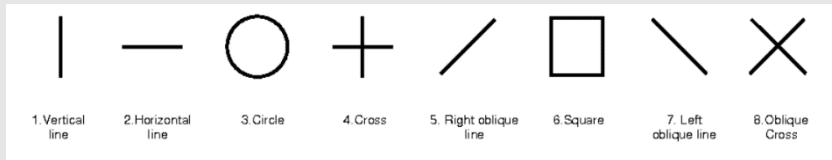
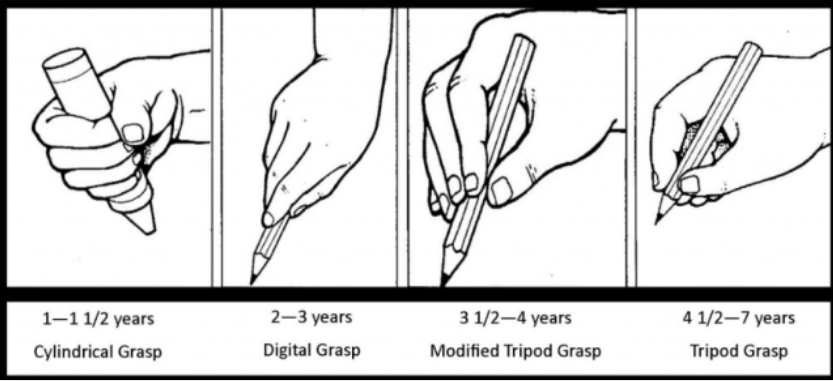
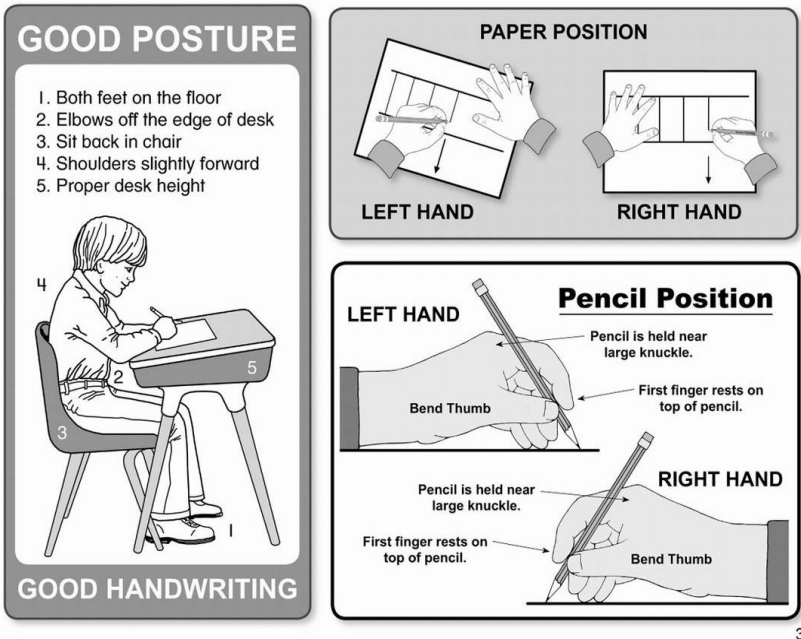


