

Ink loading a Calligraphy Fountain Pen

An extracted web help page from <https://ornasonova.com/StickyCalligraphy.php>

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Calligraphy fountain pens, besides their portability, are an easy to use tool, ideal for beginners learning calligraphy letter forms.

Choosing a Calligraphy Fountain Pen

If you have not already bought yours, then Calligraphy fountain pens come from a variety of mostly well known brands and nib sizes, with coloured ink cartridges.

Here are a few considerations in a short list:

- # As with calligraphy dip pens and nibs, the choice of what type of nib tip to use depends on what lettering styles you wish to write, and how big or small?
- # Are refill ink cartridges easy to find in your area?
- # As fountain inks are available in a bottle, does the pen have an ink converter cartridge, for bottle ink loading?
- # Do you plan to use only black ink, or a range of coloured inks?
- # Do you require a large range of nib sizes, for letters, cards and picture framed poems, etc, or will just the smaller nib sizes do?
- # Would you be looking to purchase pens individually or in a set?
- # Are replacement nibs easy to find? Can you replace a damaged nib?

Loading a Calligraphy Fountain Pen

Loading an ink cartridge into a calligraphy fountain pen is fairly simple.

Start by unscrewing the barrel from the nib unit.

Ink Cartridges vary in design, and not every cartridge fits every brand of pen, so you must be sure to get the correct ones from your supplier. Here we show the European cartridge, it will fit a large number of pens, like: Manuscript, Rotring, Osmiroid, Platignum, Reform and others. Take a close look in the picture, if your cartridges are the same, then you most likely have the European size cartridge.



Standard European size: approximately 38 x 7mm or 1.5 x 1/4 inches.

Other brands like: Sheaffer, Waterman, Monte Blanc, Parker, Lamy etc, have their own unique size cartridges. The one pictured (Generic European size) has a different top and bottom, the small round turret end, is inserted into the nib unit:



Osmiroid Fountain Cap & Barrel



Inserted Converter



Extracted Converter



Inserted Cartridge



Extracted Cartridge

Osmiroid Calligraphy Fountain Pen Disassembled

If you examine the small round end of this cartridge, there is a little seal inside that "pops" when pushed into the nib unit, this allows the ink to flow.

Pushing the seal end of the cartridge gently but firmly into the nib unit - you will be able to "feel" when the cartridge has attached to the unit, by its pop or click noise.

Reassemble the pen by screwing the barrel back on, and you are ready to go.

Ink Converter (re-fillable) loading

Besides loading your pen from the ink cartridges, if you have an **INK CONVERTER**, you can use bottled fountain ink, instead of cartridges. Filling the converter varies with each manufacturer, but as an example, our sample pictured converter (above) uses a push/pull (plunger) mechanism to fill the ink. These are available from our webpage at: <https://ornasonova.com/Osmiroid.php>

First, push the converter until the plunger is down, inside the converters tube. Fit this onto your nib unit, in the same way as an ink cartridge (also fully described above). Dip all of the nibs tip into a bottle of ink, and holding it there, pull-up the plunger, until the converter is full of sucked in ink. Re-do this a second time (push-down / pull-up) to be sure the cartridge fills to the maximum. You will need a paper tissue to soak away excess ink around the barrels tip, or you are in for an inky set of fingers.

Care and Cleaning of your Calligraphy Fountain Pen with Ink Cartridges or a Converter.

Although calligraphy fountain pens are more convenient and easy to carry around than bottles of ink, they do require basic care and attention. Store the pen with the cap on & with the nib pointing upward if there is ink in it. The same goes for when travelling about, use the pens clip to hold it upright in a pocket or bag, as the preferred way to stop any possible ink flowing out.

Troubleshooting a calligraphy fountain pen.

How to clean a pen

The pens ink will tend to dry and clog up the pen if left for a long while unused. Its best to then remove the ink cartridge or converter and clean the nib assembly.

Taking off the cap and barrel from the nib unit, remove the ink cartridge, run the nib unit under water until the water runs clear.

To get rid of excess water that might still be in the nib unit, wrap the unit loosely with a few paper towels and blow gently into the top of the nib assembly. If you have an ink converter, attach it to the nib unit and use the refill mechanism to force out any remaining water, by using the similar method as when loading ink with the converter, first empty any ink in the converter back into the bottle, re-fit the converter onto the nib unit, then put the nib tip in a glass of water and push/pull the plunger, this will flush out ink in the pens unit (neck area) and clean the converter as well. Dry with a paper towel or soft cloth.

An opened but part used ink cartridge can be saved for later use. Calligraphers are known to use a smallish ball of Blu Tack to block the hole in the end, like it was a cork.

Calligraphy fountain pens are mainly plastic with metal nibs - never use any pen cleaners unless recommended by the manufacturer, as some chemicals may damage the pen.

When ink won't flow after installing a new cartridge - Unscrew the barrel, hold the pen in a vertical position with the nib pointing down, and with some scrap paper underneath, gently squeeze the ink cartridge. Shaking the pen gently downward will also help the ink to flow. Then try a few pen strokes on your scrap paper, to get the ink moving for writing.

When ink won't flow after loading ink from a bottle - the method is similar to the above paragraph for ink cartridges, except that you would gently and under control push the plunger down a little and pull it back again. This simply floods a little ink through the pens tight neck area. Light shaking and a trial of the pen on scrap paper will show you if it is OK and ready to write yet. If necessary, continue with this process until written words are happening.

Ink flows too fast or blots - you most likely will need a slightly thicker fountain ink to succeed with writing, choose another brand of cartridge or bottled fountain ink. Fountain Ink brands do vary in their consistency. However, if the ink is found to be OK, check if the nibs tines are split or damaged, you may then have to replace it, as the nib cannot be adjusted/corrected from this state of disrepair.

To develop your calligraphic talents further

Although professionals prefer to use a calligraphy dip pen, it may be difficult to handle for some beginners. But as many benefits are found from dip pen use, it is advisable to get used to a dip pen as soon as possible.

Besides the much larger range of nib sizes and nib tip types, and there are quite literally hundreds of types.

Ink handling is also a major reason to go back to the old dip method of doing your work. This would allow the use of thick ink, medium ink, thin ink and even blended inks for your finished art works. Plus dip nibs allow any colour of ink and hundreds are available. Whereas the range of the thinner fountain inks is normally limited to less than about 20 shades.

You can certainly further your direction in this art/craft, as you can see, here is true freedom of expression for a creative calligrapher.

Extensive brand ranges of dip pens are available on our website at: <https://ornasonova.com/>