Teaching Guide

Typing Pal

A quick and easy way
to learn keyboard typing!
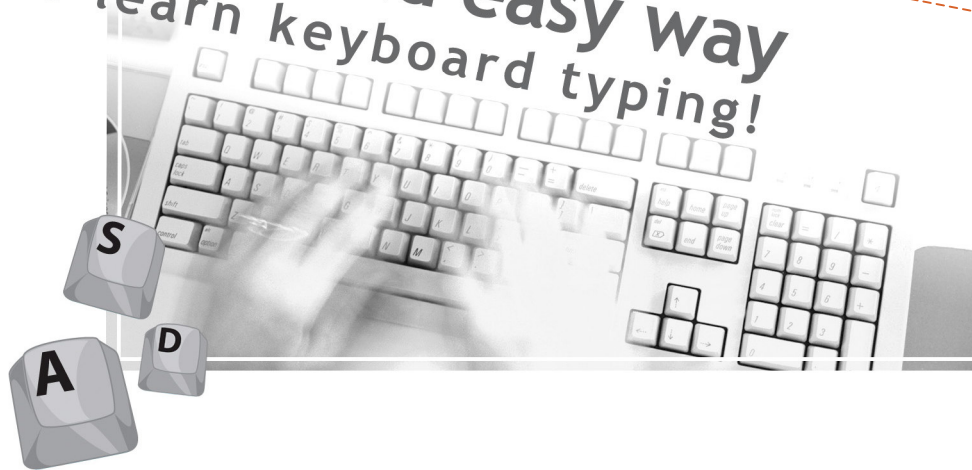
Table of Contents

Why is it important to learn a good typing technique?

It is hard not to notice the important role that computers play in the different spheres of our lives, not to mention how quickly it came about. It is just as easy to deduce that this prominence will continue to grow and that computer skills will be increasingly important. The most widespread means for computer communication is still the keyboard. And, although it is not the only means, it is the most universally used and will continue to be for quite some time.

The problem is that you must have a certain amount of command of the keyboard for it to be an effective communication tool. You can teach yourself to type using four, three or even two fingers but, at the end of the day, the only way to achieve optimal productivity is with a good typing technique that uses all fingers.

It is only as an adult that you will note the degree to which a flawed technique affects your productivity. So many adults say they regret not having learned a proper typing technique when they see how effective their co-workers are on the keyboard. And, everyone knows how hard it is to teach "an old dog new tricks," i.e. to unlearn one- or two-finger typing.

If learning to type is not initiated at school age, bad habits will quickly set in and will be very hard to undo as an adult. Sure, children or teenagers can teach themselves to type quite quickly, but not providing them with the structure that will allow them to learn a technique considerably limits them reaching their peak of productivity. And finally, the effort required for a child or teenager to learn a typing technique is much less than that for an adult who is already laden with bad habits and limits.

Introduction to the learning process and teaching guide

Introduction to the process

Learning a typing technique is more than just typing characters and calculating speed in words/minute.

The process proposed in this guide consists firstly in making students aware of good posture and healthy work habits. The next step involves learning the basic finger position on the keyboard. Teachers will then be invited to get their students to focus on accuracy rather than speed, which will gradually lead to the latter.

Introduction to the teaching guide

Each section of the guide includes worksheets that teachers can photocopy. The worksheets are documents that Typing Pal license holders (for example school teachers) can make copies of and hand out to their students. Each section contains a list of worksheets. The worksheets themselves are found in the Appendix so as to lighten the structure of the guide.

These worksheets propose activities that complement those found in Typing Pal. Given the monotonous nature of learning to type; it is recommended that you diversify the learning methods. Dividing the Typing Pal session into smaller sections with a variety of typing activities is a good way to keep students interested. As a result, they will focus more on accuracy during the Typing Pal exercises.

The first worksheet of each section is an illustration—beginning the subject on a lighter note. Teachers can put it up on the screen during the initial instructions or, since it can be photocopied, add it to a package they themselves have put together.

Lastly, there is a form letter at the end of the guide that can be used to inform the students' parents that they have started a typing course. We recommend that teachers include the school's web address (URL) and institution code.

Section 1
Ergonomics

– Are you sure that position is ergonomic?

According to the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary, ergonomics is "an applied science concerned with designing and arranging things people use so that the people and things interact most efficiently and safely." In concrete terms, ergonomics focuses on reducing the negative impact of sustained use of a technology on man. In the case of a computer keyboard, posture is the first thing that comes to mind.

When working on a computer keyboard, it does not take long before you start to feel physical discomfort. It is even highly likely that, as early as the first session, students complain about pain in their forearms, neck and elsewhere. It is therefore imperative to discuss ergonomics at the beginning of the training.

Learning

Typing Pal proposes texts on this subject that can be found under the Ergonomics tab in Typing Pal Junior (CD-ROM) or Typing Pal School. In Typing Pal 5.0 (CD-ROM), click the Learning tab, followed by the Ergonomics section. Teachers can also refer to the sheet summarizing the concepts and material to send to students who correspond to their course level. Lastly, there are also self-assessment and assessment charts that can be used to help determine how close students are to achieving their goals.

Ergonomic objectives

Here are the objectives we suggest you evaluate in relation to ergonomics:

For elementary schools

1. Never look at the keyboard
2. Know and apply the rule of aligning your eyes with the top of the screen
3. Know and apply the staircase rule
4. Know and apply lighting rules

For middle schools, high schools, colleges, professional training centers and businesses (in addition to the objectives for elementary schools)

1. Know and apply the proper mouse position
2. Know and apply the proper wrist position
3. Know and apply the proper neck position
4. Know and apply the proper copyholder position
5. Recognize the importance of taking breaks

Worksheets

Below is a list of the different worksheets available for the section on ergonomics. It is not mandatory to do them in order or to do them all. This is simply a bank of tools from which teachers can choose.

Number	Worksheet name	Type	Summary
1	Ergonomics Introduction Cartoon	Intro cartoon	
2	Summary of Ergonomic Concepts for Elementary Schools	Concept summary	Summary of ergonomic concepts for elementary school objectives.
3	Summary of Ergonomic Concepts for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers	Concept summary	Summary of ergonomic concepts for middle school, high school, college and professional training center objectives.
4	Spot the Errors (Elementary)	Worksheet	Students must circle the ergonomic don'ts on a cartoon. The answer sheet follows.
5	Spot the Errors (Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers)	Worksheet	The answer sheet follows.
6	The Ergonomic Detective (Elementary)	Worksheet	Teachers give all the students in the class an observation chart containing the name of another student in the group; they must observe the assigned person and, using the chart, make notes on his or her ergonomics. Obviously, they have to try to not get caught! At the end of the observation period (it may be spread out over several sessions), the students give the chart to the person they observed and go over the notes with them. Teachers can also do a recap as a group.
7	The Ergonomic Detective (Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers)	Worksheet	
8	Play the Game	Worksheet	Description of a group ergonomic habit observation activity that touches on the typing technique.
9	Ergonomic Habits Self-Assessment Chart for Elementary Schools	Self-Assessment Worksheet	
10	Ergonomic Habits Self-Assessment Chart for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers	Self-Assessment Worksheet	Also includes the elements in the chart for elementary schools.
11	Ergonomic Habits Assessment Chart for Elementary Schools	Assessment Worksheet	
12	Ergonomic Habits Assessment Chart for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers	Assessment Worksheet	Also includes the elements in the chart for elementary schools.

