**Alphabetic Shorthand Systems**

Speedwriting

Various systems of rapid writing based on alphabetic print or longhand characters have been devised. [Speedwriting](http://www.speedwriting.co.uk/p2.htm), Stenoscript, Forkner, [Easyscript](http://www.easyscript.com/default.html), AlphaHand, Baine's Typed Shorthand, HySpeed Longhand, Abbreviatrix, Quickhand, and Carter Briefhand are examples. [Keyscript](http://www.freewebs.com/cassyjanek), a new system based on Pitman's, claims to be the fastest of the Alphabetic systems. Few if any new symbols need to be learned. Most systems consist of rules for abbreviating words together with memorized abbreviations. If the rules are consistently applied, they can be reversed to decode your notes. These systems have the advantage of working with both pen and paper, and with keyboards. Word processing software, such as Word, could possibly be set up to decode and expand words as you type which would allow you to speed type.  
  
**Rules usually call for dropping of most vowels, some words, and using semi-phonetic spelling**. An example of "Briefhand" might be:  
  
*"The Sierra Club sued the Forest Service to stop clear-cutting on the National Forests of Texas, and judge Robert Parker decided that clear-cutting "took" red-cockaded woodpeckers within the meaning of the Endangered Species Act."*  
  
Which might be abbreviated to:   
  
*Srr Clb sued FS to stp cc on NF's in Tx, v jdg R.P. dcd'd cc "took" RCWs undr ESA.*Shorthand systems based on alphabetic characters can always fall back on longhand where clarity is important or when you might forget what an abbreviation stands for, such as "RCWs" standing for "red-cockaded woodpeckers." The example above, unless transcribed soon, would likely become undecipherable.  
  
Still, given that many people are spending more time typing than writing by hand, these systems have their appeal. As modifications on longhand, they retain the shortcomings of multi-stroke symbols per letter and, not being phonetic, the vagaries of English orthography. They lack the elegance of the symbol systems, such as Pitman's and Gregg's, that at least avoid the mistake of building on the flawed foundation of longhand.