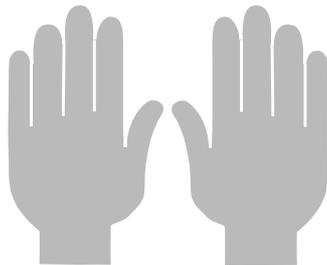


The **ARM**
Club

TypeTutor

**The Desktop Touch Typing Tutor
For All Acorn 32 bit Computers with
RISC OS 3.1 or later**



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Written by Toby Smith

The product described in this manual is the subject of continuous development and while all efforts are taken to ensure the information given is correct, The ARM Club cannot accept any liability for any loss or damage resulting from the use of TypeTutor or the information in this manual. The product is not intended to be used in safety critical situations.

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Introduction

The principles of touch typing originated with the QWERTYUIOP keyboard on typewriters, and are commonly used by secretaries and typists to improve the speed of typing, by allowing the hands to type correctly without looking at the keyboard.

As opposed to using two fingers which look for the key, and then hit it, as most untrained typists will do, each finger is assigned a set of keys which it, and it only, has to press. When the key is required, the finger moves to it, and presses it, returning to its home position afterwards. This develops eight finger typing, with the thumbs adding the occasional space.

TypeTutor includes the facilities to teach two different methods of touch typing, both based around the traditional horizontal style. The methods provided include either a straight vertical style (E, D X on the same finger). *TypeTutor* is designed to be flexible in its approach to different keyboards, including drivers for the standard Acorn keyboard, the one provided with the Risc PC range, which follows the standard UK layout, as well as the compact keyboard of the A4 Portable. (See the section on Keyboard Display Drivers.)

TypeTutor is designed to have two main functions. Firstly to teach you the basics of horizontal touch typing with a series of basic set exercises, and then to allow you to improve your typing progressively with a series of sentence exercises, which can be written by the user, or taken from the comprehensive selection provided with the package.

Please note that *TypeTutor* will *not* make you an immediate touch typist, the effect of regular use will be gradual, and as you get more used to the system you will begin to use it faster and faster, until you have reached an acceptable speed. At first progress *will* be slow, but don't give up!

Making a Backup Copy

Ensure that the *TypeTutor* disc is write protected (the tab is positioned so that you can see through the hole in the disc) and insert it in the disc drive.

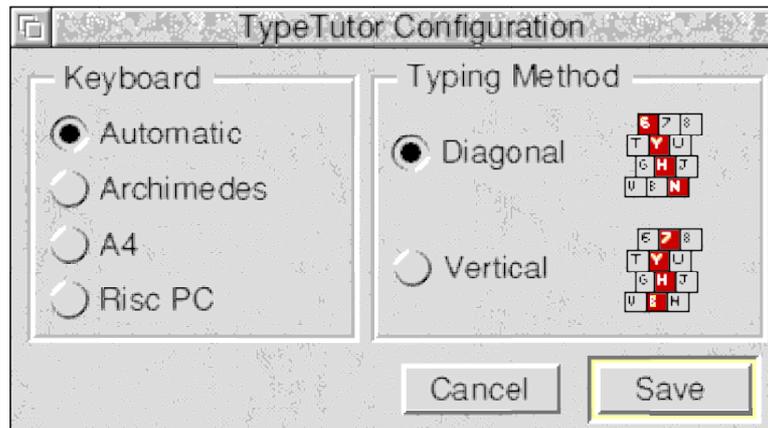
If you have a hard disc then you should create a directory called *TypeTutor* somewhere on it, click on the :0 floppy icon and drag the contents of the *TypeTutor* disc into the newly created directory. If you are unsure how to do any of this then consult your user guide.

If you do not have a hard disc then you should make a backup of the original onto a blank, formatted floppy disc (your user guide will describe how to format a disc). To do that, click menu (middle button) over the :0 floppy icon and click on the Backup option. Insert discs as prompted in the Backup window, clicking on OK after each disc change. The *Source* disc is the original *TypeTutor* disc and the *Destination* disc is the previously blank disc.

Configuring TypeTutor

Before starting to use TypeTutor, you must first configure the program to use the correct keyboard for your computer and the typing method you prefer.