Section 2
The basic position
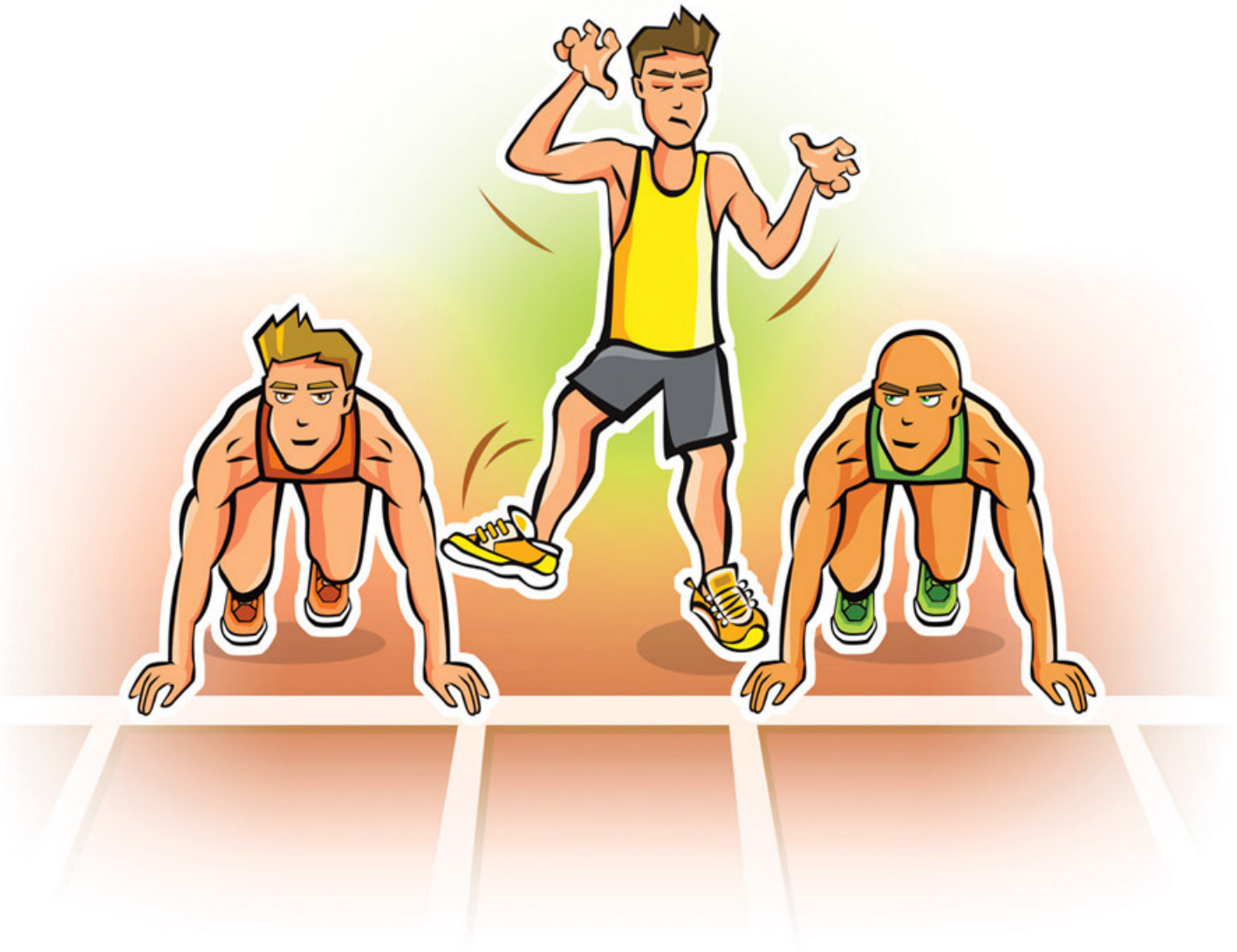
– Feel free to get into the starting position.
– No need. I run very fast on just one leg!

What is the basic position?

Before diving right into the Typing Pal exercises, it is important to learn the basic finger position on a computer keyboard.

The basic position is the position your fingers are in when resting on the keyboard, before hitting a key. After every keystroke, your finger must return to its original position, ready to hit another key. You must be able to put your fingers in the basic position and then return to that position immediately after hitting a key without looking at the keyboard, and this action should become second nature. Your keyboard productivity depends greatly on this skill.

The importance of the basic finger position on the keyboard is similar to that of a sprinter at the start of a race. A runner who does not get in an effective starting position will be at a disadvantage compared to the other runners. By not putting your fingers in the basic position, you will lose half-seconds as you constantly search for keys and hesitate about where to put them next. All these little time wasters add up and can be highly detrimental to your productivity. This is especially true if, on top of it all, you never even use certain fingers.

The two basic positions

There are two main typing methods that determine the basic finger position. The first is the method currently known as the "home row" method and the second is the "two rows" method.

With the "home row" method, all the fingers are placed on the center row of alphabetical letters:

Basic position using the "home row" typing method

With the "two rows" method, the longer fingers, i.e. the ring and middle fingers, are placed on the top row:

Basic position using the "two rows" typing method

The method where all the fingers are on one row is probably the most common. All the same, the "two row" method is often considered the more ergonomic of the two. When the ring and middle fingers are on the top row of characters, the hand stretches more, which causes the wrist to bend less.
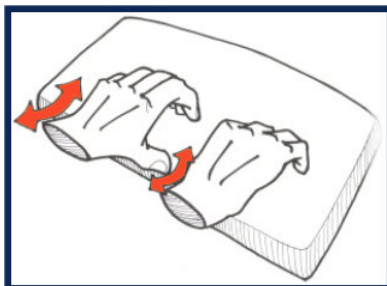
Fingers on the "home row." Note that the wrists are more bent.

Fingers on "two rows." Note that the wrists are less bent.

Currently, Typing Pal School only uses the "home row" method; however, the CD-ROM version offers both methods.

