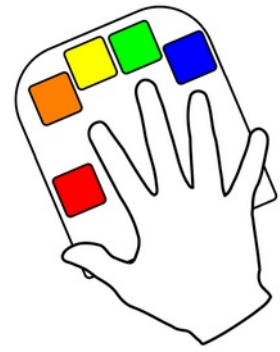


Beginner's Guide To The Quirkey Keyboard



Hello Quirkey

Do you have a Quirkey and think “How do I use this thing?” Then you are reading the correct document.

If you do not have a Quirkey, it is probably a good idea to get one at this point.

You are looking for a plastic shell with six keys on it. A beginner's Quirkey is slightly special in that each key is a different colour, but the operation is the same for all Quirkeys. If yours does not have coloured keys, use your imagination (or coloured pieces of sticky tape). Just leave it unplugged for now.

Five of these keys are arranged in the same pattern as the tips of your digits. One of them is at thumb level, but set slightly inside. It may be coloured black. This is called the “Command Key”.

Rule 1: Do not play with the Command Key.

The five keys under your digit tips are the ones you will be using to type letters, numbers, punctuation and so forth. As there are five keys, and five digits, there is no need to move your finger away from the key directly underneath it. Rest the heel your palm on the swell of the Quirkey and make yourself comfortable. Leaving your fingertips resting on the keys is fine, as long as you don't click them just yet.

Rule 2: Your fingers do not move between keys.

Rule 2 is very important. Because neither your fingers or the keys go anywhere, you do not have to look around to see where things are. They're right there where you left them. So once you have learned to use a Quirkey, you have also learned to touch type.

Plug It In

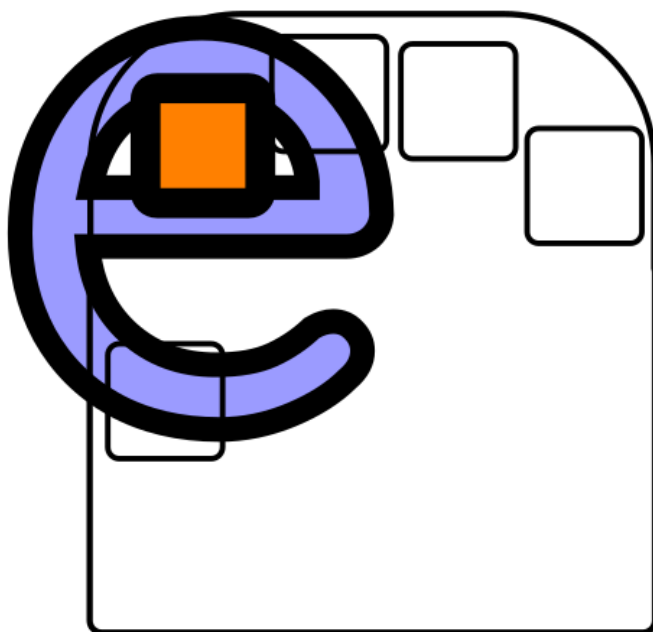
You'd better connect your Quirkey to the computer then. Put the Quirkey's USB cable into the matching hole on the computer, and let your computer do whatever it does to detect a new keyboard. If your computer asks, tell it you have a standard US keyboard and no you don't need to set up drivers or other languages thank you very much.

Sometimes computers take a few seconds longer than you would expect to recognize that the Quirkey is plugged in. We don't know why. Computers are like that. But how do you know your Quirkey is worky?

Start some form of editing program on your computer. It doesn't matter which one, just pick one you are familiar with. The Quirkey does not need any special setting up or fiddling about so it should work with all of them.

Are you ready to type something now? We can wait... Ok, now you're ready we'll start with the letter: **e**

This is the **e**asiest letter. Press down gently with the pad of your index finger (that's the one closest to your thumb) on the key under it until it goes 'click!'



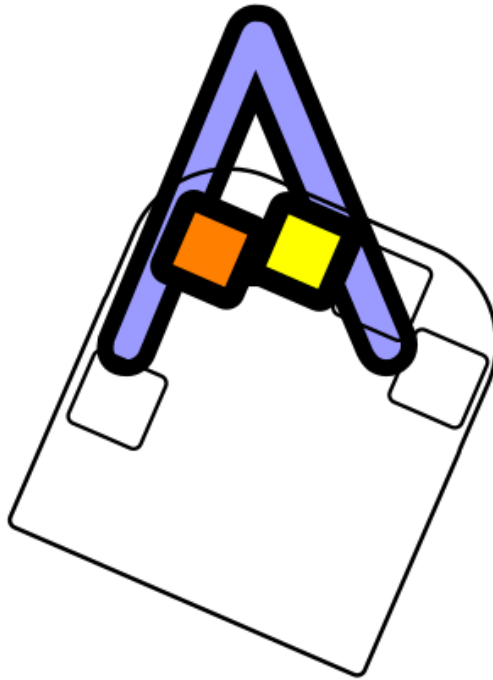
On a beginner's Quirkey that will be coloured orange. Now you can lift your finger again. It should make a tinier click and an 'e' should appear on the screen. Do that a few times until you get the feel of it.

