

Touch Typing at Home

Physical & Medical Team

There are lots of different touch typing tutors on the market. I have selected the following ones as they have been UK designed with children in mind, however this is by no means an exhaustive list!

Free online software

- BBC dance mat is a free typing tutor for kids. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/guides/z3c6tfr>
- <http://www.sense-lang.org/typing/tutor/keyboarding.php>
- Doorway online <http://www.doorwayonline.org.uk/>

Software to purchase

- Nessy Fingers <https://www.nessy.com/uk/product/nessy-fingers/> £30 single user license for a year. Colourful typing tutor uses games and real words to practice touch typing. UK English. Not compatible with iPad/tablets
- English type <https://englishtype.com/> Junior £29.95 for home license for everyone in your house. (Primary age)
English Type Senior £29.95 for home license for everyone in your house (secondary age)
Both are one-off purchases with no subscription needed. Not compatible with tablet/ iPads. Demo can be downloaded
This software was developed by and Educational Psychologist in the UK and uses whole words rather than nonsense letter strings
- Touch type 2 <http://www.inclusive.co.uk/touch-type-2-p2205> £39 single user license. A straightforward typing tutor with U.K. voice and clear layout. Not as visually appealing as some but suitable for all ages.
- Touch Type Read and Spell <https://www.readandspell.com/home-course> UK version. Supports reading and spelling as well as typing. Subscription starts at £9.99 a month for single user. Family subscriptions available. Includes access to an app as well as laptop version.

IPad

- There is a wide variety of IPad apps for touch typing. If using these please ensure that a separate keyboard is used as touch typing cannot be effectively taught on the onscreen keyboard.

Diagrams from : <http://keyboarding.ccsd.edu/help-for-students/typing-position>



Why?

- Learning how to touch type is a skill that is lifelong. The fastest typing speeds can only be achieved by learning to touch type properly.
- For students who struggle with handwriting or their handwriting is not legible, typing can give them writing they are proud of that is clear and legible.
- By making typing automatic it allows the student to focus on the content of the writing
- For older students, typing makes editing and drafting their work so much easier.

When?

- Most success seen from age 7 upwards. Year 5 or 6 is ideal time before bad habits have been established. A spelling age of 7 years is often advised, although some students learn spelling patterns more easily though remembering the physical position of the keys so although advised, it is not always essential.
- Little and often- aim for 10/ 15 minutes every day if possible.
- The student has to want to learn touch typing so it is best at an age when they appreciate the benefits.

Who?

- It is an excellent skill for **all** students to learn. Students who struggle with reading and writing or who have special needs may take longer to learn and may need more repetition.
- Students who are struggling to produce legible handwriting but have adequate fine motor skills may benefit from learning as an alternative to handwriting.

How?

- Students with literacy difficulties may find touch typing programmes that use real words easier to learn than those that use nonsense letter patterns.
- A clear large onscreen keyboard that shows the position of the letters and fingers can also help, but should not be relied upon.
- Covering the student's fingers with a privacy screen (some plywood can be screwed together to make a cover that goes across the keyboard to shield fingers or cereal box can be cut to make a cover)