To perform the configuration, double click on the *!TTConfig* application. A window will open allowing you to pick from the following options



Keyboard

- Automatic** Automatic selection by looking at computer when application is run.
- Archimedes** Suitable for A300 Series, A400 Series, A540, A3000 series, A4000, A5000.
- A4** Suitable for Acorn A4 Portable. (And other portable computer keyboards)
- Risc PC** Suitable for Acorn Risc PC, and other standard UK layout keyboards

Typing Method

This choice is a matter for personal preference, as the different methods will suit different people, depending on manual dexterity, your typing posture, and perhaps having already been taught one system or the other. For details of the different systems, consult *Appendix A - Touch Typing, The Basic Principles* later in this manual

Saving Your Configuration

Select the desired configuration with the radio buttons (shown above as filled circles) and click on **Save** to save your configuration. Clicking on **Cancel** will shut the configuration window without saving the changes

The configuration can be changed at any time, but you will need to quit and re-run !TypeTutor to make it take note of the changes. Please note that it is unwise to change typing method once you have got used to one system.

Using TypeTutor

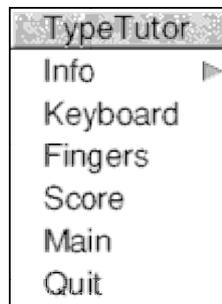
Running the application

To load TypeTutor, double click on the *TypeTutor* application that you copied onto your hard disc or backup disc. Keep the original disc in a safe place - you will need it if you ever want to upgrade it to a later version. Knowledge of the basics of using the mouse and RISC OS Desktop is presumed throughout this manual, and those who do not feel confident would be advised to re-read the first few chapters of the RISC OS User Guide.

Pressing the select (left) or adjust (right) mouse buttons over the icon on the bar will display all four of *TypeTutor*'s windows on the screen.

Icon Bar Menu

Pressing menu over the *TypeTutor* icon will result in the icon bar menu being displayed.

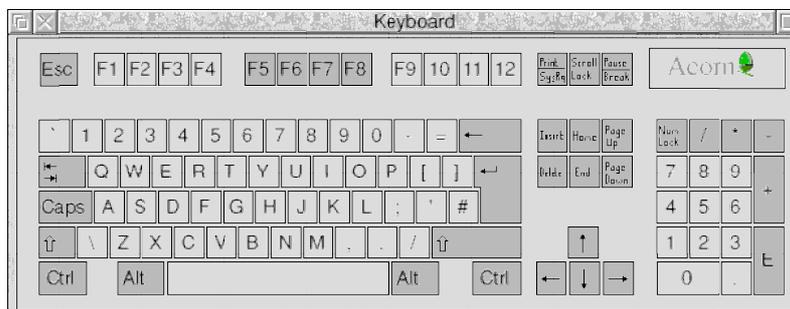


Info leads to a window containing information about the version of *TypeTutor* you are using, including what keyboard display and typing method are being used (use the toggle size icon in the top right corner of the window).

Keyboard, **Fingers**, **Score** and **Main** each open the corresponding window.

Quit quits the program.

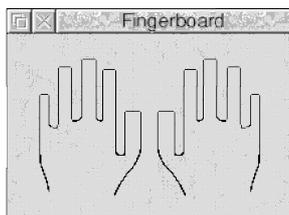
The Keyboard Window



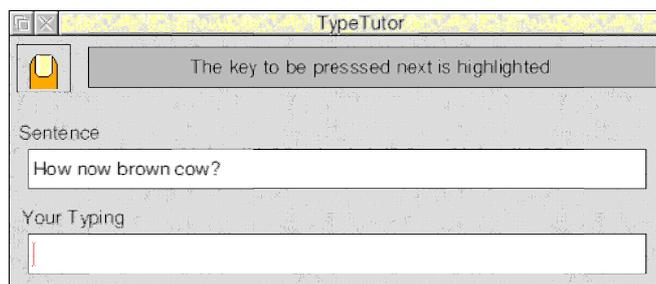
This contains a representation of the keyboard. During the basic set exercises, all the relevant keys will be highlighted in light blue. During sentence exercises the next key to be pressed will be highlighted in yellow (with *shift* if it is a capital). Clicking with select or adjust over an icon in this window will produce a demonstration of which finger to use for pressing this key. (See the section on the **Demo Function** on page 6.)

The Fingerboard Window

This contains a picture of two hands. The finger(s) to be used to press the next key(s) will be highlighted.

