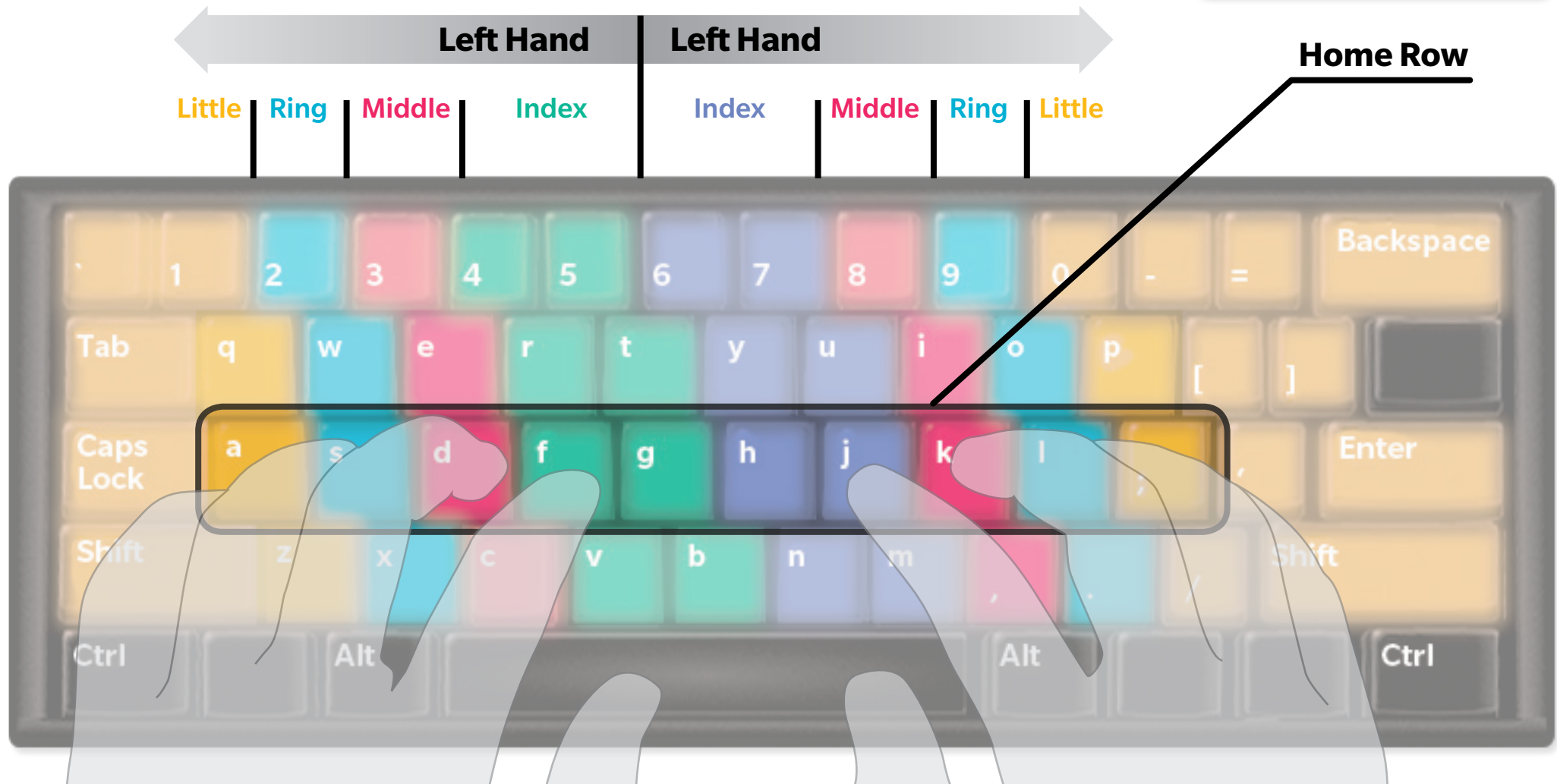


Master the touch typing method!

“Touch typing” is typing without looking at the keyboard, relying instead on the touch of the keyboard and finger placement to help you type quickly and accurately. The keyboard below illustrates the correct hand starting position or “Home Row” and between the lines are color-coded keys that each finger controls. For example, the left index finger press the [F], [G], [R], [T], [V], [B], [4], and [5] keys. These keys form a group.



Typing Activities & Tips for your Classroom!

1) Masking the Keys

Beginning typists find it hard to type without looking at the keys, but the occasional glance is detrimental to the development of long-term skills and students can grow dependent on these quick glances. Challenge students with personal goals, stressing the importance of learning the keys and perfecting their accuracy, not speed, at the beginning of the course.

Tip:

1. Using cardboard and tape, cut out and construct a three-sided box that covers the keyboard but allows room for the student's hands to type freely below, then leave the cover in place until they know the keyboard.
2. Cover each key with a piece of graphic masking tape that leaves no residue on the keyboard. Leave it in place until the students have learned the correct way of "touch typing."

By covering the keys themselves, students are more likely to accept the challenge and work on not looking. Assign a "peek-free" touch typing goal for each student. Once confidently achieved, remove the tape or box and reward students as appropriate. Throughout the semester, individual students may need to reinforce this skill. If you have more than one computer in class, either use the box or mask the keys and switch that keyboard from station to station as required.

2) Language and Words

Introduce beginners to sets of keys in stages, starting with ASDF. Once students achieve a certain proficiency with these keys, introduce the next set. This set-by-set progression continues until the typist gains familiarity with the complete keyboard.

Activity:

As you introduce each new set of keys, ask your class to see how many actual words can be formed from the limited letters being used. For example, for ASDF: sad, fad, add, dad, etc.

Hold contests for the most obscure words, the longest words, or the greatest number of words students can make from these sets. Try organizing teams and having them create sentences, paragraphs, or even short stories from a pool of words that each team member contributes. You can give awards for the silliest sentences, the most imaginative paragraph, or the most ridiculous story.

If using Mavis Beacon software:

Load the winning entries into a file and create Custom Lessons for practicing each set of keys. This further personalizes student-typing sessions and helps promote vocabulary, thinking, and research skills while developing a collaborative learning environment.

3) Type a Song!

Music plays an important part in the lives of students. Have them bring in the lyrics* to their favorite songs** to type out. In addition to contemporary music, suggest that they search for special children's songs and those from other decades like the '20s, '40s, '60s and '70s. This diversity will reveal the evolving social and cultural norms. Good sources of material include old sheet music, songbooks, LPs, the library, and the Internet.

If using Mavis Beacon software:

Import song lyric text as a Custom lesson so students can practice typing them within the program - and save them to use for other classes!

**Please remember that song lyrics are protected by copyright law and should be treated accordingly.*

***It would also be advisable to screen lyrics for appropriate language.*



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