How to type faster [closed]

Asked 16 years, 3 months ago   Modified 5 years, 7 months ago

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25

I've typed around 75wpm for the last few years but I've always wondered how people type +100wpm.

I've searched but I primarily find typing tutors that teach you to type.. not teach you to type faster. So far the only tip I've come across is to learn dvorak.

Are there exercises or tips to help break through the 75wpm wall?

`typing` `touch-typing` `performance` `wpm`

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edited Sep 18, 2008 at 16:32

Mark Biek
151k ● 54 ● 158 ● 201

asked Sep 18, 2008 at 16:20

raema
285 ● 1 ● 3 ● 4

1   Simply put, keep practicing and benchmark yourself. I type 95 wpm without dvorak and learned typing in High School 17 years ago. – Marc Jun 13, 2009 at 22:28

I'd recommend the new touchtyping.guru where the algorithm helps you to learn instead of outdated typing tutors – dzezzz Feb 17, 2016 at 16:32

This site has a free excercise for that: learn-2-type.com – jcslzr Mar 17, 2017 at 21:18

25 Answers

Sorted by: Highest score (default) ⇕

14

I'm assuming Steve Yegge's recent post prompted this? The comments contain a number of tools and games for measurement and improvement, both online and off. I'll list them here:

- Gnu Typist

- TyperA

- TypeRacer (Several people named this site)

- Typespeed

- typeonline.co.uk

Update: I just tried GNU Typist as per Mark Biek's suggestion, and I have to say that it seems like the best of the lot mentioned so far. It looks like there is a Windows version available, although I'm sure there are prettier (and more expensive) apps out there.

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Setting yourself up in an ergonomic typing position is a good start. Take a look at the diagram here - notice the arms in a straight line, feet on the floor, etc.

In my experience most people tend to slow down when they get to unusual keys - numbers, symbols, punctuation, etc, so maybe some focused practice on those key combinations? practice typing out long strings of numbers and symbols, maybe try to use some Perl code as your copy-page :)

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1   Heh, Perl code reminds me of symbol practice from Mavis Beacon. – Michael Myers ♦ Sep 18, 2008 at 17:03

Lots of really great information in the comments. I like the idea of practicing more unusual words, using a blank keyboard, or GNU typist. type racer is fun as well. Thanks!

– raema Sep 18, 2008 at 17:04

5 the diagram link is broken. I think it is this: yale.edu/ergo/workstations.html – code-ninja Sep 7, 2009 at 18:51

This excercise help me to type faster: learn-2-type.com

– jcslzr Dec 20, 2015 at 19:35

12

One of the things that helped me was something I learned from pianist... when doing a touch typing program, deliberately slow down and speed up your rate of typing from disgustingly slow to really fast in slow waves. This helps train yourself to figure out how to get your fingers to work together faster and reinforces the key locations.

Another one is perhaps a speed reading course might help? Generally your fingers are the last line of slow down in typing.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:24

David
18.2k ● 10 ● 73 ● 99

Yep, muscle memory! Start slow and make sure you get fingers going in the right motion. There is nothing worse than making muscles "remember" the wrong movement.
– Michael D Aug 18, 2010 at 15:15

9

If you want to practice while having a little fun check out http://typeracer.com

It let's you compete against other people and trust me, there's nothing better to get you typing faster than normal than a little healthy competition.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:28

Practice!

7

[GNU Typist](#) is a great, free, multi-platform program for practicing. They have different sets of exercises for practicing touch-typing as well as general Speed Drills.

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edited Jun 20, 2020 at 9:12

Community `Bot`
1 ● 1

answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:25

Mark Biek
151k ● 54 ● 158 ● 201

6

Like a previous poster said, practice, practice, practice. But, if you are a developer (since you are on this site I assume that you are), then writing code will probably not be the type of practice that you need to improve your typing skills past your current maximum. I would even argue that 75wpm is more than adequate for any code writing task. But if you really want to practice more then I would recommend picking up a copy of [Typing of the Dead](#)

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:29

pdavis
3,211 ● 2 ● 31 ● 31

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Consider switching to a keyboard layout that's designed for quick typing instead of just being layed out as it is for historical reasons, e.g. Dvorak or Colemak.

For me, it also helped a lot to use the caps lock key as backspace, for example using SharpKeys on Windows.

