Mini-Lesson: Script Writing

As we mentioned during lesson 1, Hebrew has 2 writing systems:

Block is the print writing system, and is characterized by sharp angles.

Script is the handwriting system, and is characterized by round curves.

Each letter has a block variant, and a script variant (like English has a capital and small variant for each letter). In the main lessons we'll be learning the block versions of the letters as they are the ones you'll encounter reading and typing. However, every lesson with new letters will have a supplementary document explaining the script versions of its letters for those of you interested in handwriting. First, let's look at how to write the block letters by hand.

You can fill this table as well if you want to practice handwriting. For final N, notice it needs to go all the way underneath the line:

	מ	
	M	
	ם	
	Final M	
	נ	
	N	
	ו	
	Final N	
	ת	
	T	

How script letters came to be

Because script is meant to be easier to write, the script letters developed from the block letters in a way that makes writing easier – usually by reducing the number of strokes per letter (so you lift your hand off the page fewer times per letter). If we keep this in mind, it becomes easier to see how each letter turned into its script counterpart over time, with writing becoming sloppier and people trying to reduce the hassle of writing. For each of the 3 letters below, we'll show you an approximation of the process it went through so that you wouldn't have to memorize the script, but so that it will instead just make sense from knowing the block.

(This is another usage of the association network model – instead of memorizing the script separately, we're associating them with their block counterparts, which we associated with concepts you're already familiar with, to make remembering them easier).

Script		Block	Sound
ת	2 options rounder ←	ת	T
✓	Rounder, no "roof" ←	נ	N
/	Rounder, no "roof" ←	ו	
N	Mirrored to start at the right (better flow) ← Turns into 1 stroke ←	מ	M
ם	Turns into 1 stroke ← First stroke slowly turns rounder… ←	ם	

If you want to know how to write by hand, you may practice writing the cursive letters below. When there's more than one acceptable way to write the letter, all options are provided:

_____ ℵ	**א**
M	
_____ 𝓅 𝓅	**מ**
Final M	
_____ 𝓙 𝓙	**נ**
N	
_____ ⊦	**ן**
Final N	
_____ ℕ ℕ	**ת**
T	