	Progression of Skills in English: Handwriting		Developed by with reference to DfE documents (including the national curriculum), EYFS Framework and Development Matters 2021				
Our Vision:							
Our English curriculum promotes language development which enables pupils to communicate effectively and to appreciate the richness, magic and power of the written word. It enables children to see language as a source of pleasure and enjoyment and use it to develop powers of imagination, creativity and inventiveness.							
Purpose	In this digital age, many question the importance or relevance of teaching children to write by hand or of stressing the importance of neat, legible writing. However, teaching children to write by hand seems to have some advantages that typing on a keyboard does not. A 2005 paper by researchers at Aix-Marseille University compared typing and writing in children aged three to five to see if there was a difference later in recognising the letters. Their evidence suggested that writing by hand helped the older ones recall the letters better. A study in 2012 went further, putting five-year-old children who had yet to learn to read and write through similar tests - writing, typing, or tracing letters. Then, they were shown images of the same letters and shapes while an MRI machine scanned their brains. In the children who wrote - but not in those who typed - an area of the brain used in reading activated. Researchers concluded that it's possible - but not proven - that the physical act of writing might help children learn to read. "The motor control is important," said Dr Karin James, one of the authors. "<i>Doing</i> things is important in setting up brain systems that are important for cognitive development." Later research from Dr James also suggests that learning joined letters by watching someone else write them - rather than doing it for yourself - does not provide the same benefit. The evidence so far suggests that writing by hand retains its benefits for memorisation long beyond early childhood development. A 2014 study from UCLA, titled The Pen Is Mightier Than the Keyboard, found exactly that. It studied laptop use among university students, and said it could be "impairing learning because their use results in shallower processing". (BBC article 2017) The physical act of writing also helps the individual to slow down and consider what they are writing, using a wider vocabulary, improved sentence structure and greater organisation of content. The act of ‘putting pen to paper’ and expressing feelings has long been recognised as important for mental wellbeing, offering therapeutic benefits. The aesthetics of good handwriting should also be valued and the resurgence in the interest in hand lettering, calligraphy and faux calligraphy is testament to this. There will always be children for whom using technology is of greater benefit and this should always be considered.						
Development	Handwriting is a complex skill to learn and starts well before a child is ready to pick up a pencil and make marks on paper. To develop good handwriting, you need: - good gross and fine motor skills – good whole body control and dexterity; - spatial awareness and motor memory – understanding of direction, position and movement; - visual and motor memory – to be able to recall the shape of different letters and how to form them; - the correct posture when sitting to write; - to know how to correctly hold a pencil; - to be able to control and manipulate the pencil; - to know how to position the paper on the table; - the ability to refine and improve letter formation, sizing and position; - to understand how to join the letters correctly to form words; - build the stamina to write legibly and at speed; - to develop different styles of writing for different purposes; - to be able to select, manipulate and control a range of writing implements for different purposes Each of these skills are learnt and developed in stages as a child grows. It is essential that correct support and guidance are given at each stage if the child is to write fluently and comfortably. Bad habits and incorrect formation are very difficult to correct once established.		Exercise books and paper resources - All lined exercise books in Year 1 – Year 6 to have 8mm lines. - Year 1 maths books have 10mm squares (first book only) and all other maths books are 7mm squares (dyslexia friendly exercise books have 10mm squares). - All lined exercise books have a margin. - All lined resources given to children will have 8mm lines (as seen in exercise books). Where appropriate, there will also be a margin. - yellow highlighted lines (master sheet to be used) to support children to correctly size letters in relation to one another - worksheets to have lines where appropriate (this is essential in KS1, especially for all handwriting and phonics activities) - for phonics activities, rather than giving children boxes to write each grapheme in, they should be given lines to write on, correctly orientating their letters within these lines ch i p rather than ch i p Presenting to children - Any time that handwriting and letter formation is being modelled to children, lines must be given to show the correct orientation of the letters (including a ‘top’ line and, where appropriate, a margin) - Any time that handwriting and letter formation is being modelled to children, writing must always be between two lines and never on the ‘top’ line - All handwriting on classroom walls and teaching boards must reflect the developmental stage that children are working at (printed, pre-cursive, cursive script) and be correctly joined (for continuous cursive), sized and orientated (in relation to any lines and other letters)				
