be sure to leave extra space between the two expressions.

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