The tactile reference points

It is not easy to place your fingers on the keyboard in the basic position without looking. However, most keyboards have tactile reference points to help you. If you look at the "J" and "F" keys on your keyboard, you will see a small raised area, often in the shape of a bar.

These tactile reference points make it easy to find these keys without looking at the keyboard. Moreover, once your index fingers are in position, the others will naturally fall into position on the home row.

The objectives of the basic position

No matter what level you are at, the objective is to develop the automatic reflex of putting your fingers in the basic position without looking at the keyboard.

Worksheets

The following sheets propose activities that will help develop a sense for the basic position using the tactile reference points.

Number	Worksheet name	Type	Summary
1	The Importance of Learning a Typing Technique and a Basic Position Introduction Cartoon	Intro cartoon	
2	The Search for Lost Tactile Reference Points!	Worksheet	The sheet proposes a series of mini-activities starting with finding the tactile reference points and ending with learning the basic position.

Accurate typing and starting to learn with Typing Pal

– Now, how does the saying go again? Oh yes, now I remember: slow and... umm...
the right basic position wins the race. Is that it? In any case, it goes something like that.

Speed comes with accuracy

Your typing speed is reflected in words per minute. In other words, the more words you type per minute, the more effective you are. There are however drawbacks of stressing this measurement with beginners. Students who try to type quickly risk making a lot of typos and, as a result, hindering their learning because they develop bad habits.

Obviously, a mistake made on a computer keyboard does not have the same impact as it would back in the day of typewriters, when you had to use corrector fluid to erase the mistake, over which you would then re-type the right character. Now, whenever we make a mistake, we simply reach for the backspace key, which takes less than a second. However, you have to make sure the students understand that even if it does not take much to fix a mistake, it still remains that the less mistakes they make, the faster they will complete their text.

Accordingly, at the beginning of the course, emphasis should be placed on accuracy and not speed. The idea is to try to develop a good technique firstly, and to gradually pick up speed thereafter. In fact, speed comes with accuracy.

Lower case letters first

Typing is a mechanical and repetitive action. It is therefore in your best interest to make what you do most second nature in order to be faster and more efficient. Generally speaking, lower case letters are used more than any other character.

Take this guide for example, which has 62,689 characters. This number can be broken down into 43,761 (70%) lower case letters, 1,007 (1%) upper case letters and 17,921 (29%) spaces and other forms of punctuation.
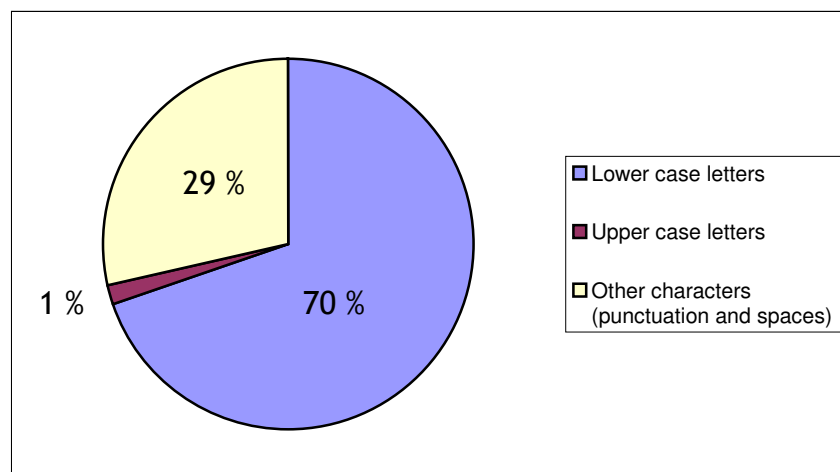
Breakdown of lower and upper case letters and other characters in this guide

This is a good example of how the majority (71%) of characters in a regular text are lower case letters. Teachers are therefore better focusing on the technique used for lower case letters than working on that used for upper case letters or other characters.

Starting to learn with Typing Pal

Typing Pal session duration

It is generally recommended to divide the course into several short sessions of no more than 15-20 minutes each and we have noticed that this is what Typing Pal users prefer. When sessions are too long, fatigue sets in quickly and students can lose motivation. Fatigue and lack of motivation can also steer students away from the objective of learning a good typing technique and cause them rather to develop poor work habits.

Instilling healthy work habits from the word go

The Typing Pal learning sessions is not the only opportunity students have to use a computer keyboard. Obviously, no one can say for sure whether or not they actually apply the basics of the typing technique. However, in the worksheets, there is a Basic Rules for a Good Typing Technique reminder that students can put up these near their desk at home.

Where to begin

The typing lesson is under the Typing Pal Exercises tab. In the case of Typing Pal 5.0 (CD-ROM), click the *Learning* tab, followed by the *Exercises* section. The first icon (Basics) provides a very brief summary of the main ergonomic recommendations. Then, the exercises are laid out in an orderly fashion. It is best to do them in order as they are organized according to the order of fingers in the basic position.

What an exercise consists of

Each exercise has two parts. In the first part, Typing Pal teaches students by showing them the location of the keys used to type the characters in the exercise and then explains the technique to use to type these characters. The second part is the exercise itself, where students are asked to type the characters shown.
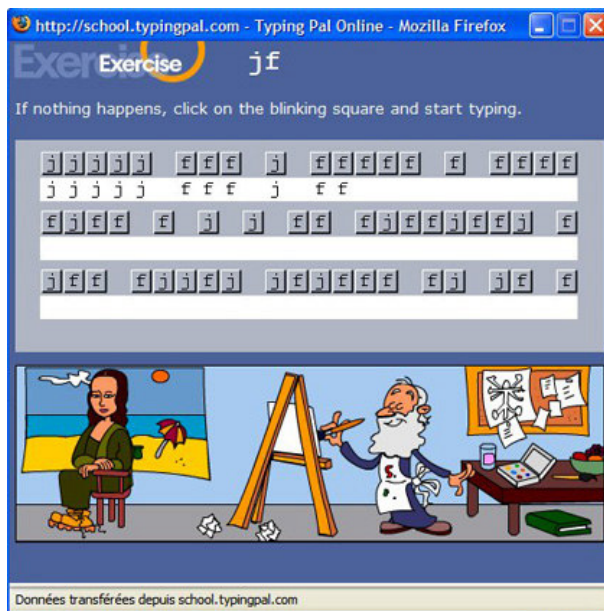
The exercise as it appears in Typing Pal School

The exercise as it appears in Typing Pal 5.0 (CD-ROM)

Why the cartoons under the exercises?

During the exercises, there are cartoons at the bottom of the window that react according to whether you hit the right key or not. Once the exercise is completed, the cartoon has different endings depending on whether students completed the exercise successfully or not.