Progression		Non-statutory Guidance		Left-handed Children		Knowledge for the Adult	
Year R:		Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently.		The following should be introduced in EYFS and secured in Year 1 (also see Appendix 6: Terminology)			
Development Matters 2021		The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil’s hand.		See Appendix 2: Left-handed Letter and Number Formation		Developmental stages:	
Children in reception will be learning to develop their small motor skills so that they can use [a pencil for writing] competently, safely and confidently.		Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided.				Skills for handwriting can be introduced from a very early stage. Children should be allowed to pick up the writing implement themselves and decide which hand they prefer.	
Develop the foundations of a handwriting style which is fast, accurate and efficient.		Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs.		At least ten per cent of the population is left-handed – a slightly higher proportion of these are males. There is no need for left-handed children to be disadvantaged when writing, if a few simple strategies are employed:		Only then should they be given help with the pencil hold (see sections on pencil grip and left-handed children). As children begin to discover their preferred hand for holding a pencil and once they are confidently using flowing movements, they can be introduced to smaller, more controlled activities.	
Form lower-case and capital letters correctly.		Once taught, children should be introduced to each element of the Fab Five for Reception – these are the expectations for every time they write:		Model letter formation, skywriting, etc. specifically for left-handed children, with your left hand.		Through these, you can reinforce left → right hand movements, moving from the top to the bottom of a letter and reinforcing the anti-clockwise movement, etc. Some children’s previous experience of print forms in languages other than English may have prepared them for the movements required to write English letters. Other children will need to learn there are differences between the directionality of English and that of other print systems.	
Physical Development ELG: Fine Motor Skills		pencil grip		Make sure that left-handed children sit on the left of right-handed children, otherwise their writing arms will clash.		Gateway to Writing – Developing Handwriting.	
Children at the expected level of development will hold a pencil effectively in preparation for fluent writing – using the tripod grip in almost all cases;		spelling		Put a mark at the left side of the page to indicate where writing begins, as some left-handed children mirror-write from the right and stabilise the paper with their right hand.		Children need to be able to make shapes and patterns before forming letters. All children need to go through the pre-writing stage to help them learn to write.	
Literacy ELG: Writing		space between words		Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work to the right so they can see what they have written.			
Correctly formed;		punctuation		Left-handed children usually need to have the paper slightly to the left of the centre of their body and should be encouraged to tilt their work to the right so they can see what they have written.		Diagram: The first 8 figures of the Developmental Test of Visual Motor Integration (VTMI) Beery (1997)	
Through the writing curriculum children are encouraged to mark-make, children are encouraged to make marks that go from left to right and right to left, top to bottom and bottom to top, diagonally, clockwise and anti-clockwise.		the cat		Experiment with seat height – some left-handed children may need a higher seat to view their work clearly and to prevent the elbow locking into their side as they work across the paper.		Getting ready exercises:	
Then, children are taught:				To avoid smudging their work:		Thumb opposition: This refers to the ability to turn and rotate the thumb so that it can touch each fingertip of the same hand. This allows us to grasp objects of various sizes and operate tools. (spread palm thumb to finger, both hands together)	
the pre-writing strokes and correct posture, pencil grip (using the Pencil Grip Rhyme for Young Children), paper position and pressure				left-handed children should be encouraged to position their fingers about 1.5cm away from the end of their writing implement		Finger Isolation: This refers to the ability to move each finger one at a time. Infants move all fingers together in unison. As they develop, children learn to move the fingers individually and this ability is essential in the development of fine motor skills, contributing to the development of an efficient pencil grip. (e.g. Tommy Thumb song)	
				the pencil should sit in the ‘V’ between thumb and forefinger, sitting parallel to the thumb			
				the wrist should be straight			

