

Dysgraphia Facts and Tips

Definition: Dysgraphia is a learning disability that impacts writing skills like handwriting, typing, and spelling. Trouble expressing oneself in writing is not part of dysgraphia, but when someone has to focus so much on transcription, it can get in the way of thinking about ideas and how to convey them.

What might your symptoms of dysgraphia be?

- You may have messy or illegible handwriting, including forming letters, spacing letters, writing in a straight line, and making letter the right size
- You may erase frequently
- Your handwriting may be inconsistent
- You may have poor spelling, including unfinished words or missing words or letters
- You may have noticed unusual wrist, body, or paper position while writing
- You may have trouble reading maps
- You may avoid handwriting whenever possible; prefer digital
- You may dislike even texting
- When using spell-check, you may have difficulty picking out the correct word from other similar words
- You may mix lowercase and uppercase letters, seemingly randomly
- You may have trouble with typing
- You may be overly reliant on simple sentence structures
- You may have difficulty with syntax and grammar
- You may have difficulty thinking and writing at the same time
- You may prefer to give or get directions orally
- You may have trouble “getting to the point” in written communication; you may often ramble or repeat yourself
- You may be able to explain yourself clearly when speaking, but not when writing

How to be successful in college:

- ✓ Ask your instructor to use a computer for in-class writing (you may have an accommodation for this)
- ✓ Use graphic/visual organizers when planning work
- ✓ Write multiple drafts, allowing time for revision and editing
- ✓ Use spell-check or grammar-check, but remember that you need to be the ultimate checker
- ✓ Ask your instructor for oral or other non-written exams whenever possible (you may have an accommodation for this)
- ✓ Ask for additional time for writing tasks (you may have an accommodation for this)

Technology (sometimes available through DSP):

- Text-to-speech tools: Kurzweil
- Recording device: Sonocent