If you are really hardcore, create your own keyboard layout. On Windows, you can do that with the Microsoft Keyboard Layout Creator.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 17:23

Henrik Heimbuerger
10.2k ● 9 ● 59 ● 72

I've just begun learning the DVORAK layout. It's quite difficult to begin with, and it makes me feel really slow. I average about 100wpm with Qwerty, but so far I'm getting about 50wpm on Dvorak after a day of practice. Will keep trying though. Will be interesting to see if I can surpass my qwerty. – Vincent McNabb Sep 20, 2008 at 5:58

The problem with Dvorak is that you don't always get to choose your keyboard. I support the code I write--all too often that means using a user's system. – Loren Pechtel Jun 13, 2009 at 22:42

▲

4

Chat. A lot.

I never received any touch-typing training. Infact, when i first started, i had to search the keyboard for the key...

Now after 7 years of IMing, its all muscle memory. I have never tried to speed my typing, but a lot of times it just flows without me even realizing that i am typing as i think. Also i have noticed i can type in my usernames and phrases i often use a LOT faster than the other things.

This may or may not have been a useful answer.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:26

Mostlyharmless
2,283 ● 19 ● 28

Chatting back in college is how I really improved my typing speed! – Scottie T Sep 18, 2008 at 17:09

2   Make sure when you chat tho that you don't degrade into "hi im typin a msg" typing. Make yourself type proper words with proper punctuation and capitalisation. – Adrian Clark Sep 18, 2008 at 17:29

1   I have never ever encountered proper words or punctuation or even case when programming. [J/K] – Mostlyharmless Sep 18, 2008 at 18:16

I like to use proper words and punctuation while writing my comments. It's also useful when writing an email to the rest of the team/boss/CV etc. It's very important to do that. – Vincent McNabb Sep 20, 2008 at 5:56

1   For me, this method is good for speed but the accuracy is terrible. – Artelius Oct 29, 2008 at 5:09

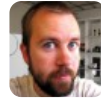Be careful, increasing your typing speed can increase the risk of carpal tunnel syndrome:

3

"The typing speed may affect risk, in some cases, however. For example, the fingers of typists whose speed is 60 words per minute exert up to 25 tons of pressure each day." [source]

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:35

Dave Rutledge
5,535 ● 7 ● 29 ● 24

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1   Hmm. I've never had that problem, but then I'm an avid smoker and coffee drinker so I'm probably getting enough breaks. – Vincent McNabb Sep 20, 2008 at 6:00

Dvorak apparently reduces that pressure since fingers spend less time travelling. Now, if only I could find the 20 mins a day for 40 days needed to switch! – Justin Lawrence Jun 13, 2009 at 22:10

3

Consistency and practice. Four things that improved my typing dramatically:

1. Find a comfortable keyboard that fits your hands very well. It's less about ergonomics or split keyboards, but more about finding one with perfect finger reach. And this means using the keyboard for a couple weeks to see if it fits. Once you pick a keyboard, use it 100% of time. Have the same keyboard at home and work.

2. Make sure your workstation is properly fitted to you. Basically, follow any decent ergonomics guide (90 degrees everywhere is WRONG!!!). All of this

"ergonomics" stuff has the benefit of stress on the rest of your body that can distract you or cause muscle fatigue (i.e. slower typing). Again, use the same workstation configuration everywhere--if that means getting the same expensive chair at home, do it.

3. When emailing, chatting, and posting, use complete words and sentences. Abbreviations, slang, and other "shortcuts" taught me a lot of bad typing habits and made me lazy. They also had a lot of awkward letter combinations that didn't show up in other places, including normal composition and coding.

4. Consistency. Use the same tools with the same settings and shortcuts all the time. The less time you spend worrying about how the software works and reaching for the mouse, the faster your typing will be.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 17:55

James Schek
18k ● 7 ● 53 ● 64

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You need to pick yourself up a copy of Typing of the Dead and start killing zombies. You'll be honing your typing skills and preparing for the eminent zombie apocalypse at the same time! Grab the demo to check it out!

In all seriousness, I've had this game for years and it really has helped me improve my typing skills and it's way more fun than any other typing program out there.

