

KEYBOARDING TECHNIQUES

Learn these techniques, and think about them every time you key.

1 Body Posture

Be sure to sit in your chair with the lower part of your back touching the chair for support. Lean forward slightly, keeping your back straight. Both feet should be directly in front of you, touching the floor and slightly apart. Your elbows should rest comfortably by your sides when your hands and fingers are in the Home-key position. Your elbows should not be pressed against your body or stuck out from your body. Position your chair so that when your elbows are in this natural position, your curved fingers rest on the Home keys. The illustration to the left shows correct posture.

2 Hand/Finger Position

Your hands should be deeply curved with your fingertips placed in the center of each Home key (A, S, D, and F on the left and J, K, L, and Semicolon on the right). Your fingers should rest lightly on the Home keys. Each finger remains in this position unless it is reaching to tap another key. Your fingers should be in an upright position, not curved in or out on the keys. Make sure to rest your thumbs lightly on their sides over the Space Bar. Your wrists should be held low, but the bottoms of your hands should not touch the keyboard.

Key Tapping Technique

Each key should be tapped with a quick, sharp tap by the tip of the finger. When reaches are made, each key should be tapped and the finger returned to its Home-key position with no wasted motion. Keys must be tapped with the correct fingers.

Reach Technique

To tap keys other than the Home keys, your fingers must leave the Home keys to reach to tap the desired key. As a finger reaches and taps another key, it should be returned quickly to its Home key with no lost motion. Only one finger at a time should leave its Home key.

Return or Enter Key Technique

The right pinky (Semicolon finger) reaches over to the right to tap the Return or Enter key. The pinky should tap Return or Enter quickly and return to its Home key. If your hands are small, you may slide your whole hand over as far as necessary for the pinky to tap the Return or Enter key. Your fingers should stay close to the Home keys and return there as quickly as possible. Stretch your fingers as much as you comfortably can.

Space Bar Technique

Both thumbs should rest lightly on their sides on the Space Bar. Your right thumb should tap the Space Bar sharply with as little movement as possible. Strong left-hand users may use the left thumb to tap the Space Bar, but only one thumb may be used—never both, and never alternating left and right. The motion of the thumb should be down-and-in, toward the palm of the hand. Your fingers should remain resting on the Home keys when the Space Bar is tapped. Tap the Space Bar quickly after the last letter of a word is keyed.

Shift Key Technique

The Shift keys are located on both sides of the keyboard and are pressed by the pinky fingers. When keying a capital letter tapped by a finger on the left hand, the right pinky reaches over and down to the right Shift key. The right pinky presses the Shift key and holds it down only long enough for the left hand to tap the letter. Then both keys are quickly released and the fingers are returned to the Home keys. The same procedure is followed when a capital letter is to be tapped by a finger on the right hand; but in this instance, the left little finger taps the left Shift key.