

Do we still need to teach touch typing?

A close-up, slightly blurred photograph of a person's hands typing on a laptop keyboard. The hands are positioned over the keyboard, with fingers resting on the keys. The background is a plain, light-colored surface.

We asked the experts...

Foreword

Graham Rice - Assistive IT Technician, CLASS, University of Westminster

“In today’s 21st Century, learning to type at a reasonably competent speed is a skill that should be imparted to almost everyone. However, it is not something that is actively taught. One seems to be expected to learn the skill, as if by osmosis. Schools don’t teach it, yet competence is expected at both university and later in the workplace, and we are not talking about just ‘15 words a minute’. That isn’t competence. If there is one thing that will help you study at university, it’s the ability to type reasonably accurately and speedily. If you are unable to type competently, you are going to spend longer working, compared to those that can already type.

Talking with an ergonomist a few years ago, he said that learning to type is one of the best skills you can teach students before they go to university, as it not only increases their productivity but also equips them with a transferable skill that is really useful when they leave.

Whilst voice recognition is an excellent solution for many, it is not the panacea that many had hoped. Even in ideal circumstances manufacturers don’t guarantee 100% accuracy. It is good but it is not faultless. When a manufacturer claims 97% accuracy, this suggests

that the computer will make 3 errors in recognition in every 100 words, 30 in 1000 and maybe 300 in 10,000. All the words that appear on your screen will be spelled correctly but not necessarily the words you intended. For me, everything that I dictate needs to be proof-read, either by myself, a machine (with a screen reader) or a 3rd party, just to make sure that everything on the page is what I intended and that the computer hasn't made a silly recognition error. Added to which, like many people, I find that an open plan office limits the success of speech recognition, as the microphone can find it difficult to differentiate between me and the people around me."

"Finding the time to learn when you are busy is difficult. I know, as I have started many times but it really is something we all need to make time to do."

Central London Assessment Services



“Students are increasingly using smartphones, resulting in good typing speeds on a phone using one finger or thumb. However, when faced with a computer with a full keyboard, students often struggle to change their habits and use all their fingers to type. We often make recommendations for KAZ Type to support students to work more efficiently, without the additional mental load of searching for keys on the keyboard. The software’s unique Accelerated Learning method incorporates muscle memory, which ingrains spelling and vocabulary to memory, which increases the productivity of students.”

Learning to touch type also equips students with a portable skill for life, which they can carry beyond university into the workplace.

Dylan - Centre Manager, Bangor

“All of the students benefitted! They were keen to personalise their settings. Having the chance to choose background and font colours is proven to benefit dyslexic learners. I also observed the students continually making use of the keyboard positioned on the computer screen to ensure they were touch-typing.



As a teacher, I found setting up the KAZ programme for a group very simple and it was easy to monitor students progress. For extra chance to practice, students did have an opportunity to use the programme at home and found this beneficial.”

I would highly recommend this programme for anyone working with dyslexic students.

Ruth Pierce - Specialist Dyslexia Teacher and Assessor, Lyndhurst Dyslexia Centre



KAZ was a remarkably effective solution. The boys learnt the basics of touch typing in hours.

“I wanted to make sure their motivation was high, so I set up an inter-form competition where the typing champions of each class were pitted against one another. This generated excitement, so much so that I found boys were neglecting their studies to improve their typing speeds!

I believe that every student at Dublin Oak Academy needs to touch type.”

It is the professionalism of touch typing that is so important. You don't expect to see a manager or project leader in the workplace tapping away using just their two forefingers. In this day and age it just looks prehistoric.

Robert Pattison
Principal, Dublin Oak Academy



JOCKEY CLUB
SARAH ROE SCHOOL

JCSRS uses KAZ's neurodiverse touch typing software to help promote literacy, ICT skills, communication skills and build confidence and independence.

Our students love it! Not only do they use the program at school but also practice typing at home.

Daphne Ip
Occupational Therapist
Jockey Club Sarah Roe School (JCSRS), Hong Kong

“In today’s world of technology, the life skill of touch typing is a crucial 21st century skill. KAZ is very much part of the digital literacy scheme of works that I teach. For the very youngest learners, this has had a very positive impact on their reading and writing skills, to the point that Willow Brook was recognised by the Mayor of London as being one of the top performing schools in London in school year 2018/19.”



