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Vision Impairment and Touch Typing

Touch typing skills often make it possible to use a computer more effectively. They are particularly valuable for partially sighted and blind computer users as they remove the need to constantly look between the keyboard and the screen.

To develop touch typing skills you will need some instruction on how to position your hands and which fingers to use to strike keys. Drills are used to practice each key and sequences of keys until the whole alphabet is covered.

It is worth checking with local colleges if they have courses which can be adapted. If not some of the following ideas may help:

The RNIB have a factsheet called Developing Keyboard Skills that contains more detailed information on this subject.

Product	Supplier
Keyboard Skills factsheet	RNIB Technology Service

To Identify the Keys:

Large print keyboard stickers

These will help you identify where the keys are, they are a learning tool rather than something to be relied upon. Available in different colours and styles such as black on white, white on black and black on yellow and upper or lower case. They cost between £10 and £15.

Product	Supplier
Keyboard stickers	Techno-Vision Systems Dolphin Computer Access, Keytools

Bump-ons

These are small stick on blobs which can be used to mark specific keys on the keyboard. Many people like to mark f, j and backspace. Available in different sizes and colours.

Product	Supplier
Bump-ons	RNIB Customer Services

Computer Based Typing Tutors

A number of these are available, but not all will be suitable for use with magnification software or speech output.

VICTAR have a large print typing tutor which allows you to select the character size that suits you and change background and foreground colours. It also has speech output through any soundcard or an Apollo speech synthesiser. Download it free from

www.education.bham.ac.uk/research/victar/resources/tech/centre.htm

Product	Supplier
Centre Touch Typing Tutor	VICTAR

Tape Tutorial

If you would prefer to listen to instructions on tape you can obtain a tape course, cost around £10.

Product	Supplier
Learning to Touch Type	RNIB Customer Services

Also RNIB's tape library has the following title by A. M Drummond which can be borrowed if a member:

Product	Supplier
Typing - First Course	RNIB Customer Services

Useful Factsheets

The following factsheets are relevant to this subject. We also have skillsheets that are step by step guides to customising your PC.

- A range of RNIB technology factsheets
- Voice Recognition for Blind Computer Users
- Vision Impairment and Computing
- Keyboard Shortcuts in Windows
- Electronic Publications

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