



Here is a really-quick intro to the Mantis keyboard layout. Don't let the hexagonal keys confuse you! The diagram above highlights the rotated and staggered columns with alternating shading for each finger. Dark circles indicate the home keys for each digit.

The letter keys are mostly QWERTY but the index fingers are missing one key. Therefore **J** and **B** are moved to the pinkies. **Space** is on the right thumb home key. To provide the same functionality as a normal 85% keyboard, each key performs multiple jobs (colored legends):

- Black: Alpha layer for normal letters with a (nearly) QWERTY layout
- Green: Symbol layer with numbers and symbols
- Red: Function layer with function, navigation and editing keys
- Blue: Modifiers **Ctrl**, **Win/OS** (⌘), **Alt** (⌥), **Shift** (⇧), **AltGr**

Activate the Symbol and Function layer by holding **Sym** or **Fn** respectively, just like you'd hold shift to type UPPERCASE. Modifiers are also (mostly) activated by holding a key, rather than tapping it. **Fn+X** toggles an alternate Alpha layer based on Colemak-DH.

The Sym layer has numbers on the home row and most shifted number symbols above. The Fn layer has a navigation cluster on the right, editing keys on the left, F1-F12 across the top row. **C**, **V** and the right thumb keys control the RGB backlight, from left to right: mode, speed, colour, saturation, brightness. Hold **Shift** to decrease instead of increase.

Common combos of layers and modifiers are comfortable without twisting or moving your hands. Uncommon combos with multiple keys on the same thumb are **Fn+AltGr** and **Sym+Alt/Shift**. The Sym layer works without **Shift**, while **Alt** can be used as a one-shot mod. E.g. if you need to type **Alt+1**, tap **Alt**, then hold **Sym** and tap **1**. The Symbol layer has a second **AltGr** on the left index finger to combine with symbols on the right thumb.

Customize the keymap for your needs with [Vial](https://get.vial.today/) (<https://get.vial.today/>). It updates the keymap on-the-fly and stores it on the keyboard itself. You'll have your custom keymap with you wherever you take your keyboard. Happy typing!