



Vision Support Team
Sensory Support and Physical Difficulties Support Service

The Importance of Teaching Touch Typing



What is Touch Typing?

Touch typing is a motor learning experience. This means not looking at your hands. If they truly learn to touch type this skill will last a lifetime like riding a bike!



Reasons for learning to touch type

Learning to touch type and becoming a competent typist, can lead to a high rate of accuracy in typing and a good rate in terms of words per minute. In handwritten exams with a lot of writing involved, writing at a rate of 20 words per minute (WPM) is an arduous task. Rates of 40-50 WPM should be easily managed by young learners of touch typing.

The great thing about typing is it puts students with all types and levels of SEND on an equal footing with their peers. It also removes any roadblocks that students with SEND may come across as they prepare to move further into their education and on into adulthood. If the student has difficulties with handwriting, with touch typing their work, the student will be able to read 'their own writing' back to themselves, minimizing the impact of poor handwriting on their ability to learn and develop.

The development of technologies that can aid access to the curriculum has made typing a more useful skill. The skill is primarily one of muscle memory. When students learn to type with a multi-sensory and modular course, they strengthen reading, writing and spelling skills at the same time as they gain confidence and motivation.



Tips for Success

There are some things that need to be known before supporting a learner on the road to touch typing. Touch Typing is just that. There should be no peeking at the keyboard. Learners do not look at the keyboard or their hands. They need to get into a comfortable position in which the hands fall naturally onto the keyboard. The surface on which the keyboard stands must not be too high. The wrists may rest on pads if they are typing for a long time. If they can type at a regular pace, almost

to a beat, it will help them achieve a high speed. A Touch Typing program is a series of lessons starting with the home keys (A S D F J K L :) and leading to full mastery of the keyboard. Moving on to the next exercise without sufficient mastery of the current exercise will only lead to disappointment later on. Learners benefit from regular practice. Little and often is best. Accuracy should come before speed.

Finally ...

- **Speed.** This is going to be the first and most obvious benefit of learning to touch type. ...
- **Accuracy.** One of the most important things to learn no matter how hard they type is to type accurately. ...
- **Time.** ... (able to work quicker than writing)
- **Fatigue.** (reduces tiredness when working)
- **Health.** ... (improve posture, tiredness etc)
- **Job Prospects.** ... (opportunities increase)
- **Focus.** ... (able to concentrate on work)
- **Editing** (easier access to reading back work using magnification or speech software)

Basically, the benefits are endless!

Touch Typing courses available to purchase

IOTA - Touch Type 2: (£35, single user licence / £140, 10 user licence)

This software allows the user to use speech as well as enlarge the text. Suitable for all ages.

Azabat— (£30-£50 depending on type purchased.)

This software provides the ability to have speech and text magnification. Suitable for all ages.

Touch typing courses available online

DanceMat – <https://www.bbc.com/bitesize/articles/z3c6tfr>

A free course

- ◆ Suitable for primary aged students. Screen cannot be modified so unsuitable for low vision students.
- ◆ Very interactive and engaging for younger students.

Typing Club - www.typingclub.com

A free course

- ◆ Suitable for any age.
- ◆ Text can be enlarged and background modified to reduce glare.
- ◆ Able to modify course to suit one handed Typing if required.
- ◆ Provides statistics to show progress for student and person supporting. – Useful for TAs to show the impact their support is making.

DoorWay Online— <http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk/typing/>

A free course

- ◆ A number of different courses are available to suit the needs of the student.
- ◆ There is speech with the course but there needs to be Adobe flash player available to allow it to work.

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