In addition to adding a lighter side to the exercise, these cartoons are meant to get students to look at (and keep looking at) the screen and not the keyboard.

The Typing Pal results table

At the end of each exercise, Typing Pal displays the results in a table. Students can consult the table to see how many "words per minute" they reached for the exercise, as well as the number of errors, which is the number they should focus their attention on in the beginning of the course.
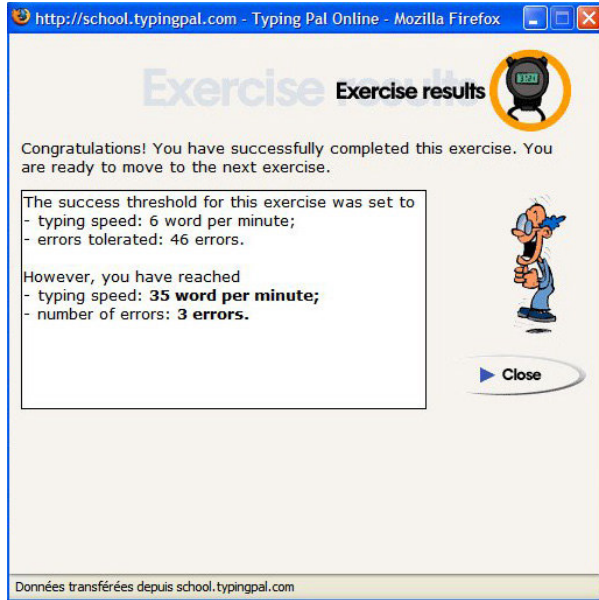
The results window as it appears in Typing Pal
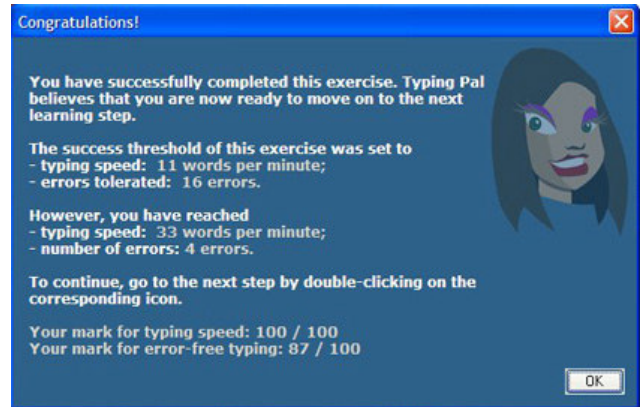
The results window as it appears School in Typing Pal 5.0 (CD-ROM)

Spotting signs of discouragement

Learning how to type requires a lot of discipline and can often cause students to become discouraged. Here are some previously seen situations during which it is common to see signs of discouragement.

	Symptoms	Proposed approach
1	Students who focus on accuracy may type slowly in the beginning of the learning process and continually fail the exercises because they do not reach the target speed in words per minute.	It is therefore better to lower the target speed in words per minute so they can happily go about working on their technique. This can be done in the Teacher Management Module.
2	Students have completed the first exercise (jf) and are already excited about their scores. But, in the second exercise, they notice that their scores have dropped significantly and they lose motivation.	Explain to the students that the second exercise requires using four fingers as opposed to two, which is much more difficult. Encourage them, and tell them they will get it with time, that this will not be the only time they will run into this difficulty and, most of all, to keep focusing on their technique.
3	The situation described in point 2 could arise any time the students have to hit a key that is not in the basic position. This could cause the students to make more errors. For example, if using the "home row" method, you may see signs of discouragement during the "ei" exercise.	The brain has to get used to every new movement on the keyboard. In the case of the previous example, this is the first time an exercise requires using characters on the top row. Same thing for the "c" exercise, which uses the bottom row for the first time.\n\nExplain this to the students and offer them encouragement.
4	Upper case letters and other characters that require a combination of two keys are always likely to discourage students.	In this case, explain to them that their speed is more likely to increase when typing lower case letters. It may help to show them the example that gives the proportion of lower case letters to other characters in Section 3.
5	Students often have to redo an exercise more than once. For example, it is not uncommon to see some students redo an exercise as many as ten times. It's easy to understand how they can get discouraged.	We suggest, after three to five tries, authorizing students to move on to the next exercise even if they have not successfully completed the current one. They can come back and redo it later. If this does not work, lower the target speed in words per minute.

Accuracy objectives

When it comes to calculating the number of errors, you will soon notice that there are two standpoints. The first, the more classic, involves seeing an error as a loss of time. In this context, teachers calculate the speed by subtracting a certain number of words (3-10) per minute for every error. The second considers that, on a computer, the speed in words per minute already takes errors into account because the backspace key is hit every time a typo is made and it is therefore pointless to add an additional penalty.

Typing Pal takes two things into consideration when determining accuracy.

1. First, it depends on the motivation for learning a typing technique. The requirements will be different for students for whom typing is required for their work than for those who are satisfied with functional typing skills.

2. However, regardless of why students are learning to type, they will be more effective if, during their training, they concentrate on learning a good typing technique while making as few errors as possible.

It is more realistic, when assessing how well you type—and notably the number of errors you make—to look at how well you do with an actual text rather than random letter and word drills. A text is closer to reality.

During the exercises, it is better to simply ask students to always make sure the number of errors is less than or equal to the number tolerated for the exercise. This number is provided in the results table at the end of the exercise. You may want to suggest that students redo the exercise if they exceed the number of errors tolerated.

If using Typing Pal CD-ROM, it is best to use an existing text as the exam, or to create one using the text *editor*. With Typing Pal Junior, the texts are under the *Practice* tab, where as, for Typing Pal 5.0, click the *Training* tab, followed by the Practice section.

For Typing Pal School, we recommend using the Entry Level Test and Final Test found under the Exercises tab to determine improvement in terms of the number of errors. You can also use the Teacher Management Module to add customized texts.

The following Target Table is based on the results from the Entry Level Test and the Final Test (approx. 60 words) in Typing Pal School. Use it as a guideline to help you to evaluate your students.

	Target	Average, but needs improvement	Uh oh! You need to really work hard at making fewer errors!
Children around ages 9 to 11	Less than 15 errors	Between 25 and 30 errors	More than 40 errors
12 years of age and older and functional	Less than 10 errors	Between 20 and 25 errors	More than 35 errors
Students from professional training centers	Always strive for perfection!		

Worksheets

The following worksheets propose activities that focus on improving accuracy.