to form lower case and upper case letters and digits 0-9 correctly focusing on shape, space, size and sitting		Writing from left to right is more difficult for left-handed children. They should, therefore, be given more attention in the classroom to ensure that they do not learn bad habits of position, posture and pencil grip which will hinder the development of a fast, fluent and legible hand.	‘Pip and dip’ Joints (knuckles): The dip joints (those closest to your fingernails) need to be able to manipulate well to support a tripod grip. (activities that are malleable and give high resistance, e.g. matching by attaching clothes pegs) Bilateral Coordination: This is the ability to use both sides of the body at the same time in a controlled and organised manner. This can mean using both sides to do the same thing, for example, when pushing a rolling pin, using alternating movements, for example, when walking, or using different movements on each side, for example, when cutting with scissors while holding and controlling the paper with the other hand. Visual motor integration: This is the coordination of visual perceptual abilities and fine motor control. It is a skill that allows us to use our eyes and our hands in a coordinated and efficient way. Pencil grip: Pencil grip isn’t just about being able to hold a pencil in the correct way for writing, it sets up posture, core strength and muscle tone. An incorrect pencil grip can lead to learning difficulties, pain and other issues.				
Year 1:. - sit correctly at a table, holding a pencil comfortably and correctly - begin to form lower-case letters in the correct direction, starting and finishing in the right place - form capital letters - form digits 0-9 - understand which letters belong to which handwriting ‘families’ (i.e. letters that are formed in similar ways) and to practise these.	Handwriting requires frequent and discrete, direct teaching. Pupils should be able to form letters correctly and confidently. The size of the writing implement (pencil, pen) should not be too large for a young pupil’s hand. Whatever is being used should allow the pupil to hold it easily and correctly so that bad habits are avoided. Left-handed pupils should receive specific teaching to meet their needs. Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely and automatically with the correct orientation. Once taught, children should be introduced to each element of the Fab Five for Year 1 – these are the expectations for every time they write: - letter formation - spelling - space between words - punctuation - check for sense	Languages that are written left-to-right, like English, are more difficult to write with the left hand -- a right-hander writes away from his body and pulls the pencil, while a left-hander must write toward his body and push the pencil. If a left-handed child is only permitted to write with the left hand but not <i>taught</i> how to write, the child may develop a needlessly uncomfortable, inefficient, slow, messy way of writing that will be a lifelong hardship. Therefore, it is especially important for parents and teachers to understand how to teach left-handed children to write correctly. The most important factors are: the position of the writing paper, the position of the arm and wrist, and the grip on the writing instrument. (The Handedness Research Institute) There is a useful video here- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aVJLS-xskRo Mirror writing (writing in reverse) is very common in young left handed children whose natural inclination is to start at the right of a page and move the pencil to the left. This is perfectly natural and children should be gently guided with reminders (perhaps a star in the left hand margin) to show them where to start.	 <table><tr><td>Palmer supinate</td><td>Digital pronate</td><td>Static tripod</td><td>Dynamic tripod</td></tr></table> Diagram: Erhardt, 1994 Make sure they sit in a good position for writing – on a chair, feet flat on the floor, forearms rested comfortable on the table. Children must have a suitable-sized table and chair. When children are practising letter formation, adult observation and guidance are essential to limit poor habits developing. Correct Letter formation – lower case letters, capitals letters and numbers: See Appendix 1: Right-handed Letter and Number Formation A sun can be added to the corner of the page to help children with the orientation of letters.	Palmer supinate	Digital pronate	Static tripod	Dynamic tripod
Palmer supinate	Digital pronate	Static tripod	Dynamic tripod				
		Right handed children should not sit on the left of a left handed child. Right handers are dominant and will encroach on a left hander’s space. This might cause a ‘hooked hand’ as the left hander curves their hand round to create space to write. Poor pencil grip can affect the quality of a child’s handwriting and put unnecessary strain on the hand muscles and ligaments. This will cause the hand to tense or cramp and tire quickly, making writing hard work. Many left-handed writers form a hooked grip that not only puts extra strain on the hand muscles and ligaments but the wrist and shoulder areas of the body. Ensure children apply the correct pressure so that writing is neither faint nor too dark.	 Teaching tripod pencil grip: Letter families: See Appendix 3: Letter Families – correct orientation and letter size For simplicity, the letters of the alphabet can be sorted into four main movement groups. The advantage of aligning letters with a key letter (l, r, c) is to help children to remember the starting point and subsequent movement of the letter. This is particularly effective in discriminating b from d. The four groups are: - down and off in another direction, exemplified by the letter l (long ladder): letters i, j, l, t, u, y - down and retrace upwards, exemplified by the letter r (one-armed robot): letters b, h, k, m, n, p, r; numbers 2, 3, 5 follow a clockwise direction - anti-clockwise round, exemplified by the letter c (curly caterpillar) letters: a, c, d, e, g, o, q, f, s; numbers: 0, 6, 8, 9 - zigzag letters: letters: v, w, x, z; numbers: 1, 4, 7. Possible problems: - An overtight grip – do not use shiny pencils				