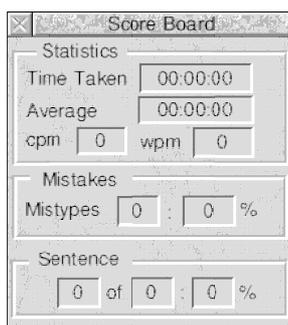


The Main Window



This contains three important icons. The grey box at the top provides information about the state of the program. The second box contains the text which you should type, and the box below that, with the caret in it, contains the text which you are typing. If the caret disappears to another program, click with select over this icon to return the caret and control to *TypeTutor*.

The Score Board



The Score board displays various details as to how you are progressing through the exercise. It is updated at the end of each sentence. These statistics should not be considered as perfectly representative. To get a good figure to gauge your performance, an average over several different types of sentence, particularly some which you are unfamiliar with, should be taken.

The Mistakes section is treated differently for different exercises. For all the basic set exercises it will show the number of mistyped character sequences. For sentence exercises, it will show the number of mistyped characters.

Main Menu

Pressing the menu (middle) mouse button over the main window will produce a list of the set exercises. Click on the desired one to load it.



Exercise Files

TypeTutor has numerous basic set exercises to cover the home keys, all the alphabetic keys and some of the extra symbol keys. Once you have mastered these, you can then progress to sentence exercises. These can be loaded from disc by double clicking on a *TypeTutor* Exercise file. A selection of such files are provided with the package and you can create others if you wish to do so.

Exercise files may be loaded into the program by dragging onto the icon bar icon or by double clicking. They may be stored anywhere on any media that you desire.

No saving or creating facilities are provided for the exercise files, but it is intended that they can easily be created to the user's specification in any text editor program, such as *Edit*. There can be as many as 50 text sentences per exercise, They will be used in order until there are no more specified, or a different exercise is loaded.

The *TypeFile* application, provided with the *TypeTutor* package, converts text files to *TypeTutor* Exercise files. Please see **Appendix B** for instructions on how to use it.

Demo Function

If you press either select (left) or adjust (right) mouse buttons over any of the keys in the keyboard window, then this key will be highlighted in green, as will the finger used to press it (in the fingerboard window). The shift key to be used in association with this key will also be highlighted in yellow, along with the finger used to press it.

So, When Am I Good Enough?

Once you have got to grips with using *TypeTutor*, which shouldn't take long, you will then progress slowly through, learning all the fingers, and gaining practice at using them with the basic set exercises. Once you feel confident with this, you should start attempting sentence exercises, a large selection of which are included with the package. Don't use the same one all the time, as you will begin to remember the sentences, and hence could type it quickly anyway. At some point, you will find that your typing no longer gets better, at this point, you're good! How long it takes to get to this stage, however, varies largely from person to person, depending on dexterity, amount of practice, how set in your old ways you are and so on. Continued steady use of the principles outlined in **Appendix A**, in both *TypeTutor* and other packages, will eventually improve your typing speed. You may like to start off by recording the speed of your old method over a particular exercise, and checking for improvements as time goes by.

Keyboard Display Drivers

TypeTutor uses a very flexible method of displaying the keyboard, allowing one main program to be run on different computers with many different types of keyboard.

Each different Keyboard Display Driver contains it's own keyboard display window, and code to translate the keys onto the picture of the keyboard and the fingerboard.

To change between drivers, you can use the *!TTConfig* application.

To find out which keyboard display driver you are using, load the program, and then open the program information window from the icon bar menu. Click on the Toggle Size icon (top right hand corner) and the window will expand to give details of the current keyboard driver and typing method. This information is also displayed at the bottom of the banner displayed when you first load *TypeTutor*

A list of keyboard display drivers included in the version you have purchased is provided in the *!!ReadMe* file on the disc.