Number	Worksheet name	Type	Summary
1	The Importance of Prioritizing Accuracy From the Beginning Introduction Cartoon	Intro cartoon	
2	Keyboard in One	Worksheet	Students who manage to complete an exercise without making any errors get to add their names to a table.
3	Dream Team	Worksheet	Keyboard in One in teams
4	Forget the Keyboard	Worksheet	Improve your accuracy without looking at the keyboard.
5	Improvement	Worksheet	The worksheet explains how to use the improvement activities to improve your accuracy.
6	Cosmik Ball	Worksheet	A team activity that uses the Cosmik Ball game (Game tab) to encourage students to focus on accuracy. It is best to wait until students have practiced all the lower case letters before proposing this activity.
7	All for One and One for All!	Worksheet	Another team activity that aims at encouraging students to focus on accuracy. This time, errors are compiled in the review exercises.
8	Basic Rules Reminder	Reminder	Reminder outlining the basic rules of a good typing technique.

Section 4
Improving your speed

– Yes, yes, yes, I know you type quickly. But, I'm begging you, just focus on your accuracy for the next couple of minutes…

A springboard into the future

The speed in words per minute at the end of the course should never be seen as the final score. It is highly likely that students will continue using a computer keyboard after their Typing Pal course. In this case, their improvement will be directly related to how much of the typing technique they assimilated. If students developed the habit of always going back to the basic position and always using the proper keystroke techniques, their improvement after the course will be greater than students who pays no heed to these aspects.

This is why teachers, even at the end of the learning process, should focus more on the basic position, technique and accuracy than on speed in words per minute. They should think of the Final Test as a springboard into the future and remind their students that speed comes with accuracy.

In the worksheets, there is a self-assessment questionnaire that you can use during the Final Test. This questionnaire, which touches on the basic position and the typing technique, is a good way to go over these notions with the students.

How does Typing Pal calculate the speed in words per minute?

Most Typing Pal activities stop when an error is made. In other words, if students make mistakes, they cannot continue until they correct it. Accordingly, all completed texts or exercises are error free. Thus, Typing Pal does not subtract words for errors made.

Typing Pal considers any group of five characters to be a word. So, the speed in words per minute is simply calculated by dividing the total number of characters typed by five.

Target speeds in words per minute

	Target	Average, but needs improvement
Children around ages 9 to 11	20 (errors tolerated)	15
12 years of age and older	30 (errors tolerated)	24
Students at professional training centers	30 (no errors tolerated)	

Worksheets

The following sheets propose activities that may help acquire a good typing speed.

Number	Worksheet name	Type	Summary
1	Accuracy is Essential to Speed Cartoon	Intro cartoon	
2	Self-Assessment Questionnaire for the Final Test	Self-assessment worksheet	Self-assessment questionnaire to use during the final test
3	Slow Down, Hare!	Worksheet	A simple way to make students realize that too many errors can really slow you down.
4	Improvement	Worksheet	How to use the exercises in the Improvement tab to improve speed.

Appendix 1 : Worksheets
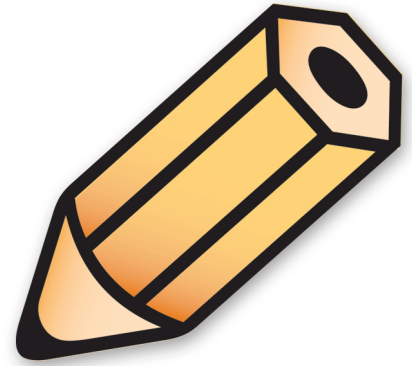
Ergonomics Worksheets

Table of Contents

section **1**

— Are you sure that position is ergonomic?

Summary of Ergonomic Concepts
for Elementary Schools

section 1

This sheet summarizes the ergonomic concepts covered by the objectives of the elementary school guide.

1 – Never look at the keyboard

You have to learn from the onset to look at the screen and not the keyboard when you type. If you let your eyes move from keyboard to screen too often, you could lose a lot of time. Moreover, looking at the screen, if it is positioned properly, keeps your head straight, which complies with the staircase rule described below.

2 – Align your eyes with the top of the screen

In the case of a desktop computer, your eyes should be at the same height as the top of your screen. Feel free to prop up the screen if this is not the case. Long hours in front of the screen can cause neck pain if the screen is not in a good position.

3 – The staircase rule

The staircase position is the proper posture when working on a keyboard. Sit with your back straight, leaning slightly against the backrest at a 90˚ angle with the seat.

Your thighs and legs should form a 90˚ angle.

It is important to have your feet flat on the floor. If necessary, use a footrest. Most children require footrests.

Your forearm should form an angle of approximately 90˚ with your arm.

4 – Lighting

Poor lighting can cause headaches or even dizziness. Your computer screen does not give off enough light to read without straining your eyes. It is therefore recommended that you work with the lights on.

Never put your screen in front of something that creates a glare such as a brightly colored wall or a sunny window.

Never strain your eyes to see; blink your eyes or look straight ahead to re-establish your focus.

Summary of Ergonomic Concepts

for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers

section 1

This worksheet summarizes the ergonomic concepts covered by the objectives for middle schools, high schools, colleges and professional training centers. It supplements the sheet for elementary schools.

1 – The mouse

The mouse should be as close as possible to and at the same height as the keyboard. A poorly positioned mouse could result in shoulder pain. It is recommended that you use keyboard shortcuts as much as possible to keep your mouse use to a minimum. Moreover, it will increase your productivity since your hand will not have to leave and come back to the keyboard. It is much faster.

A mouse that is not the right size for the individual can also cause physical discomfort.

2 – The wrist

Never "bend" your wrists. Repeated long periods of work in this position cause sharp pain in the wrist, also known as carpal tunnel syndrome. Do not raise the top of the keyboard even if it comes with feet to do so. Raise the base of the keyboard instead.

3 – The neck

Your neck should be straight. Do not have your head too far in front of the rest of your body. This position is called the "chicken position" and is, at the end of the day, very detrimental to your neck vertebrae.

Good position   Poor position

4 – The copyholder

A copyholder is the stand on which you rest the papers you need to look at when typing. Make sure it is at the same level as your screen. If necessary, equip it with additional lighting. This way, there will be less contrast between the paper and the screen.

5 – Breaks

It is recommended that you take breaks from time to time. Take a five-minute break after every hour of steady work or 15 minutes after 90 minutes of work. These breaks will allow you to maintain a constant level of productivity. And feel free to stretch: rotate your head (be careful not to twist your head back too far) and your wrists; wiggle your fingers; etc.

It is also recommended that you frequently change your work posture without, however, neglecting back support.

Spot the Errors
(Elementary)

Name: _____

Group name: _____

section **1**

Circle the ergonomic mistakes in the picture.