The Tripod Pencil Grip is considered the most appropriate grip for handwriting, for both right and left-handed writers. This is because it allows the fingers and wrist to move freely without putting strain on the hand, helping to improve correct letter formation ability and making handwriting a more comfortable experience. Correct pencil grip can be taught using the [Pencil Grip Rhyme for Young Children](#). For older children, the [Drawbridge Flip](#) can be used.

It is a good idea to introduce the tripod pencil grip to children when they begin to learn to write their own name, usually around 5 years of age

There are key developmental stages for how a child develops a “tripod grip”. They are:

- 1 – 1 ½ years:** a child learns to build shoulder and core strength and the movement for drawing starts at the shoulder
 - 2 – 3 years:** a child learns to use their forearm muscles and movement starts at the elbow
 - 3 ½ – 4 years:** a child learns to use their wrist and some of the smaller hand muscles and movement starts at the wrist
- Ensure children apply the correct pressure so that writing is neither faint nor too dark.

Posture: Developing a good posture is as important as developing a good pencil grip. Over the years, children spend a great deal of time writing, and sitting in an awkward position can cause headaches, fatigue and pain in the shoulder, arm or hand. It can also slow down a child’s writing.

Children will be able to sustain writing for longer if they become used to sitting comfortably.

- Ensure that they have a good pencil grip – use commercial pencil grips only if other methods have failed.
- Check that tables are large enough for the children not to be jostling each other’s arms.
- Check that the height of tables and chairs allows children to sit comfortably, with their feet flat on the floor. Their legs should be free and not come into contact with the underside of the desk top. They should be able to sit up at the table without having to lean over it or stretch to reach it.
- The lighting should be good, so that the children can see what they have written.
- Children should use their left hand to steady the paper and bear some body-weight.
- The paper should be tilted slightly to the left.
- Provide a slanting board for those who need it

Gateway to Writing – Developing Handwriting.

Gateway to Writing – Developing Handwriting.