Now try pressing the key down, wait a second, then lift your finger. Notice how the 'e' only appears when you *release* the key? The Quirkey will only interpret your keys when you lift the last finger.

Rule 3: The Quirkey waits until you have lifted your fingers. There is no rush.

Now let's try that on a letter that requires two keys: **a**

We've tried to represent this as the short horizontal line across the middle of a capital 'A' so:



Hold down the index finger **and** middle finger keys at the same time – orange and yellow key if you're playing in colour. Now lift the fingers up. No rush, remember. You should see 'a' appearing next to all your e's. Now you can type aeaeae, which is an improvement.

Time For A 'P'

Enough of these vowels. Let's have a consonant: **p**

This time we will exercise all your fingers and your thumb, just keep your thumb away from the Command Key! Ok, push down all the main five keys at once, and then lift your fingers back up. You have just p'd.

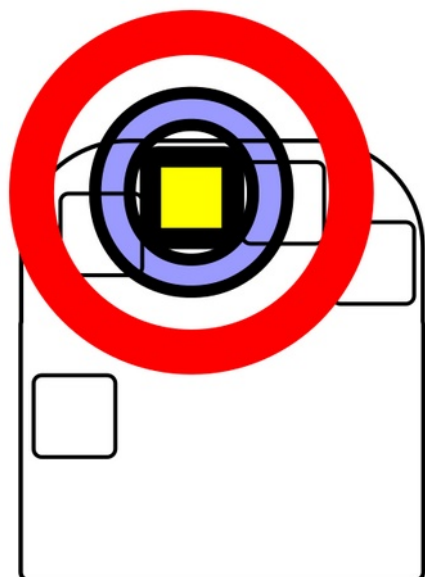


If you didn't get a 'p' try again, just take it easy and make sure you have held all the keys down – it's possible you missed one. Or two. See, it works.

You can now type your first word: pea

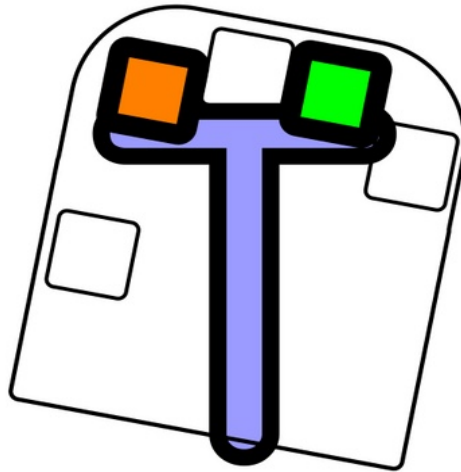
Well, it probably looks more like eeeeeaaaaeappea and you will want to know that you can add spaces by clicking just the thumb key – but Rule 1, don't touch the Command Key!!!

Great, you can type 'pea ape' – so easy you can do it with your eyes closed. I bet you are itching to try out all the individual finger keys, probably with your eyes open again. Go on, get it out of your system. Start with the **o** right on the middle finger like the centre of a target. Have fun, see you in the next chapter.



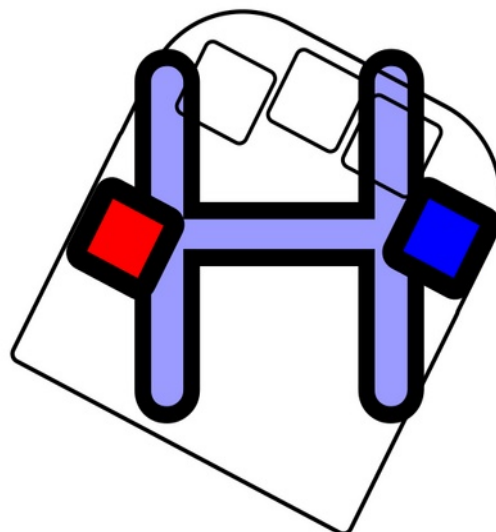
The

The time has come to learn the most common word in the English language: the. We'll start with the 'T' which uses the index and ring finger keys (orange and green if you're typing on a rainbow Quirkey). We think it looks a bit like the line across the top of a capital 'T' like this:



Your 'T' will be a lower case 't' though, which is something we'll fix in the next chapter so hold that thought. You can now type "potato" (or "eat a toe" which is mildly disturbing but progress of a sort).