Spot the Errors
(Elementary)

Answer

1 – Eyes not aligned with the screen
2 – Lights not on
3 – She is looking at the keyboard
4 – He is not in the staircase position

Spot the Errors

(Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges
and Professional Training Centers)

Name: _____

Group name: _____

Circle the examples of poor ergonomics in the picture.

section 1

Spot the Errors

(Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges
and Professional Training Centers)
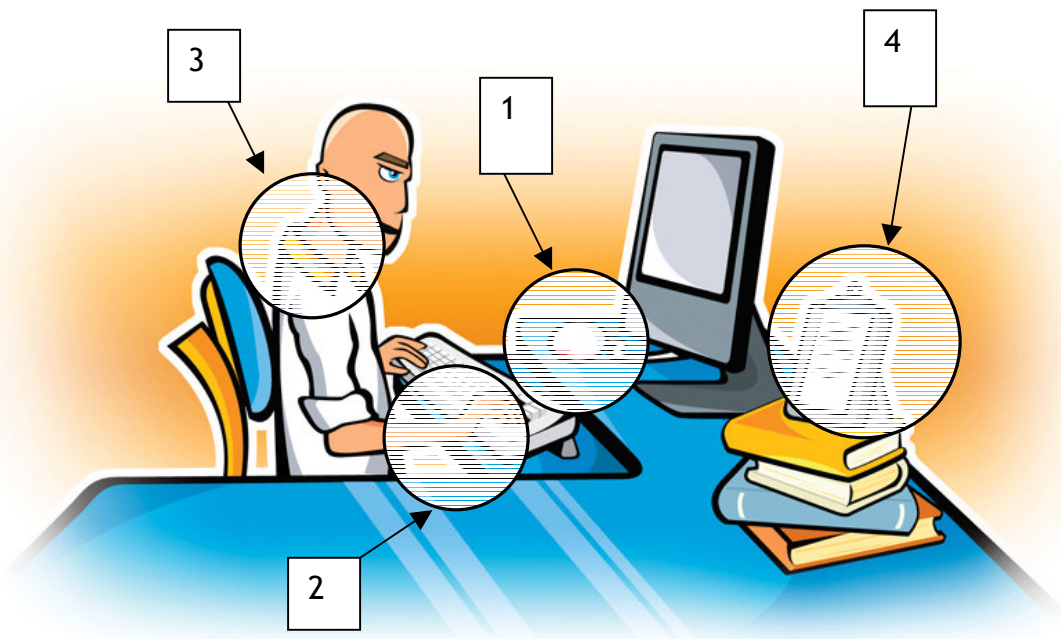
section **1**

Answer

1 – Mouse too high
2 – Keyboard in a position that causes the wrist to bend
3 – Head too far forward, creating neck strain (chicken position)
4 – Copyholder not at the same level as the screen

The Ergonomic Detective

(Elementary)

Observe your assigned person without getting caught. Complete the chart below within the time limit set by your teacher. When the teacher gives the signal, give the completed chart to the person in question and go over your observations. Whatever you do, don't reveal your identity until the end of the activity.

You must observe the following person: _____

section

1

Habits	Never	Sometimes	Always
He or she looks at the keyboard			
Feet are flat on the floor			
Back is curved			
Body is in the staircase position			
Eyes are aligned with the top of the screen			

The Ergonomic Detective

(Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges
and Professional Training Centers)

section 1

Observe your assigned person without getting caught. Complete the chart below within the time limit set by your teacher. When the teacher gives the signal, give the completed chart to the person in question and go over your observations. Whatever you do, don't reveal your identity until the end of the activity.

You must observe the following person: _____

Habits	Never	Sometimes	Always
He or she looks at the keyboard			
Neck and head are in the chicken position			
Back is curved			
Body is in the staircase position			
Mouse is at the height of the keyboard			
Eyes are aligned with the top of the screen			
Wrists are bent			

Play the Game

section **1**

The Play the Game activity is a group ergonomic habit observation activity that requires less involvement than the Ergonomic Detective as it is a group activity.

Pick a student who is comfortable with the keyboard. Teachers can also play this role, which would be even better as it implicates the student less.

The person chosen sits in front of a computer while the other students gather around to watch. This can also be done in several smaller groups.

The person in front of the keyboard types a text. If you have Typing Pal Junior (CD-ROM), or Typing Pal School, look under the Practice tab. If, however, you are working with Typing Pal 5.0 (CD-ROM), click the *Training* tab, followed by the *Practice* section. While the person types, the other students watch and take mental notes of their ergonomic observations.

Once the text is completed, everyone gathers around and discusses their comments.

Teachers may, without the other members of the group knowing, ask the person typing to demonstrate certain bad habits, so they can go over them later as a group.

This activity is a good way to stimulate the group should teachers feel their interest in the Typing Pal activities is waning.

This is also a good time to explain a game. Rather than type a text, get the designated person to play a game. With the entire group's attention, teachers can use this opportunity to go over the rules of the game.

The *Word Rescue Mission* game is best for this kind of activity because you have to type whole words and not just characters.

Ergonomic Habits Self-Assessment Chart

for Elementary Schools

Name: _____

Group name: _____

section 1

	Comments
Do I still glance at the keyboard when I type?	
Are there times or places where I still have a tendency to do so?	
At school, do I always remember to set up my workstation so that my eyes are aligned with the top of the screen?	
If I have a computer at home, is it set up so that my eyes are aligned with the top of the screen? If no, what can I do to fix the problem?	
Do I always make sure I am sitting in the staircase position when working at the computer?	
Are there times or places where I fail to sit in the staircase position?	
Do I always make sure the lights are on when working at the computer? If no, explain why and what you are going to do to fix the situation.	

Ergonomic Habits Self-Assessment Chart

for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges
and Professional Training Centers

Name: _____

Group name: _____

section 1

	Comments
Do I still glance at the keyboard when I type?	
Are there times or places where I still have a tendency to do so?	
At school or at work, do I always remember to set up my workstation so that my eyes are aligned with the top of the screen?	
If I have a computer at home, is it set up so that my eyes are aligned with the top of the screen? If no, what can I do to fix the problem?	
Do I always make sure I am sitting in the staircase position when working at the computer?	
Are there times or places where I fail to sit in the staircase position?	

See next page

Do I always make sure the lights are on when working at the computer? If no, explain why and what you are going to do to fix the situation.	
Is my mouse at the right height (normally the same as the keyboard) so that you don't have to raise your shoulder? If no, explain why and mention steps you will take to correct the situation.	
Are my wrists in an ergonomic position when I type? Expand on your answer and, if you feel your position is not ergonomic, explain what you are going to correct and how.	
Could your work posture be detrimental to your neck? Expand on your answer and, if you feel your position is detrimental, explain what you are going to do to fix your posture.	
If you use a copyholder, do you feel it is in an ergonomic position? If no, explain what you are going to change.	
Do you take breaks from time to time? Expand on your answer.	

