



## KEYBOARD PROGRAMMES

There are a wide variety of different keyboard programmes available from education suppliers, websites and shops selling software. The BBC Teach website has a section on developing typing skills <https://www.bbc.co.uk/teach/skillswise/typing/zjgm92p>. Below is a summary of a number of different programmes, although the list is not exhaustive. The information is from - <http://www.dyslexic.com/typing> and is relevant to children with a variety of different needs, not just those with dyslexia. The software package name will take you through to the individual product page. This gives more details including suppliers, prices and minimum specifications.

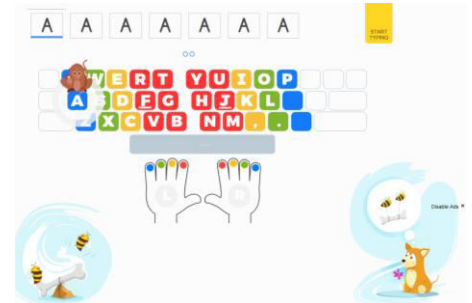
### Free programmes:

**BBC Bitesize Dance Mat Typing** – Free touch-typing programme aimed at teaching children and young people to touch type through fun interactive games and use of rewards as they improve their speed.

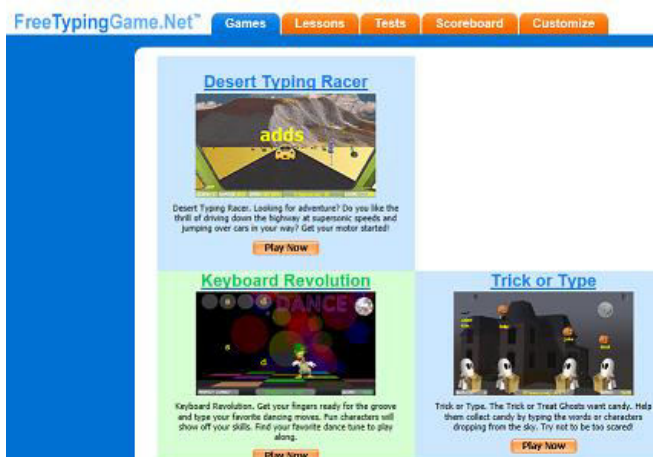


**Typing Club** - This typing programme is thorough and has two strands.

**Typing jungle** – this programme is best suited to younger children and children with learning disabilities. It goes slow and uses interactive games, stars and certificates to keep kids engaged and motivated. The other strand is more suitable for teaching older children/adults how to touch type.



### FreeTypingGame.Net



**Age:** All ages

**Setting:** Home or school

**Teacher's Settings:** Limited. Games and typing lessons can be customised to include specific letters.

**Average Length of Lessons:** 40 lessons or varying length. Tests and scoreboard also available.

**Number of Games:** 10



FreeTypingGame.net offers 40 different lessons to use for [free typing games](#). The most popular lesson, the home row (homerow) keys, definitely offers a challenge for those beginning to type. In addition to the home row lesson, FreeTypingGame.net offers several lessons based on particular key emphasis. Typists struggling with particular keys can use these lessons to improve their accuracy. FreeTypingGame.net offers lessons that emphasize hands and fingers too. There are a number of games which are enjoyable and engaging and the programmes track progress and set targets for improvement.