Now for 'H' which again has a line going right across the middle of it, but slightly lower down (red and blue for those with colours). So we picture it as this, with the thumb and little finger keys:



Can you type "the potato" with your eyes closed? When you can, go to the next chapter and we'll show you how to get into and out of trouble with Rule 1.

Breaking Rule 1

About that Command Key. It can do many things, and the reason you've been subtly discouraged from playing with it is that you also need to be able to undo those things. Let us start with the simplest thing it does.

You now have permission to click The Command Key. Once.

No smoke? Fire? Things from The Dungeon Dimensions? Good.

So what has happened then?

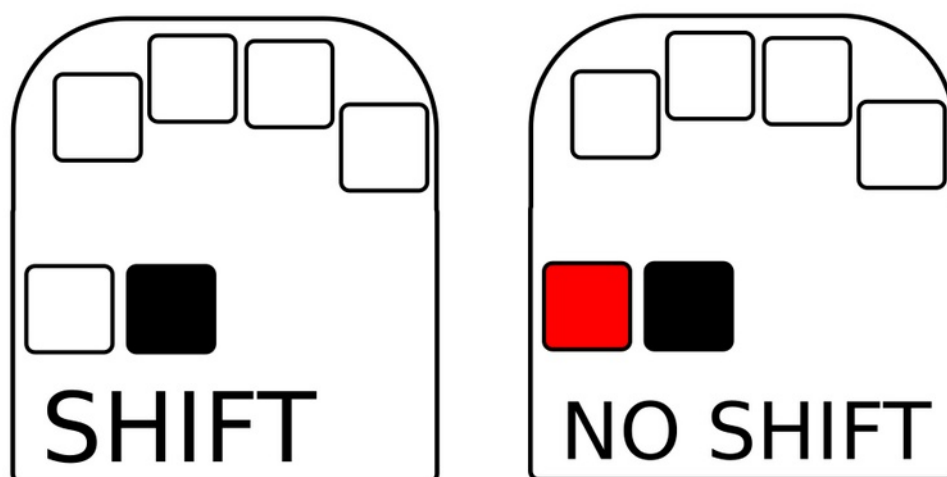
If you try typing a 'T' now you will get a 'T' not a 't'! Keep typing 'he' and you end up with 'The'. So pressing the Command Key once will make the next letter a capital letter. Basically it does exactly the same as the shift key on your old keyboard.

But wait, there's more. Let's try that again, but first press the Command Key *twice*. Now type 'the'. See? EVERYTHING IS IN CAPITALS. HELP! I'M STUCK IN CAPITALS HOW DO I GET OUT?

And that is why Rule 1.

You have locked in a shift. There are several other types of shift that the Command Key can get you into, but the way to clear them all is the same:

Press the thumb key **and** the Command Key at the same time. This can take a bit of getting used to, to be honest, but listen for both switches clicking and you'll figure it out. At worst, you'll accidentally type a space, so feel free to have at it several times. So, to summarize:



Now you can start a sentence with a capital letter. With that taken care of, and now we know how to get out of weird shift states that make the Quirkey do "funny things to my computer" we can let you loose on the rest of the

alphabet, and some other common command combinations, like the Enter and Delete keys. Conveniently the Delete key looks much like the 'D' key but uses the Command Key instead of the thumb key. You can learn two keys at once!

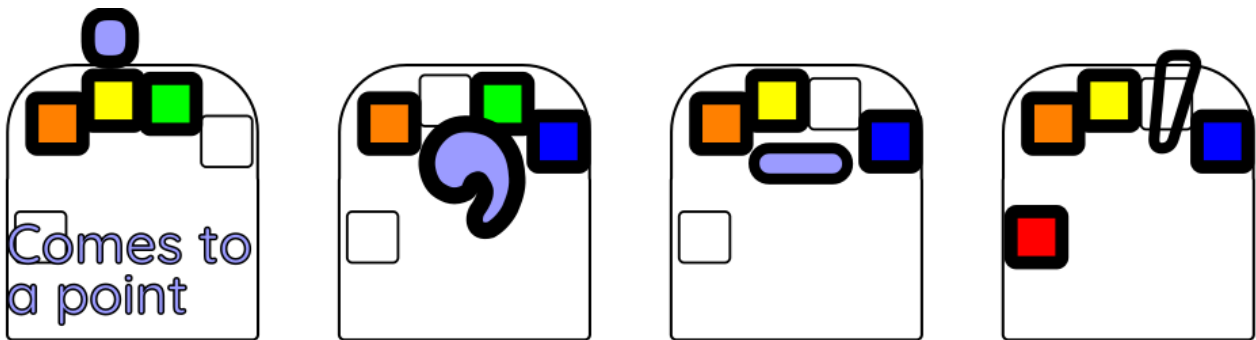
If you print this out and trim it to size, you can stick it on the desk next to your Quirkey. That keyboard in the way? Well, move it somewhere else, you might not be needing it for much longer anyway...



