



INSTRUCTION GUIDE

CD-ROM SOFTWARE

Teaching kids to type in an hour on a Qwerty keyboard using proper technique.

INTRODUCTION

Can you remember learning to ride a bike?

First, you sat on the bike. Someone held the seat and the steering wheel while running alongside you. Next, they ran along with you, only holding onto the seat while you pedaled and began to steer. At some point, they knew to let you go on your own while they continued to run along cheering you on as you wobbled your way down the street. The same psycho-motor skill technique used to teach you to ride a bike is used to teach kids 7-12 years old to type in an hour. There are 4 steps in learning a psycho-motor skill.

1. Conscious Learning - focus attention on a new activity.
2. Trial and Error - mimic the action.

3. Refinement and Practice - repeat the action and build muscle memory.

4. Automatic Performance – execute without conscience thought.

To return to our bicycle analogy; you were very proud of your accomplishments that first time out on the bike. However, had you never attempted to ride a bike again you might have lost whatever progress was made that day and you certainly never would have progressed to a level of automatic performance.

WHAT WE DO

Keyboard Town PALS™ is a computer keyboard program that teaches elementary school children the letters and symbols on a Qwerty keyboard in an hour using proper technique. It is fast and efficient as well as enjoyable and easy to learn.

Keyboard Town PALS™ accomplishes this through the PALS system. PALS stands for **PURPOSEFUL ASSOCIATIVE LEARNING SYSTEM.**

The PALS system works on the classic principle that two objects seen or heard together will often become linked in our minds. In addition to utilizing association and numerous memory techniques to improve retention, we incorporate different cues throughout the video to

stimulate the visual, auditory, and kinesthetic senses.

Other typing programs

Traditional typing programs rely on rote drill and competitive games with lots of timed trials and contests to see who can make the fewest mistakes in the least amount of time. The drills and exercises can bore even the most interested students. They can easily frustrate students and destroy their self-confidence and desire to learn, but most importantly, they stifle creativity. And such programs can take a semester or a year to master. There had to be a better system to teach kids to type.

Our program

The KTP CD is the result of over five years of research in refining and developing a better way to teach young children to type and minimizing performance anxiety.

The KTP program uses puppets, music and humor to create a playful relaxed atmosphere and taps into a child's natural curiosity and desire to learn new things.

One of our most radical features is the de-activating of the delete and backspace buttons. A functioning delete button causes children to lift their right hand off of the keyboard clicking the mouse to erase errors. This interruption in typing requires a re-orientation back to the keyboard. The

starting and stopping motion interrupts the learning process and misdirects the student's focus. Therefore, we have eliminated the delete button and backspace button and the desire to constantly correct mistakes. Mistakes and forgetfulness are part of the learning process.

WHAT WE DON'T DO

1. Surveillance – There is no need to hover and watch over the child while learning.
2. Competition – We do not put children in a win-lose situation where only one person can come out on top.
3. Over-control – We do not grade or count the number of incorrect letters pressed.
4. Pressure – We do not establish grandiose expectations for a child's performance. This often ends up instilling aversion for a subject or activity. Unreasonably high expectations often pressure children to perform within strictly prescribed guidelines.
5. Time – We do not have timed speed tests. If intrinsic motivation is one key to a child's creativity, the crucial element in cultivating it is time: open-ended time for the child to savor and explore a particular activity or material to make it his own. The results will be apparent after an hour.

GOOD FOR ALL TYPES OF LEARNERS

Keyboard Town PALS™ is successful with all types of children, including those with learning differences. Each child may move through the program at his own pace without fear or shame of being compared to other children.

Each finger covers three keys except for the pointer fingers. They press six keys each. In each case, however, the action always flows from Home Key Street to Downtown and then Uptown. The program is generally taught in two 30-minute lessons; first the left hand is taught and then the right hand is taught. The total instruction time is one hour.

However, if a teacher prefers, the program can easily be taught one finger at a time.

Instead of two 30 minute sessions, the teacher has the option to divide the program into eight stand-alone lessons. Each lesson will take about 6 to 7 minutes.

THE FUN BEGINS:

The CD opens with light ragtime music setting the tone for the fun that follows.

Sunny, a puppet who guides and instructs the students

throughout the CD, welcomes students to Keyboard Town and points out that this small town has only 3 streets.

There is HOME KEY STREET, DOWNTOWN AND UPTOWN.

The houses are all placed on a diagonal just like the keys on a keyboard.

Students are directed to assume proper posture position and to place the little finger of the left hand on the first house on Home Key Street. This is the A key. The Amy puppet lives in the first house, opens her doors and begins her story on home key-street.

THE PATTERN IS ESTABLISHED:

Amy next takes the student Downtown and last, Uptown.