### **Download / Subscription programmes:**

#### **First Keys 3**

**Age:** 4-11 years

**Setting:** School

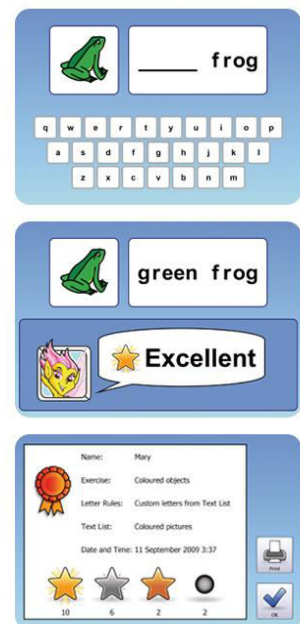
**Teacher's settings:** Yes

**Number of lessons:** Based on 6 activities which use word lists selected by the teacher

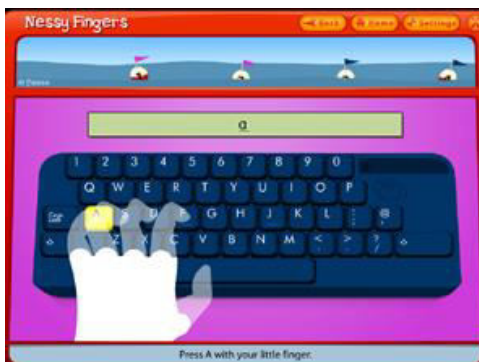
**Average length of lesson:** N/A

**Number of games:** N/A

First Keys to Literacy teaches keyboard skills whilst helping to develop early literacy skills. It's designed for young children or older children with learning difficulties as the location of keys is taught by associating letters with pictures and speech. This is an ideal programme for pre-school and KS1 children which quickly familiarises them with the keyboard. It is possible to change the font, size and case of the text and you can create your own word/picture lists and add phonetic speech to a new word. But this programme is only designed to teach the location of the letters on the keyboard, it does not test speed or accuracy.



#### **Nessy Fingers**



**Age:** 7-14 years

**Setting:** School or home

**Teacher's settings:** Yes

**Number of lessons:** 5

**Average length of lesson:** 3 - 10 minutes

**Number of games:** 9

Nessy Fingers has been developed from the popular Nessy Learning Programme. Nessy Fingers concentrates on teaching the layout of the keyboard via the alphabet in 5 short lessons. This unique approach allows rapid learning and keeps students motivated. Using the alphabet provides a logical and familiar learning structure and reinforces the alphabet sequence, while the carefully selected fonts and wide range of display options enable the programme to be personalised to individual student's needs.



Once the lessons are completed, students can access 9 enjoyable and colourful games to practise their skills. The “Skillometer” and Hall of Fame tracks progress and awards prizes encouraging and motivating the students. Nessy Fingers contains 233 word lists, including those from the Nessy Learning Programme. Words become progressively harder to improve both spelling and basic punctuation. New word lists and sentences can be created while students can add their own music to get into the rhythm of typing as they play the games. Overall, Nessy Fingers provides a fun and motivating environment to develop typing skills while reinforcing spelling skills.

### EnglishType Junior



**Age:** 7-14 years

**Setting:** School or home

**Teacher's settings:** Yes. Choose the level of vocabulary used in the lessons, which lesson the student is on and monitor progress.

**Number of lessons:** 8

**Average length of lesson:** 15 minutes

**Number of games:** 5

EnglishType Junior uses a mixture of lessons and games to harness your brain's ability to memorise movements without looking at the keyboard. Instructions are given in writing but also spoken. The material used in the lessons is tied to the National Curriculum with similar sounding words being used in each activity. Fun to use and easy to set-up, EnglishType Junior is suitable for both home and school and can be highly motivating for children.

### EnglishType Senior



**Age:** 12-16 years

**Setting:** School or home School or home

**Teacher's settings:** Yes. Choose the level of vocabulary used in the lessons, which lesson the student is on and monitor progress.

**Number of lessons:** 12

**Average length of lesson:** 15 minutes

**Number of games:** 3

EnglishType Senior uses a mixture of lessons and games to harness your brain's ability to memorise movements without looking at the keyboard. Instructions are given in writing but also spoken and colour is used to help learning. The material used in the lessons is based on 300 most commonly used words in adult vocabulary and includes quotations and proverbs. Different speed options make it excellent for mixed ability groups; challenging the brightest and providing extra help for those that need a slower pace of learning.