Alan Tsui - Speaking at Bett 2019

source:[https:// www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/education-and-youth/schools-success/schools- success-profiles/willow-brook-primary-201819](https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/education-and-youth/schools-success/schools-success-profiles/willow-brook-primary-201819).

It is the best piece of on-line learning that I have ever seen and had the privilege of using since I started using the Internet in 1997.

Alan Tsui

Academic Enrichment Programmed Leader

Willow Brook Primary School Academy, East London, Speaking at Bett 2019



“I was trained as a touch-typist, many years ago, but I have never believed that we should make children actually learn to ‘touch type’. I always thought they should just know their way around a keyboard.

However, I have recently been informed of some research which pointed to the fact that if you can touch-type, then it leaves room for the brain to get on with other things, such as ‘what you actually want to write’. I am not sure why I hadn’t thought of that before because I can hold a conversation with someone while typing something different altogether.

So, with this latest information, I have changed my view and now recommend everyone should do the course and learn to type correctly.

Let’s face it, with this type of up-to-date software, why wouldn’t you want to learn it. I can’t believe it is so easy!”

I used KAZ many years ago at my teaching centre, but I have to say, this newer version is far better and a lot more accessible for people.

Maria Chivers (Founder of the Swindon Dyslexia Centre)

Dyslexia A2Z & International author on Dyslexia and other learning difficulties

“I met the KAZ team very recently at the Nottingham Belfry BESA LearnED roadshow and was immediately impressed with their software. There are costs associated with it but you are paying for a product that is approved and works.”

Importantly, they are BDA Assured, members of BESA and NAACE and have a City & Guilds Assured edition, which you may find useful for your secondary school students.



“Their course incorporates a preference screen which was developed in association with the Dyslexia Research Trust. However, if your students are anything like me, they will probably choose a filter colour they like best but this is great as it creates the best learning environment for them.”

Abigail Hawkins FCCT
SENDCO & DSL, Education Consultant





“The presentation was very useful and added to my knowledge of KAZ. I do recommend KAZ to students who have difficulty touch typing but I think following the presentation, **I will be recommending it more and enquiring further with students as to whether this is an area of difficulty.**”

Flora Strange
DSA Needs Assessor

“I have always typed my papers and book manuscripts but recently submitted a chapter of my latest book for publication whilst using a speech to text software.

Surprisingly my first draft was returned. Why? The fact of speaking into the software didn't allow me to present my thoughts in the expected formal style. Instead I conveyed my message far too casually for that type of writing.

Whilst all assistive technology is wonderful, including speech to text, we should be aware that it does have limitations.”

I'm coming to believe that touch typing is a fundamental skill and one which actually integrates into all other software. It really should be one of the first skills learned.

Bill Lowe

Former Head Teacher, University Leader, Trainer, Author & Consultant



“How can we teach pupils the skill of touch typing, without adding unnecessary workload? The world we live is increasingly dependent on electronic communication; typing has become one skill that we consistently execute every single day, all over the world...

With constant time-constraints and an impossible workload, the pressure felt by teachers is very real. Is it any surprise that they are always on the lookout for quick, easy and effective solutions?

Kaz-Type understands how stretched teachers are, so they have developed an inclusive and affordable touch-typing software that is designed to deliver effective results.”

Quick and Effective Learning



Inclusive



Safe



KAZ-Type is why some forward-thinking schools and teachers are taking the initiative to include and teach the skill, either during lesson time, lunchtime, after school clubs or at home.

Ross Morrison McGill founded [@TeacherToolkit](#) the 'most followed teacher on social media in the UK'. In 2015, he was nominated as one of the '500 Most Influential People in Britain' by The Sunday Times



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6q5WqiKWHS0>

“I was drawn to KAZ because they offer a neurodiverse version. I tend to work on the basis that if I can cater for that child with dyslexia or ASD, everybody will benefit.”