Getting To The Point .

What we need to be able to do now is to finish the sentence with a full stop, or as some countries say, a period.

As you have probably worked out by now, there are only 31 characters that can be typed by using combinations of five keys. The alphabet has 26, you've found the space character, that leaves us with 4 key combinations before we have to start using the more advanced "Command Key shifts" (spoiler alert: that's in the next chapter). Those remaining 4 combinations have been used for the most common punctuation symbols:



As well as the full stop we have a comma, hyphen and apostrophe. These are the last characters you have to learn for regular typing, so it's worth the effort.

Quick note: If you have turned on Shift, your computer will think that you have pressed the shift key when you type `.,-'` so will do exactly the same thing as your regular keyboard would do and come up with `><_"`

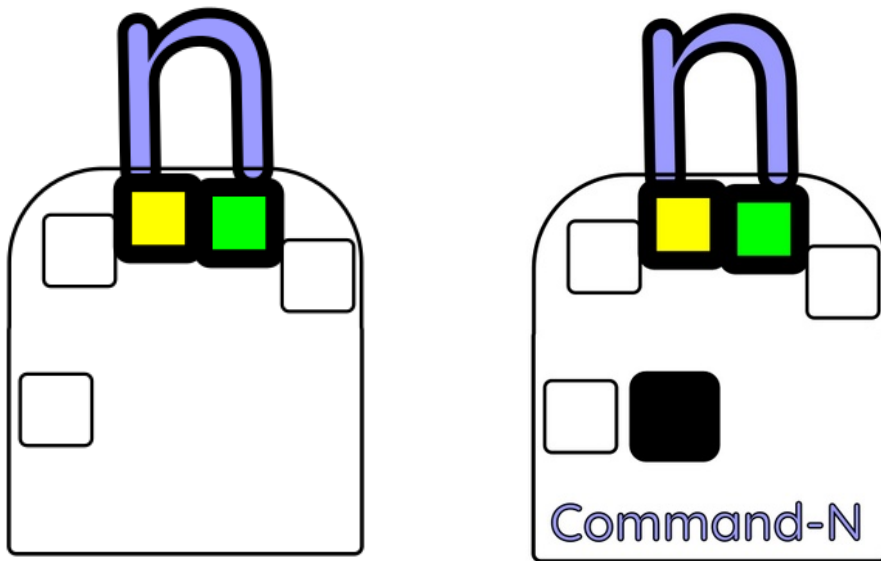
So take the time to practice what you've learned. Once you can manage the alphabet – while only peeking a little bit anyway – you are ready to take on the next chapter where we will learn to count.

Counting On Command

Now you've got the hang of the Command Key for capitals and a few basic essentials, it's time to take it to the next level: Numbers.

Trust me, learning to count on a Quirkey is a heck of a lot easier than learning all the letters of the alphabet!

To make things easy to remember, the command to turn on numbers is based on the letter 'N'. What we do here is to use the Command-N combination, which is just like typing a regular 'N' but you also press the Command Key like this:



You have already discovered that use the Command Key to turn on Shift will only affect the next character. Pressing Command-N once does exactly the same thing.

Pressing Command-N twice will leave you in Number Shift until you hit the No Shift (that was the tricky both thumb keys at once manoeuvre, just to jog your memory).

So hit Command-N twice, and we'll go back to the editor on your computer to try it out.

The first number we'll do is zero. Why? Because it is the same key combination as 'O' and you know that one. Try it. Middle finger, remember.

Because you will often be typing spaces along with the numbers, the thumb key will still produce a space. For your convenience, other useful combinations like full stop, delete and enter also work just as they did before.

With Numeric Shift in operation, we have a whole new set of key combinations that we can use for punctuation and so forth. But for the moment we will concentrate on the rest of the numbers.

As the thumb is spoken for already, we have to start at number one with our index finger, which is how most people count anyway. Two is the thumb and index finger, and for number three we add in the middle finger and so on:



Now try it: **0123**

Great, now everyone knows the code to my suitcase lock.

When we get to five, we run out of keys, so we just start counting on our fingers the other way like this:



Note: Numeric Shift is not the same thing as the Num Lock key on your ordinary keyboard. As the Quirkey does not have a numeric keypad, the Num Lock is not really applicable. We'll get to Pg Up, End, and cursor movement in the next chapter.

The author has got this far, and is still figuring out how to complete the documentation.

And just in case you were wondering, why yes. This manual was indeed typed in only using a Quirkey.