			• Avoid handwriting practice on whiteboards (slippery surfaces), on knees, etc. • Pencil grip- using all fingers gives less control/ makes formation harder. • The purpose of a pencil grip is to help a child develop a tripod (three fingered) pencil grip. Different grips can be used to help with different issues and there are a range of these available; however, commercial aids might not be necessary. • Poor pencil grip can affect the quality of a child’s handwriting and put unnecessary strain on the hand muscles and ligaments. • This not only makes handwriting hard work, but is frustrating and de-motivating for children who cannot produce the required quantity of written work. It is therefore important to check that a child is developing an appropriate pencil grip and to correct a poor grip as soon as it starts to appear. When children are practising letter formation, adult observation and guidance are essential to limit poor habits developing.
Year 2: • form lower-case letters of the correct size relative to one another • start using some of the diagonal and horizontal strokes needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • write capital letters and digits of the correct size, orientation and relationship to one another and to lower-case letters • use spacing between words that reflects the size of the letters	Pupils should revise and practise correct letter formation frequently. They should be taught to write with a joined style as soon as they can form letters securely and automatically with the correct orientation.	As above and:	As above and: Clear indication of joined/unjoined letters (including capital letters). Use clear and consistent terminology. See Appendix 6: Terminology When children are practising letter formation, adult observation and guidance are essential to limit poor habits developing.
Year 3/4: • use the diagonal and horizontal strokes that are needed to join letters and understand which letters, when adjacent to one another, are best left unjoined • increase the legibility, consistency and quality of their handwriting ‘Joined handwriting should be the norm; pupils should be able to use it fast enough to keep pace with what they want to say.’	Pupils should be using joined handwriting throughout their independent writing. Handwriting should continue to be taught, with the aim of increasing the fluency with which pupils are able to write down what they want to say. This, in turn, will support their composition and spelling. <i>for example, by ensuring that the downstrokes of letters are parallel and equidistant; that lines of writing are spaced sufficiently so that the ascenders and descenders of letters do not touch</i>	As above and: Teachers need to be aware of which handwriting tools are not left-hander friendly e.g. fountain pens (or equipment such as quills), soft-leded pencils, overly ‘inky’ handwriting pens	As above and: Publishing: Children should have the opportunity to publish a piece of work at least 3 times each academic year. This could be through any part of the curriculum. The purpose of this activity is to develop pride in presentation, quality of handwriting. Writing implements: In addition to standard HB pencils and handwriting pens, children will be offered a range of writing tools which may include brush pens, calligraphy pens, pencils with differing leads and many more. Children will have opportunities to choose different medium for tasks such as publishing and labelling. Give tasks which allow experience of writing for different purposes, including: i) note-making (quick writing, often including abbreviations) ii) fast and fluent writing (neat and legible for all readers) iii) publishing (writing for presentations) iv) printing (e.g. labelling, captions, posters) v) poetry (e.g. shaped poems, calligrams) Dictation: Write from memory, simple sentences, dictated by the teacher, that include words and punctuation taught so far (e.g. Year 3/4 and 5/6 spellings) When children are practising letter formation, adult observation and guidance are essential to limit poor habits developing. At the end of Key Stage 2, children should be able to maintain legibility in joined handwriting when writing at speed.
Year 5/6: Pupils should be taught to: write legibly, fluently and with increasing speed by: • choosing which shape of a letter to use when given choices and deciding whether or not to join specific letters • choosing the writing implement that is best suited for a task	Pupils should continue to practise handwriting and be encouraged to increase the speed of it, so that problems with forming letters do not get in the way of their writing down what they want to say. They should be clear about what standard of handwriting is appropriate for a particular task, for example, quick notes or a final handwritten version. They should also be taught to use an unjoined style, for example, for labelling a diagram or data, writing an email address, or for algebra and capital letters, for example, for filling in a form.		
SEND			Activities to Develop a Tripod Grasp
To join or not to join... The ultimate aim is for a child to develop a good handwriting style; which means: • They can produce and maintain a good speed • Have a fluid hand movement that is comfortable • Letters are of a consistent and appropriate size, positioned correctly • Handwriting is legible (so others can read it easily). For some children this may mean that they will always print or use a single letter form of writing as learning to join is just not appropriate. But that does not mean they will not comply with the bullet points above. This decision will be made in conjunction with the SENDCo. Handwriting Intervention • Children do not need to be able to remember how to correctly form all of their capital letters before they are taught how to join their letters. This is because capital letters never join to the lower-case letters in a word. However, for these children correct capital letter formation needs to be taught alongside the introduction of letter joins. • Early intervention in handwriting is essential to ensure that any incorrect letter formations and pencil grips do not become automated. • Teachers will repeat activities used in EYFS to continue to support developing a tripod grip. • As part of quality first teaching, teachers have a bank of fine motor resources/activities in their classrooms to provide children on an ad-hoc basis to support the development of motor skills where there is a need, prior to referring to the SEND team for further advice or guidance. Equipment			• Placing clothes pegs/bulldog clips around the edge of a container • Picking up small objects using tongs and then tweezers • Threading beads Picking up cards • Fill a medicine dropper (or mini turkey baster) with paint and drop onto paper • Playing with squirt gun or squirt bottles with a trigger action. • Drawing on a brick wall with chalk and then using a squirter and water to remove the chalk marks. • Posting coins into a box with a slot in the lid • During craft activities, use stickers or mini stampers, holding with the thumb, index and middle fingers only • Transfer water from one container to another using a turkey baster • Popping bubble wrap • Placing pegs in and out of a pegboard • Making paper clip chains • Playdough modelling • Playing with construction toys such as Lego • Use felt-tips and crayons that are thicker and shorter. Very short crayons cannot be held with a whole hand grasp • Ask the child to hold a small sponge or eraser in their hand with their little and ring fingers and then hold a pencil with the other fingers • Manipulating clothes pegs • Use a moulded pencil grip to help the child position their fingers on the pencil, such as The Soft Pencil Grip.

- Paper resources – yellow-highlighted lined paper will be provided to help enable children to correctly size their letters in relation to the lines and one another. This paper can be used specifically for handwriting practice. However, for some children, it may be beneficial for them to have these lines available for all written activities until correctly sized handwriting becomes automated. The use of these guides should be gradually removed until they are not needed at all.
- Tools to support handwriting – some children require specific equipment to support them to adopt comfortable posture and accurate grip as well as maintaining the flow and legibility of their handwriting. These tools – including writing slopes and pencil grips – will be provided by the SEND Team. This may be in response to advice from outside from agencies or due to observations made by themselves or class teachers. These are always a last resort and do not replace high quality first teaching and specific intervention.
- Muscle Exercises – In order to improve muscle strength and dexterity for handwriting, our SENDCOs in conjunction with the EYFS Lead will recommend muscle exercises. Where appropriate, this may be supported by paediatric occupational therapists.

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