Simon Luxford-Moore - head of eLearning at Erskine Stewart’s Melville Schools in Edinburgh

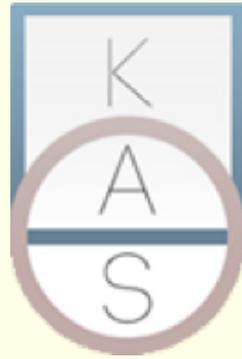


DSA Portal_Admin

“I am a self-taught, 3 fingers per hand typist and know that I can do better. Now that we are all working form home, we have no excuse not to up our game and all learn to type. I would encourage all assessors to take up the challenge and complete this course with me. Bring it on!”

Michael Humphreys
CEO - Edmin Software
Director - Book My Assessment

Creator of innovative and disruptive solutions for the education sector



“I recommend KAZ DSA for students with SpLD in higher education when undertaking DSA assessments. In the case of workplace assessments I opt for KAZ (Adult Edition). The objective is for students and employees to reach automaticity when typing. Touch typing is a skill that transformed my life.”

I think touch typing is the single most important strategy when working with students and employees with SpLD.



Patrick Mulcahy - Manager at Kingston Assessment Services

DSE and Ergonomic Assessments

Poor ergonomics can all lead to numbness, tingling, cramp and pain of the hands, wrists, shoulders, neck, back, head, eyes and lower limbs, causing inflammation or irritation of tendons and musculoskeletal disorders (MSDs).

Ergonomists analyse the interaction between people and machinery/equipment. They have an understanding of musculoskeletal function and apply their knowledge to ensure correct workplace setup, appropriate furniture and make sure equipment is safe and as easy to use as possible.

Poor ergonomics can be seen in many professions, including those where typing at length is required. Research shows that if you work with computers, you are more likely to develop Repetitive Strain Injury (RSI) at some point in your career.

Pressures on employees can only increase as we are all forced to take over responsibilities formerly covered at secretarial and clerical level.

This trend, when coupled with the constant danger of RSI, means there is a definite need for proper keyboard skills training.



Graham Coath - Ergonomic and assistive technology consultant, DSEU



"I am Director of Support Services at a large firm of solicitors. Accurate records are vital but we were struggling to recruit suitable candidates for junior secretarial roles. Audio typing is an essential skill and this was the stumbling block. Touch typing is no longer taught in schools or, if it is, they just scrape the surface. We decided to train our own typists, through a modern apprenticeship. We have been using KAZ online touch typing program now for several years. The apprentices do the basic course, plus a speed test module once a week to check if they are progressing satisfactorily. The KAZ reporting system means I can see at a glance just how well they are doing."

The company benefits from increased productivity and more accurate work and the apprentices learn new marketable skills that improve their confidence.

Angie D'Andrea - TC Young, Glasgow

"I first became sold on touch typing when I taught in adult education and worked with people who were blind or had very limited sight. It was so effective that we employed a typing teacher to teach basic keyboard skills to students who had dyslexia, physical disabilities or severe learning difficulties and not only were they delighted to be learning a new skill but their spelling improved too.

I noticed that away from the keyboard they would often be moving their fingers in patterns on the desk as they worked out spellings. Who knew that 'was' is a triangle and 'were' is three steps forward and one step back? They started to develop that muscle memory which most of us reserve for handwriting - that sense that you have made a mistake before you even look at what you have written."



People who learn to type often say it's one of the best investments they have ever made. KAZ teaches the letter keys in just 90 minutes.

Sal McKeown - Commissioning Editor for Digital Learning magazine, part of the Teaching Times group

Bett January 2019/20 - SEND

The aim of the award is to reward products that make a distinct contribution to supporting learners with special educational needs



Teach Primary August 2019/20 - SEND Teach Secondary August 2019/20 - SEND

Comprising six nominations for each category, the shortlist features a wide variety of innovative resources – from SEND and CPD packages, to maths and wellbeing, and much more.



Bizziebaby Award 2018/9 - Standard edition

The Bizziebaby expert team of testers are parents who know what they want, know when a product is a 'Must Have' item and will look at every aspect of a product or service and advise others of their findings.



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