• **Ergonomics**

Ergonomic Habits Assessment Chart

for Elementary Schools

section 1

Group name: _____

Complete the chart using the legend below:

Adopted the behavior = **A**,   Briefly adopted the behavior = **B**, Did not adopt the behavior at all = **C**,
Not applicable = **N/A**.

Student name																						
Works without looking at the keyboard																						
Makes sure eyes are aligned with the top of the screen																						
Works in the staircase position																						
Feet are flat on the floor most of the time																						

Ergonomic Habits Assessment Chart

for Middle Schools, High Schools, Colleges and Professional Training Centers

Group name: _____

Complete the chart using the legend below:

Adopted the behavior = **A**,   Briefly adopted the behavior = **B**, Did not adopt the behavior at all = **C**, Not applicable = **N/A**.

section **1**

Student name																								
Works without looking at the keyboard																								
Makes sure eyes are aligned with the top of the screen																								
Works in the staircase position																								
Mouse is well positioned																								
Wrists are not bent																								
Neck and head are straight and not out front (chicken position)																								
The copyholder, if applicable, is the same height as the screen																								

Basic Position Worksheets

Table of Contents

section **2**

–Feel free to get into the starting position.
–No need. I run very fast on just one leg!

The Search for Lost Tactile Reference Points!

section **2**

This worksheet proposes a series of steps to discover the tactile reference points and use them to automatically assume the basic finger position.

For these activities, each student needs to be sitting in front of a keyboard. You will also need, for each student, a piece of soft fabric, approximately 12″ x 24″.

You must also have determined if you use the "home row" or "two row" method before starting this series of activities.

1. Ask the students to look at their keyboard and find the two keys that are different from the others. Once found, explain to them why they are different.

2. Ask the students to close their eyes and try to place their index fingers on the keys with tactile reference points.

3. Do this several times.

4. Ask the students to lay their piece of fabric on the keyboard, and then to place their hands between the keyboard and the fabric. The students have to try to place their index fingers on the tactile reference points. Insist that they do so while looking at the screen and not the keyboard.

5. Ask the students to remove the fabric. Explain the basic position. You can ask the students to start the first Typing Pal exercise (Exercises tab) to see the image of hands in the basic position on the keyboard. You can also, if you have a canon, display the image on screen.
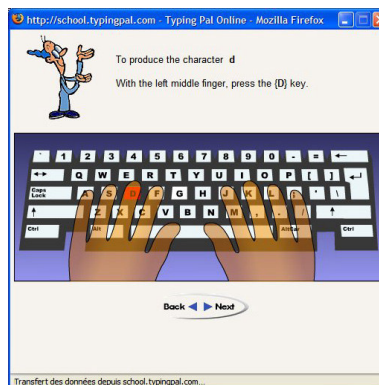
Window that opens when you begin a Typing Pal School exercise and that demonstrates the basic position.

The students place their index fingers on the keys with the tactile reference points. Then, without lifting their index fingers, they place the other fingers in the basic position.

6. Repeat the exercise.

7. Do it again with a piece of fabric.

Accuracy Worksheets

Table of Contents

section **3**

– Now, how does the saying go again? Oh yes, now I remember: slow and... umm...
the right basic position wins the race. Is that it? In any case, it goes something like that.

Keyboard in One!

Group name: _____

section 3

How to Play

During the day-to-day use of Typing Pal, when students complete an exercise without making any errors, their name gets added to the Hole in One table. The names can also be added to a large sheet in the classroom.

Name	Date	Exercise

Name	Date	Exercise

Typing Pal

K e y b o a r d - i n - o n e

We hereby confirm that

_____

has managed to perform a _____ "Keyboard-in-one."

_____   _____
Teacher   Pupil

Dream Team

Group name: _____

How to Play

section 3

Divide the group into two teams. The names of Keyboard in One students are added to the table below under the corresponding team. The winning team is the one with the most Keyboards in One.

1			2		
Team name			Team name		
Name	**Date**	**Exercise**	**Name**	**Date**	**Exercise**

	Total:			Total:	

Forget the Keyboard!

section **3**

About the activity

Place a piece of fabric (approx. 12″ x 24″) on the keyboard. Students slide their hands under the fabric and get into the basic position as described in The Search for Lost Tactile Reference Points! activity. They must now do the exercise.

When should you propose this activity?

It is recommended that this technique be used with characters already learned, for example during review exercises.

Another approach is to redo an exercise already done. This can be done at the beginning of each session, at which time you ask all the students to redo the last exercise they completed successfully (do not suggest they do this with an exercise they failed), this time using the fabric. You can also choose to use other exercises depending on what you expect of your students.

This activity is good for students who pay no heed to accuracy because they want to go too quickly. Doing an exercise with the fabric at the end of the session helps break the monotony and encourages students to focus on accuracy.

- **Accuracy**

Improvement

section 3

What are the Improvement exercises?

The Typing Pal Improvement tab contains a series of exercises designed to work on students' weaknesses. Typing Pal compiles the statistics after each exercise. When students start an Improvement exercise, Typing Pal analyzes the students' statistics so as to propose an exercise tailored to their needs.

When should you propose an Improvement exercise?

It is good to get into the habit of doing an Improvement exercise after each review exercise.

Every time students do a new exercise, the characters in that exercise are added to the list of characters that could appear in an Improvement exercise. Accordingly, as soon as the first exercise with upper case letters is completed, all subsequent Improvement exercises will contain upper case letters. As such and knowing that the typing speed improves greatly when you work on accuracy of lower case letters, it is recommended that you use the Improvement exercises at regular intervals while students are learning lower case letters.

Which Improvement exercises help improve accuracy?

The best exercise for improving accuracy is the Improving Accuracy exercise. This exercise will propose characters that the student generally finds the most difficult.

Other exercises propose improving more specific aspects, such as, for example, The Most Difficult Character exercise. In addition to focusing on certain challenging points, these exercises can also add a little variety to the learning process.

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Cosmik Ball

Group name: _____

Divide the students into teams. Each student is ready to start the Cosmik Ball game. When you give the signal, everyone starts the game at the level set by the teacher. The goal is to be as accurate as possible in order to get the most points. When students complete their level, they tell the teacher so that their score can be added to the table. The team with the most points wins.

1		2		3		4	
Team name:		Team name:		Team name:		Team name:	
Participant	Points	Participant	Points	Participant	Points	Participant	Points
Total:		Total:		Total:		Total:	

The winning team is:_____

All for One and One For All!