3

Type to the beat of a song. Start with a slow beat and work your way up. Don't rush it. Typing in bursts is often counter productive. Rhythm causes accuracy. The keyboard is just like a musical instrument and that's how musicians gain accuracy. You also need to practice regularly, even if just for 5 mins each day, to train your muscles.

I forget the details, but I remember the following was asked of some famous violinist:

"How did you learn to play so fast?"

His reply: "Really, really slowly".

:)

2

Use both hands (and all ten fingers).

To maximize your typing speed, you need to use the opposite pinky to shift/ctrl etc. and you want to minimize the amount of time you have to "reacquire" the home position. My biggest increase in typing when coding was

to really learn my IDE's keyboard shortcuts, since that eliminated the relatively slow process of using the mouse.

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edited Sep 18, 2008 at 18:10

answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:30

Steve Moyer
5,733 ● 1 ● 26 ● 34

Disable your mouse. (This is more for overall computer productivity than WPM.)

2

And I know you can't do it on your own, so get someone to enforce it.

It'll force you to learn keyboard shortcuts and consider keyboard-friendly options.
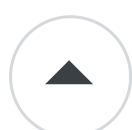
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answered Oct 29, 2008 at 5:16

Artelius
49k ● 13 ● 92 ● 106

A nice, tactile keyboard helps. Especially if it's blank. You'll be speeding along in no time.

1

http://store.daskeyboard.net/prdaskeulorb.html

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:22

Sadly, I think this link is now broken. – Justin Lawrence Jul 18, 2014 at 14:46

If you are having a problem with a particular key combo or miss-typing a particular word, or even just want to practice something, put it into your password. That way you get it fixed in your muscle memory as you can't even see what you are typing.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:58

Colonel Sponsz
1,711 ● 1 ● 12 ● 21

Practice, Practice and Practice

0

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:23

Robit
258 ● 1 ● 2 ● 11

Make it so that you cannot see the keyboard, this will force your mind to remember where the keys are. I used this when starting on the Colemak keyboard layout and it worked really well.

answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:29

Teifion
111k ● 76 ● 164 ● 196

He can type 75wpm. He already knows where the keys are.
– kirk.burleson Sep 18, 2010 at 19:13

0

The biggest way I increased my speed was by never looking down at the keyboard. I also have a very ergonomic keyboard that splits the keyboard in half so I get use to the right hand using the right side and the left hand using the left side.

answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:30

Primetime
579 ● 4 ● 10 ● 24

0

My hands aren't my bottleneck, so touchtyping doesn't make me any faster. I already don't get enough bitrate out of my head to max out my hunt and peck. some people (me) may never be able to TT effectively.

agreed on muscle memory though. common thngs like usr/pass always get boshed out quickly without thinking, but for code, my hands are not the bottleneck

answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:32

Get a Kinesis Essential keyboard. Keys are laid out better for faster typing.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 16:37

Russell Nelson

IRC-ing a lot helpen a great deal with me; Especially playing those Trivia like games where the fastest one gets the points. You can also try "typespeed" on Linux. If you really need more speed and you think you've mastered the technique you can also consider using the [Dvorak keyboard layout](); It will help you type fast but you really need to adapt to it.

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answered Sep 18, 2008 at 17:00

fijter
18k ● 2 ● 26 ● 28

I switched to Dvorak and my typing speed has increased, and I also learned after 8 years, how to touch type.

answered Sep 20, 2008 at 5:32

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I would double the suggestion(s) to switch to an ergonomic typing position. Also, I've noticed that I cannot type faster on my laptop. I have an external anti-RSI QWERTY keyboard (with the reverse-V style key layout), and I can type a lot faster with more accuracy on that that I can on my laptop.

answered Oct 29, 2008 at 6:15

0

If you use a contoured keyboard, like, for instance, the Kinesis Advantage keyboard, it is easier to type blind, since it is much easier to feel where your hands are on the keyboard if it isn't flat. After a couple of days I was typing considerably faster than on a normal keyboard. And there is also a version switchable to Dvorak layout, though I never bothered to try that.

About blind typing: in my experience, knowing where your hands are is the important and difficult thing in blind typing - and after years of keyboard use you know very well where the common keys are. So just concentrating every once in a while to have your hands in the proper

position for blind typing, and to type the keys with the right finger will get you into blind typing in a couple of months without any additional exercise.

(source: kinesis-ergo.com)

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