

Sheaffer VFM Metal Barrel Fountain Pen

Sheaffer VFM Design



The Sheaffer VFM is a simple, yet elegant fountain pen. It is made of metal and has a thin, cigar shape that tapers toward both ends with a thicker middle.

The finish is matte, and covers the entire capped pen except for the ring between the cap and body and the pen clip. It's available in many colors, I'm reviewing orange. The finish appears matte with indoor lighting, but in sunlight there is an iridescence that shines from within that's attractive, the finish has some depth to it.

Have you ever stood next to a hotrod and looked "into" the paint rather than "at" the paint? You were looking through several thin coats of paint deftly applied by an artist.

Imagine some depth in the finish of the VFM, but in a pearl, not high gloss, finish. If you've ever seen a pearl paint job on a car, you'll have an idea of what the finish on the VFM resembles. Pearl paint jobs are like pearls in nature: subdued pastels, not just flat or high gloss white.

You feel like you're looking into them because it's a multi-step painting process with several coats of base, a coat of translucent pearl, and then the overlay of clear-coat.

No, they didn't put that much time, energy and effort into the fit and finish of a fifteen-dollar fountain pen, but what I'm trying to say is it's nice! Okay, enough with three-stage car painting, back to the VFM...

It's an unexpectedly nice finish on a **cheap fountain pen**.

The nib is stainless steel and the size and shape you'd expect for the scale of this pen. The nib has no engraving, outside of the Sheaffer name stamped into it. I'm reviewing the medium nib.

There is a plastic grip section that narrows from the body to a comfortable grip and there's a metal ring that the nib and section fit into to meet the body of the pen.

The pen clip is metal as is the cap band, the ring that separates the pen body from the cap. The pen clip has the trademark Sheaffer White Dot on the top of the pen clip to identify the brand. The cap band is stamped with "SHEAFFER" three times so you can see it from any angle around the ring.

Sheaffer VFM Performance



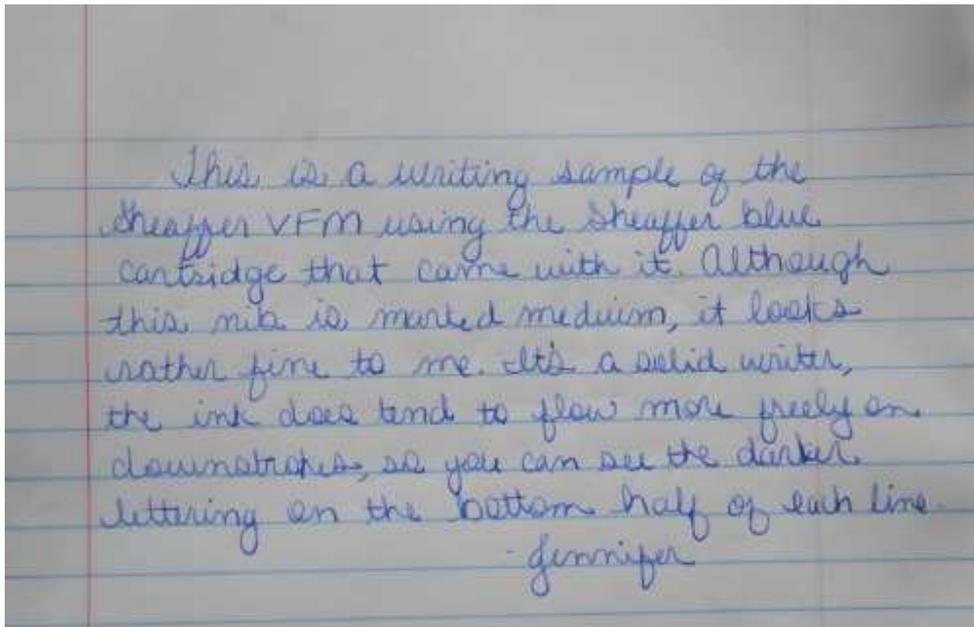
The VFM fountain pen performs well on standard ledger paper and 24lb weight paper.

The ink delivery is interesting. It hard started whenever I put it down for a bit. Meaning, it would take a second to put ink to page when I wrote before the ink would start coming out of the pen. I didn't experience this during longer writing sessions, only when I capped it, put it down, then came back to it.

What is interesting is that it isn't necessarily a wet writer, but it isn't consistent. It delivers more ink on down-strokes so it tends to puddle a bit using the standard Sheaffer international short cartridges.

You can see the feathering in the writing sample. If you imagine a midline across each line of writing, the letters feather more at the bottom where the ink pooled more, and they are lighter shades across the top. What's weird is I wouldn't call this a wet writer, it's a dry writer with more flow on down-strokes, the section isn't metering out the ink as well as an expensive fountain pen does, but what are you going to expect for twenty bucks? It's awesome when you consider it's only twenty bucks!

Sheaffer VFM Writing Sample



Ink Smudging



I used it on my day planner and it bled through the backside of the paper, so don't use it on your calendar planner. I didn't experience any smudging and only very slight feathering on the page. Because it delivers ink more heavily on down-strokes, it tended to feather a bit at the bottom of some letters.

Hand Fatigue

I didn't experience any hand fatigue using this pen. Now that I think about it, I'm experiencing more hand fatigue typing this page than I did writing for an hour with the VFM. It's well balanced and isn't heavy, even for a metal fountain pen.

Cap Fit

The cap snaps on and off with an audible click. I love that, so satisfying. It does not post with that click though. When you post the cap on the back it is friction-fit so you just have to jam it down a bit to get it to stay put. There's a plastic cap liner that creates the friction fit to cap the pen and to post it on the back. The plastic protects the finish so you don't have to worry about jamming it down a bit tightly to get it to stay put.

Sheaffer VFM Maintenance and Specs



The VFM uses international standard short cartridges, and doesn't come with a converter. You can't use a Sheaffer converter with the VFM because the outer diameter of the converter is the same as the outer diameter of the threads on the section so it won't fit inside of the pen, (I tried for you.)

Do you want to use fun ink colors that aren't available in cartridges? Some people like matching the ink to the finish of the VFM. If you do, you'll want to buy a set of cartridges, a bottle of an ink color you want and some **Blunt Tip Fill Needles** on Amazon. The needles are only five bucks for a set of 10... you'll probably feel weird buying needles if you're not diabetic, but hell, it's Amazon, who's going to know? I just got mine yesterday.

Then, when you run a cartridge dry, dip the syringe into your ink bottle, load up some ink and squeeze it back into the cartridge through the inlet that attaches to the section of your pen, then you get to plug and play! Here's an [article on how to syringe fill](#) step-by-step. Let the fun begin! Sheaffer VFM weighs in at .7 ounces

I can feel fountain pen fascists seething as they read that last paragraph, but they wouldn't be caught dead with a twenty dollar fountain pen anyway so please don't send me evil email and let the rest of us play!

Specs (Measured By Me with Calipers... So This Is Not Scientific):

Length Posted: 135mm

Length Uncapped: 118mm

Width at Cap Band: 10mm

Width at Grip Point (section): 7mm

The Sheaffer VFM Comes in 10 Colors:

Strobe Silver, Neon Blue, Ultra Mint, Excessive Red, Extreme Purple, Matte Black, Radiant Ruby, Ultimate Plum, Chilled Blue and Maximum Orange