This will be a repeated format for all 26 letters and four symbols.

After being introduced to each letter and symbol, a digital hand appears and always demonstrates proper technique before asking the child to type letters or words.

Students' eyes will be drawn to the text box screen and they will watch their letters scroll by as they type.

Within a few minutes, students are typing real words.

SELF-MOTIVATION CAN'T BE BEAT!

Being able to type words so quickly motivates the child to

continue. Instead of prodding a hostile student to complete a program of randomly placed letters, you will have an enthusiastic eager participant.

At the end of the instruction, teachers may print out a copy of the child's work as well as the post video assessment.

KEY TO SUCCESS

Educators agree that for today's child, learning to type properly is a necessary skill. But you hold the key to success. Upon completing the CD, many children request to watch the puppet show again. This is good and will reinforce the associations. Some kids will lapse back to the bad habit of hunting and pecking (hunting and pecking puts excessive strain on wrist and hand muscles, tendons, and ligaments).

Here is where our bike analogy can be helpful again. How does a child acquire speed and accuracy in typing? You had to get on the bike again and again until every action was performed smoothly. Every time the child sits down at the computer, he needs to place his fingers on home key-street. No matter what he is typing, the **real-life-task applications** (emails, assignments, homework, book reports, creative writing sessions and technical instruction) will lead to **automatic performance and speed and accuracy.**

The best part is that it doesn't take long. After a week or two, step four of learning a psycho-motor skill will be cemented, and the child will be typing automatically.

Today, most homes own one or more computers.

Therefore, it makes sense for parents and teachers to partner in this process and direct their child's fingers to their correct positions on home key-street.

IN CONCLUSION

Keyboard Town PALS™ is a valuable tool to help children succeed in a world that's been transformed by computers and technology. It will provide them with a skill that can liberate creativity, and increase productivity in school, at college and eventually, on the job.

AT A GLANCE

- **Loading the program prior to the lesson** will be helpful to younger children.
- **Click to start Lesson 1.** The left hand lesson is approximately **30 minutes**.
- The program is to be taught on **two consecutive days** for maximum results.
- **Lesson 2** begins with a **review of the left hand** and then proceeds to **teach the right hand keys**. Lesson 2 is approximately **30 minutes**.

- Each lesson may be divided into **four 6 - 7 minute mini-lessons. Each mini-lesson teaches only the keys pressed by that one finger.**
- Before beginning the program check that students have **proper typing posture.**
 - a. The chair height must be high enough so that the child's **hands and wrists**, when extended to the keyboard, are **below waist level.** This will avoid fatigue.
 - b. **Elbows** are to be kept **close to the waist.**
 - c. For optimum comfort the **feet are to be supported.**
 - d. Center the body to the H key.



- Children should do a few minutes of **warm-up finger limbering** exercises such as wiggling, drumming and flexing fingers.
- For younger children the meaning of straight and diagonal should be explained and demonstrated.

- There are **3 main rows** of operative keys in our program. All other keys except for shift and space bar are inoperative for this introductory CD.
- The **fingers** are always grounded on the **middle row** of keys which is called **home key-street**.
- **The little finger of the left hand always rests on the first key, the A key.**
- **The pointer finger of the right hand always rests on the J key.**
- The **box at the bottom of the screen** has been designated as the child's **typing area** and is activated by **pressing any operating key**. The child is free to begin typing at any time.
- The **delete and backspace buttons are deactivated. This curbs anxiety related to fear of making mistakes.**
- Several letters **C, R, U, and Y** are taught using a **SOUND CLUES**, not spelling clues.
- The spacer bar is always pressed by the right thumb. The **tool bar** offers a **color change option** for both the typing area **background and the choice of font color**. This color option allows each child to choose and individualize his screen-color-combinations. While it's fun for all children to experiment with

color combinations, some children may actually experience improved visual perception. However, we have chosen to limit print-outs to **black and white option only**.

- The assessment tool will evaluate a child's mastery of the 30 letters and symbols on the keyboard after only one hour of instruction. In line with our stress-free philosophy, we do not time-test.

KTP has produced companion **teaching aids**, all of which are designed to cement the storyline. An effective tool is to have the child recall aloud the storyline as he uses the tools listed below. For example, as the child fills in the review sheets and builds the keyboard, he should recite the story as taught on the video. The following products may be purchase from our website:

Instruction Coloring Storybook

Activity Pad

Stickers

Concentration Card Game

Placemat of the town

No matter what the typing activity, applying the newly learned skill to **real-life-task applications, and keeping**

**the hands correctly positioned on home key-street, is
the key to success.**

Donna Katz and Rita Herman
Keyboard Town PALS, LLC
1-866-200-8881
www.keyboardtownpals.com