



Module 15: Typing and audio skills to proficient level or further if you already touch type/Audio transcribe

- Improve your typing skills beyond a beginner level
- Tips on how to improve your touch typing
- How to effectively transcribe audio
- Mistakes and errors to avoid

In this module you will learn:

- Improve your typing skills beyond a beginner level
- Tips on how to improve your touch typing
- How to effectively transcribe audio
- Mistakes and errors to avoid
- Why are typing and audio transcribing skills important?

15.1 Introduction



Touch typing is a crucial skill, especially in this digital age.

Typing skills have to keep pace with modern office technology and gadgetry. It's very simple: Slow and diffident typing and audio skills will leave you at a disadvantage when it comes to completing office tasks. Performance and learning will be restricted and it will prove challenging to keep up with the workload. Efficient typing and audio skills helps personal assistants and secretaries cope with a digital environment that uses text as the main form of communication.

A high typing speed helps you maximise your time and productivity in the workplace. Your typing skills could make all the difference between being picked for a promotion and being left out.

A good rate of typing is 65 words per minute, but you don't have to aim for this until you have learnt the basic techniques and skills.

Diligent practice with an attention to quality and efficiency is a good way to improve.

Every form of communication from writing reports, preparing emails and office memos is done with the help of touch typing. In short, whatever we used to do with the help of pen and paper is now done with the help of a keyboard and monitor.

Check out these tips to help you improve your speed. As with other skills, learning typing skills involves patience and perseverance.

15.2 What are some of the important benefits of touch typing and why should you learn it?



Touch typing is a much better method compared to the traditional hunt and peck method.

Learning to touch type improves your employability and helps save on time. The time factor plays a

very important role.

Here's an example to illustrate the point.

If you type at say 20 words per minute, it's going to take you roughly about 30 minutes to type out a one page document. In fact, if you add in thinking and focus time, it may take closer to an hour to complete one document.

On the other hand, if your typing speed goes up to say 60 words per minute, you can get a page done in under 10 minutes and devote your time to other tasks at hand.

Traditional methods of typing involve relying on sight to spot keys; this can often lead to lapses and mistakes where you have to keep backtracking to correct mistakes. This can lead to a waste of time and concentration.

Touch typing helps your learning by using motor memory skills rather than sight. The result is less time spent on correcting errors and better concentration levels. If you have more free time, you can even consider relaxing your aching shoulders, wrists and neck. Touch typing is known to increase productivity, inculcate healthy typing habits and make typing an enjoyable experience.

FACT



Barbara Blackburn holds the record for the fastest typing. She was able to sustain 150 words per minute over a 50 minute period. Her peak speed was 212 words per minute!

Source: elearningindustry.com

15.3 What is Touch Typing?

Touch typing was invented in 1888 by Frank McGurrin.

The technique involves typing without using your eyes to look at the keyboard. Touch typing involves placing 8 fingers horizontally over the middle of the keyboard where each finger has a designated number and area of keys to press when typing.

Focus on your Technique

Touch typing is 80% technique, 10% accuracy and 10% speed.

People who are masters at touch typing will tell you that without proper hand position and typing technique, you'll only be able to type at a limited speed. Typing each button and looking for each one around the keyboard can never compare to quick and accurate touch typing. Formulating a proper technique will help you type much faster and will eventually help you learn how to touch type.

Learn from Errors

Learning to touch type will be accompanied by many errors; most of us cannot escape this fact when we initially learn our way around the keyboard. Repetition is the key to learning with anything, so the more you do it, the easier it will become over time.

Touch typing is about mental energy and muscle memory; our muscles learn and remember certain techniques that we do over and over. Type as often as you can and this will engrave the movements into your muscle memory. Study and test yourself in each technique before moving on to more complex techniques.

Use Good Posture

Make sure you are sat in a comfortable position when at work or typing at home. Poor posture will only result in strain and stress on neck, back and shoulder muscles.

Good upright posture in your spine will increase your overall alertness and help you concentrate for longer. Focus on the best place to place your fingers. You should be relaxed with your feet resting squarely on the floor.

Your head should be slightly tilted forward and elbows should be kept at a right angle. There should be a distance of at least 45 to 70 cm between your eyes and the computer screen. The wrists should just touch the table top; avoid putting body pressure on the wrists.

Stop looking at the Keyboard

To increase your typing speed in a short space of time, stop looking down at the keyboard. This will lead to more mistakes at first but will dramatically reduce over time. Look at the screen and let your fingers learn where each letter or function is on the keyboard.

There are no short cuts with this method, only hard work and perseverance.

Touch typing should be one of your main skills as a personal assistant or admin worker.

15.4 Typing Strategy



A touch typist would place their fingers in the start position as previously mentioned.

Learning at a beginner level usually involves printing exercises that contain only letters that are near the standard position or on it. This would then be followed by an attempt to master the other rows. It is important to learn where to position each finger when you start as you cannot look at the keyboard once you begin.

The starting row consisting of ASDF JKL is located in the middle row and these are the keys that you can always return to easily.

One hand should always be kept near the mouse for navigational purposes. Keys F and J often have functions that allow you to perform commands without having to point or click; these are referred to as 'shortcut keys'.