Group name: _____

Here, the students are divided into two or four groups and the number of errors made in each review exercise are added up. The team with the least amount of errors wins. The review exercises can be done at the student's own pace or within a certain amount of time set by the teacher.

section **3**

1		2		3		4	
Team name:		Team name:		Team name:		Team name:	
Exercise	Team's total number of errors	Exercise	Team's total number of errors	Exercise	Team's total number of errors	Exercise	Team's total number of errors

The winning team is:_____

Basic Rules Reminder

section 3

Before using a keyboard, even if it is only for writing or e-mailing or chatting, I always keep these four rules in mind:

1. I make sure that my position and my work environment are ergonomic

2. I always start with my hands in the basic position

3. When I am not typing, I always resume the basic position

4. I never look at the keyboard

Always focusing on these rules will make my performance better in the long run!
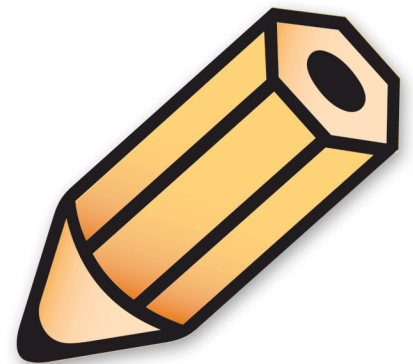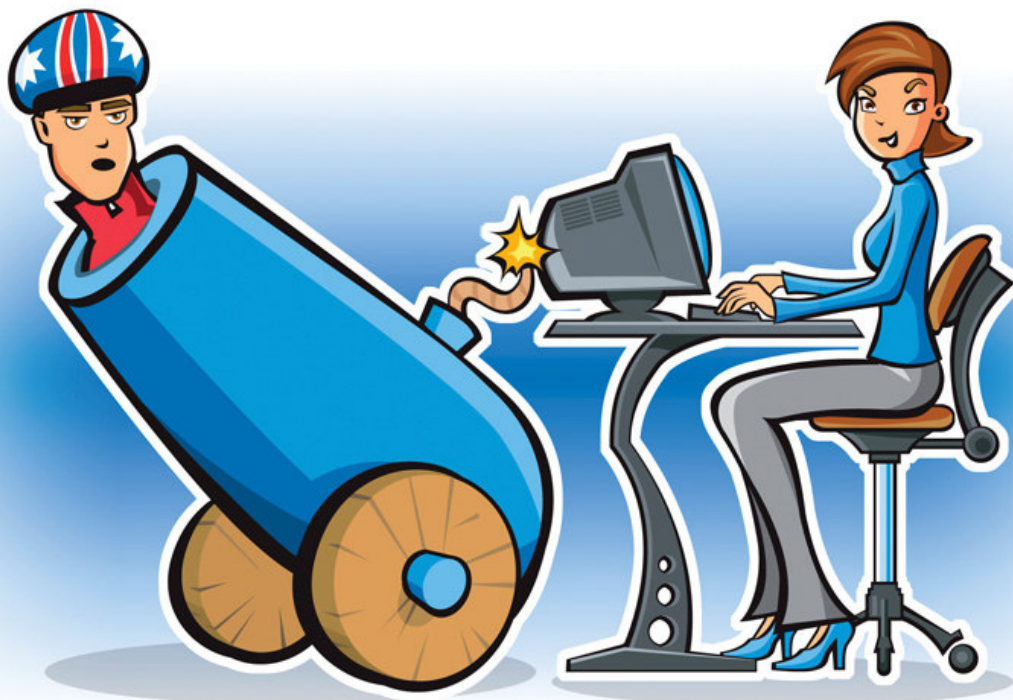
Typing Speed Worksheets

Table of Contents

4
section

– Yes, yes, yes, I know you type quickly. But, I'm begging you, just focus on your accuracy for the next couple of minutes…

Self-Assessment Questionnaire for the Final Test

section 4

Take the Final Test. When you are finished, leave the results window open on your screen. Then, answer the questions below:

1 – Please indicate your speed in words per minute: _____

2 – Is it what you were expecting? Why or why not? _____
_____
_____
_____

3 – Are you happy with your speed? Why or why not? _____
_____
_____
_____

4 – Please indicate your number of errors: _____

5 – Is it what you were expecting? Why or why not? _____
_____
_____
_____

6 – Are you happy with your number of errors? Why or why not? _____
_____
_____
_____

7 – Please indicate, on a scale of one to ten, how closely you followed the basic position rule during the test. Were all your fingers in the basic position, and did your fingers return to the basic position after every keystroke?

<div align="center">

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   1 0

</div>

8 – Please indicate, on a scale of one to ten, how closely you followed the typing technique. Do you type every key using the finger recommended by the technique?

<div align="center">

1   2   3   4   5   6   7   8   9   1 0

</div>

9 – How do you feel about your answers to questions 7 and 8?
_____
_____
_____

Slow Down, Hare!

This activity is for students who make a lot of errors, even if they type quickly.

About the activity

section 4

1. Ask the students to look under the Statistics tab and to note the speed in words per minute as well as the number of errors for certain practice texts selected by the teacher.

2. Explain to the students that, in many establishments, a number of words are subtracted from the score for every error.

3. This number of words can range anywhere between three and ten.

4. Ask them to subtract, for every practice text, three words per error, using the calculation table on the next page.

5. Ask them to draw a conclusion.

Calculation worksheet in words per minute minus errors

Name: _____

4
section

Text name	Number of errors	Multiplied by 3	Speed in words per minute minus the previous result	What is your conclusion?

• **Typing Speed**

Improvement

What are the Improvement exercises?

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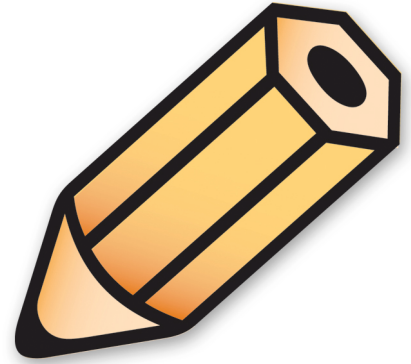### Which Improvement exercises help improve speed?

The Improving Speed exercise proposes the characters that the student generally types the slowest.

We suggest that you alternate between this exercise and Typing Pal Prescription, which proposes a combination of the main challenges in terms of both speed and accuracy.

Appendix 2 : Letter to the parents

Sir/Madam,

I would like to inform you that our school now has access to *Typing Pal School*, the best tool for learning how to type. Your child can now practice directly from home via the Internet.

Technological evolution and the ever-growing presence of the Internet in our daily lives have made it so that keyboard proficiency has become a must for your child who will later find him/herself at a professional training center, college, university, or in the labor market.

As a parent, we ask that you encourage your child to improve on what he/she has learned by reminding him/her to practice at home every week. He/she can log in at this address: http://school.typingpal.com

The institution code is: _____

We wish your child the best of luck with his/her typing.

_____
Teacher