### TypeQuick for Students



**Age:** 7-14 years

**Setting:** School or home

**Teacher's settings:** Limited - can set goal typing speed.

**Number of lessons:** 10. Eight teach the layout of the keyboard, one improves speed and one improves accuracy. This is followed by the "Royal Challenge" for improving speed and accuracy.

**Average length of lesson:** 20-30 minutes

**Number of games:** Challenges and activities throughout the lessons.

TypeQuick is a typing programme from Australia for children. Based around a character called Kewala it teaches typing while you and Kewala tour the Australian Outback. Lessons can be tailored to individual students with frequent reports and graphs on the student's progress. There are 10 lessons taking you through all the keys then testing your speed and accuracy. The graphics and story-based activities in this programme make it highly enjoyable for children. However each lesson takes between 20 and 30 minutes and if the programme is stopped before a lesson is completed then the student's progress will not be recorded. This can make it unsuitable for children who find it difficult to concentrate for this length of time.

### Type To Learn



**Age:** 7-14 years

**Setting:** School

**Teacher's settings:** Extensive. Settings can be done at an individual or class level and include screen layout and appearance, vocabulary level and reporting functions.

**Number of lessons:** 22

**Average length of lesson:** 10 minutes

**Number of games:** 4

This is a very popular typing programme for children and is particularly suited to dyslexic users. It is a combination of games and exercises with two keys covered in each lesson. This interactive approach makes this programme very popular with all ages, including adults. The approach is varied with the emphasis on accuracy in the lessons and speed in the games. Type To Learn consists of 22 lessons, four games and a speed-building exercise. There are extensive teacher options including setting individual speed and accuracy goals and automatic record keeping for a whole class. However, to use Type To Learn both a class and pupil profile must be set up, making this programme less suitable to home use.



### Typing Instructor Deluxe



**Age:** 7 years +

**Setting:** Home. Can be used in a school environment but limited control functions

**Teacher's settings:** None and no settings for making a user follow a particular lesson pattern.

**Number of lessons:** 15 lesson plans

**Average length of lesson:** 10 minutes

**Number of games:** 10, plus over 300 articles for practicing typing skills.

Typing Instructor Deluxe uses a combination of lessons and games to teach typing. It is suitable for all levels of typist with a skills test available to identify the best level to use. There is no structured route through this programme so the user can choose which element they want to use - whether it is practice articles or games for improving skills or by going to a lesson for a particular key they have problems with. This makes it ideal for all the family whatever the level of typing skills they have. It is less suitable in a teaching environment as there is no way of directing the user to a certain level or activity. For adults it provides an excellent programme for first improving and then returning to practise their typing skills through the games or practice articles.

### KAZ Typing Tutor



**Age:** 7 years +

**Setting:** Home. Can be used in a school environment but limited control functions

**Teacher's settings:** None and no settings for making a user follow a particular lesson pattern.

**Number of lessons:** 5 steps to learning the keyboard, followed by an accuracy section and speed building section.

**Average length of lesson:** 90 minutes to learn the layout of the keyboard (can be broken into 5 lessons of 20 minutes each), then followed by sections for improving accuracy and speed.

**Number of games:** none

KAZ typing tutor is a popular British keyboard-training product that uses a simple, three-step approach to learn touch-typing. In the first step KAZ quickly familiarises you with the keyboard using five clever phrases. After this the user progresses on to an accuracy stage where the user practices typing first on individual words, then sentences, then paragraphs. Finally there is a speed building section where the user's speed and accuracy is tested using sentences appropriate to their reading level.

Unlike other typing tutors KAZ only uses real words for teaching typing. The instructions are available either as text on the screen or as speech but this must be chosen on installation. As the user can progress through the programme quickly and jump from section to section, it is particularly good for users who already have some basic keyboarding skills. Although Kaz does not contain any games or challenges for practising typing skills, this is seen as a benefit to many adult users who find them a distraction from developing their skills.