Touch Typing Skills and Tips

1. Keep your finger movement limited to finding the keys which you want. At first, only practise feeling the 'home row'.
2. You may wish to concentrate on moving the little finger and ring fingers as they tend to be underdeveloped.

3. Remember to scan the text about one or two words in advance; this will help you keep up with the speed.
4. Touch typing takes a little time to practise, but eventually you will be able to type without looking at the keyboard. Your fingers will move expertly over the keys by force of habit and motor memory.
5. After the home row, you need to learn the lower and upper rows of keys followed by special characters, numbers and upper case letters.
6. The second stage involves memorising commonly used syllables for faster typing. The third stage involves actual typing practice of text. The main objective is to try to type without looking at the keyboard.
7. It helps to establish and maintain a rhythm while typing. This helps ensure that key strokes fall at regular intervals.
8. Keep keystrokes light and avoid using excessive force. This helps increase speed.

Activity 1 - Touch Typing Practice

Estimated time: 10-15 minutes

Since you learned business writing skills and have probably used a computer before, the chances are good that you have typed before. However, this module covers another form of typing called touch typing, which is designed for 80 percent technique, 10 percent accuracy, and 10 percent speed.

Position yourself in front of your computer for some typing practice. Ensure that you have good posture and your feet are placed flat on the floor. Following the tips in the module, spend the next 10-15 minutes practising the touch-typing technique.

15.5 Audio Transcription



Audio transcription is the process where one listens to audio text and transforms it into written text.

In earlier years, a transcriber would actually sit and write words as they were being spoken. This meant that companies had to depend on the physical presence of a trained subscriber to take down conversations.

However, modern technology has changed the face of audio transcriptions.

Transcription is now done by recording the speech and then replaying it through headphones in order to type it out.

The introduction of speech recognition and dictation software has also contributed to the evolution of transcription techniques. However, there are flaws with computer driven transcription software as it works on the basis of recognition of specific speech patterns.

Please note that audio transcription is specialised work and goes beyond simple touch typing skills.

15.6 Benefits of Audio Transcription Services

Most businesses insist on saving hard copies of audio files for their records.

Many times, having a text version of an audio file makes it much easier to understand what is being said compared to straining to listen to different voices, accents and tones. Audio transcribers are highly trained and experienced professionals who are responsible for transforming audio files into coherent hard copies of textual content.

These hard copies can then be used to create other literature, documents and records. Transcription services are indispensable for most businesses. If you become a trained transcriber, your employability increases dramatically as transcription services are always in demand.

Audio Transcription Tips

- Start your transcribing sessions with headphones that are of good quality. Using headphones will stop you from being distracted and you will also hear the sound much better.

- Good earphones especially play an important part if there are multiple speakers, different accents and certain levels of background noise. Your hearing skills need to be really sharp.
- If you are receiving a pre-recorded session, adjust the volume to suit you.
- Agree on a uniform and consistent format for transcription. That way you will stick to the same formula and work on it.
- Always clearly mark who is saying what.
- Is your audio Non-verbatim or Verbatim? Non-verbatim means you type the initial conversation and leave out all stutters or pauses etc. Verbatim is where you record EXACTLY what the audio file plays like. In this case, describe everything in exactly the sequence as it occurs.
- Listen to the file in 30 second segments, record the audio and then do the next 30 seconds. Bite size audio will be less overwhelming to your ears.
- Avoid playing the audio too loud as this will give you an earache when listening to a long audio file; also opt in for comfortable headphones.
- Only type as fast as you are able to without errors and mistakes. If you type too fast to match the speed of the audio, you may have to spend a lot of time proofreading your work and correcting errors. As a matter of fact, you may wish to consider proofreading as you type. This will help save time and you can guarantee a high quality transcription.
- Use ready-made templates which are particularly useful when you offer transcription services for the legal and medical sectors. This will save you time and effort.
- You may wish to take regular breaks to keep your mind active and quick.
- Save the recording in a high-resolution format.

Take a Quick Recap Test

[viralQuiz id=80]

Activity 2 - Practise with Audio Transcription

Estimated time: 10-15 minutes

You should have spent at least ten minutes practising touch typing, which is an extremely valuable skill in your career.

As you move on to this activity, we will focus on audio transcription. So, you will spend another 10-15 minutes at your computer. This time, try to locate an audio file or pre-recorded transcription and spend some time transcribing it to text.

Assignment

Typing and audio skills to proficient level or further

Time: 30+ minutes

Hopefully, you took in as much of the information in this 15th module as possible. To find out how well you have done, complete the following worksheet.

Download the worksheet below and complete.

[Download Worksheet \(PDF\)](#)

[Download Worksheet \(Word\)](#)

Module Summary

You have learned what touch typing is and how to improve on it. You have read and learned the basics, format and our general tips that can help you improve your typing skills at any level. You know how to position yourself and we have validated how important touch typing is in your job role as a personal assistant.

Touch typing is an evolved version of traditional typing. It involves typing without peering down at the keyboard to search for keys. Touch typing technique is preferred for its combination of efficiency and speed. As you practise, you gradually learn to type without looking down at the keyboard at all. Touch typing helps maximise productivity and saves time.

Transcription is the conversion of audio files into text formats. The technique involves listening to speech and typing it at the same time. This is a specialised skill and involves training and experience. A pair of high quality headphones is necessary for accurate and precise transcription.

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