























The Dickens Code (DC) Alphabet







The **DC Alphabet** draws upon the actual symbols that Charles Dickens used in his shorthand writing. Sometimes these differ from the shape of the symbols outlined in the shorthand manual that Dickens learnt from: Thomas Gurney's [Brachygraphy](#).

This alphabet is based upon Charles Dickens's shorthand notebook and his notes on teaching shorthand. The symbols are drawn from [Dickens's Manuscript Shorthand Book](#) (English MS 725), in the collections of the John Rylands Library at the University of Manchester.

As you use the DC Alphabet, look out for the  symbol in the 'Notes' column – these red flags indicate a particularly tricky symbol.

Letter	Symbol	Symbol also stands for the word	Notes
A		I (personal pronoun)	 Identical to the symbol for letter <s> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol for letter <a> only used at the start of a word • Written from the bottom up so next symbol in word starts from the top
B		be	
C		see, sea	 Identical to the symbol for letter <g>
D		did	
E		he	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol for letter <e> only used at the start of a word • Note the hook (bottom left of symbol)

F		if	
G		good, God	☞ identical to symbol for letter <c>
H	NO SYMBOL		☞ symbol for letter <h> is dropped, e.g. 'hesitates' = <estts>, 'he' = <e>
I		high	☞ Identical to symbol for letter <j> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol for letter <i> only used at the start of a word • Not used for personal pronoun 'I'
J		Jesus	☞ Identical to symbol for letter <i>
K			☞ identical to symbol for letter <c>
L		lord	
M		am, him	
N		in	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Horizontal line, usually short
O		on, how, own, one	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Symbol for letter only used at the start of a word
P		people	
Q		question	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Roman letter is used
R	 (start)  (middle)	are, her	☞ Symbol for the letter <r> at the start of a word is different from the one used in the middle of a word (a short uptick)
S		is, his	☞ Identical to symbol for the letter <a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Only used at the beginning of a word • Written from the top down so the second symbol in the word starts from the bottom of this one

T		it	☞ This symbol should be a vertical line
U		you	• Symbol for letter only used at the beginning of a word
V			☞ Identical to symbol for <w>
W		which	☞ Identical to symbol for <v>
X		cross, Christ	
Y		why	
Z	NO SYMBOL		☞ There is no symbol for the letter <z> in the Manchester notebook; the Gurney manual uses the symbol for the letter <s> to represent the letter <z>