



Ballpoint pen refills: A quick guide

The refill inside your turned pen has a big impact on how it writes. And when the ink runs out, you don't necessarily have to replace it with exactly the same refill that came with the kit.

The first step is knowing which refill format your pen uses. Most William Wood-Write ballpoint pen kits use either a Cross-style or Parker-style refill.

Cross-style refills

Cross-style refills are long and narrow and are commonly used in Slimline-style and other 7 mm twist ballpoint pens. The refill screws into the pen's twist mechanism, which moves the writing tip in and out as you turn the pen.

Best for: Pens designed specifically for the Cross-style format.



Also available: Compatible Forever pencil refills are available, making it possible to create matching pens and pencils by simply swapping the ink refill with the pencil one.

Parker-style refills

Parker-style refills — also known as G2 refills — are larger than Cross-style refills and are used in many different ballpoint pen kits. One of the advantages of the Parker-style format is the variety of refill options available. Depending on your pen, you can change the way it writes simply by changing the refill.



Standard ballpoint

The familiar everyday choice. Traditional ballpoint ink offers dependable writing and is a practical general-purpose option.

Gel

Gel refills provide a smoother, more fluid writing experience than a traditional ballpoint and are a good option for people who prefer the feel of gel ink.

Schmidt P900

The Schmidt P900 is a premium German-made ballpoint refill in the Parker/G2 format. It uses traditional ballpoint ink and is available in different line widths and ink colours.



Choose it if: You like the characteristics of a traditional ballpoint but want to upgrade the refill in your handmade pen.

Schmidt easyFLOW 9000

The Schmidt easyFLOW 9000 is also a Parker/G2-format refill, but it offers a different writing experience. Its ink system combines characteristics of ballpoint and rollerball refills, producing smooth, consistent ink flow with less writing pressure.

Choose it if: You want a particularly smooth, free-flowing writing experience in a Parker-style pen.



Schmidt P900



Schmidt easyFLOW 9000

Beaufort Ink refills – Cross or Parker style

Beaufort Ink ballpoint refills provide another premium replacement or upgrade option for compatible handmade pens. They come in Cross or Parker styles but are made by Beaufort Ink in the UK.

Choose them if: You're looking to upgrade the writing experience of a compatible pen rather than simply replacing its original refill.

What about pencils?

Some pen designs can use a pencil mechanism instead of an ink refill. Cross-style and Parker/G2-style Forever pencil mechanisms are available for compatible kits, making them useful for creating pencils or matching pen-and-pencil sets. There is also a convertible 7 mm pencil mechanism that fits some pen kits to easily turn them into a pencil.

Always check the requirements of your particular kit before replacing a refill with a pencil mechanism.



Which refill should I choose?

Start with **compatibility**: determine whether your pen takes a Cross-style or Parker/G2-style refill.

Then think about **how you like to write**. If you prefer the familiar feel of a conventional ballpoint, a standard refill or Schmidt P900 may be a good fit. If you prefer smoother-flowing ink, consider a gel or Schmidt easyFLOW 9000. Premium Beaufort Ink refills offer another upgrade option for compatible pens.

Good to know

Cross-style and Parker-style refills are different sizes and are not interchangeable. However, if your pen uses the Parker/G2 format, you may have several compatible refill options. That means you can change the writing experience of a favourite handmade pen without having to make a new one.

When you're making a pen as a gift, consider including a spare refill. It gives the recipient a replacement to have on hand — and shows them exactly what to look for when they need another one.

Comparison at a glance

Refill	Format	Writing feel	Best for
Standard Cross-style	Cross-style	Familiar, controlled ballpoint feel	Everyday writing and Cross-style pen kits
Standard Parker-style	Parker/G2	Familiar, dependable ballpoint feel	Everyday writing and Parker-style pen kits
Gel	Parker/G2	Smooth, fluid ink flow	Writers who prefer the feel and appearance of gel ink
Schmidt P900	Parker/G2	Smooth, premium traditional ballpoint feel	Upgrading a Parker-style pen while retaining conventional ballpoint characteristics
Schmidt easyFLOW 9000	Parker/G2	Very smooth, free-flowing; requires less writing pressure	Writers looking for a smoother writing experience
Forever pencil refill	Cross-style or Parker/G2-style	Mechanical pencil	Compatible pencil kits or converting compatible designs to pencils