

# Meet the Keyboard Events

## WE'LL COVER THE FOLLOWING ^

- Say What?

To work with keyboards in a HTML document, there are three events that you will need to familiarize yourself with. Those events are:

- `keydown`
- `keypress`
- `keyup`

Given what these events are called, you probably already have a vague idea of what each event does. The `keydown` event is fired when you press down on a key on your keyboard. The `keyup` event is fired when you release a key that you just pressed. Both of these events work on any key that you interact with.

The `keypress` event is a special bird. At first glance, it seems like this event is fired when you press down on any key. Despite what the name claims, the `keypress` event is fired only when you press down on a key that displays a character (letter, number, etc.). What this means is somewhat confusing, but it makes sense in its own twisted way.

If you press and release a character key such as the letter `y`, you will see the `keydown`, `keypress`, and `keyup` events fired in order. The `keydown` and `keyup` events fire because the `y` key is simply a key to them. The `keypress` event is fired because the `y` key is a character key. If you press and release a key that doesn't display anything on the screen (such as the spacebar, arrow key, function keys, etc.), all you will see are the `keydown` and `keyup` events fired.

This difference is subtle but very important when you want to ensure your key presses are actually overheard by your application.

## Say What?

It is weird that an event called `keypress` doesn't fire when any key is pressed. Maybe this event should be called something else like `characterkeypress` , but that is probably a [moo point](#).