Appendix A - Touch Typing, The Basic Principles

Basics

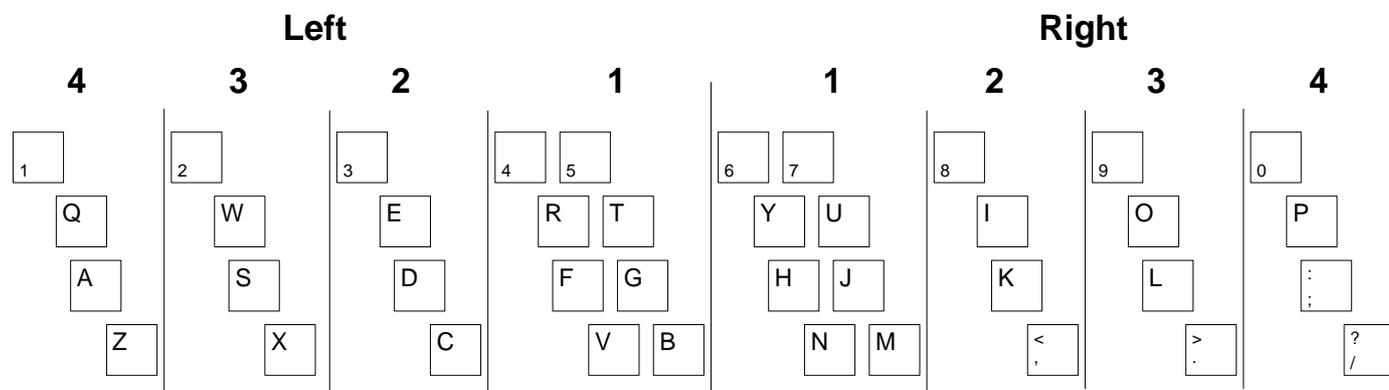
The basic principle of horizontal touch typing is that the fingers rest above a horizontal row of keys, known as the home keys, and move up and down the keyboard to press other keys within their range, returning to their home keys after each press. (apart from double presses). The home keys are ASDF for the left hand and JKL; for the right. You will note that the F and J keys have a small bar on some keyboards to enable you to locate them easily. The space bar is usually operated by either or both of the thumbs, and the keys on the sides of the main keyboard (Tab, Control, Shift etc. on one side and Back-space, Return, Shift etc. on the other) are operated by the fourth (or little) finger. It is worth noting that whilst the little fingers are the least used in everyday life, they take an important role in touch typing, having control over the Shift and Return keys.

Typing Method

The choice of typing method, either diagonal or vertical, is entirely up to the user, but do check that you are trying to type using the same style that TypeTutor is using to display the information, or the display may confuse you! The method being used is displayed in the opening banner, and in the program information box from the icon bar menu (use the toggle size icons to reveal).

Diagonal Method

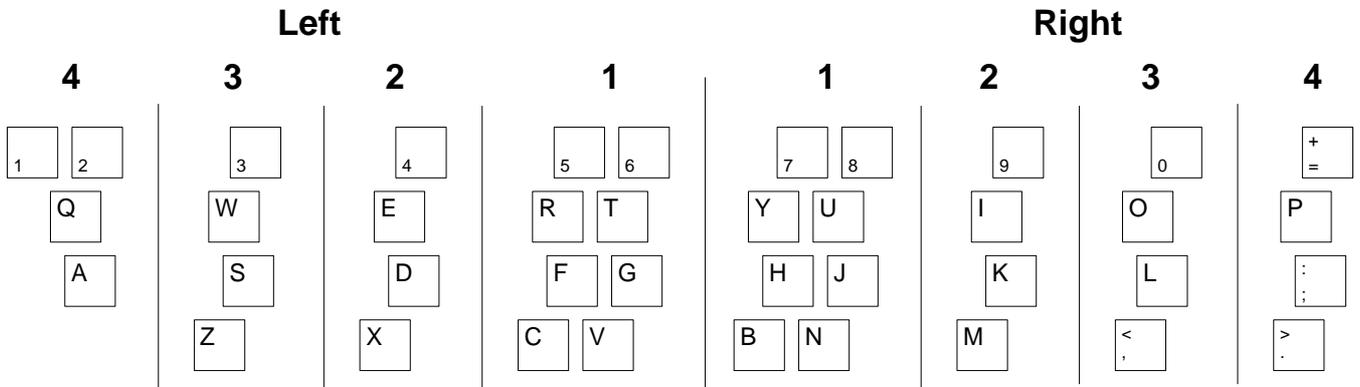
Under the diagonal method, the fingers control keys in a left slanting row centred on their home key, so the first finger of the left hand, whose home key is F is also used to type 4, R & V. The finger allocation for the alpha-numeric keys is shown in the diagram below. For the other keys (tab, shift etc) please see the supplement relevant to your keyboard.



With the diagonal method, to obtain capital letters, the opposing shift key is used - should you have to type a capital of one of the characters from the left hand, the right shift is used (4th finger, right hand) and vice versa.

Vertical Method

With the vertical method, the fingers move in a straight up and down style, controlling keys directly above and below the home key. In this way, the first finger of the left hand controls 5, R, F (home key) & C.



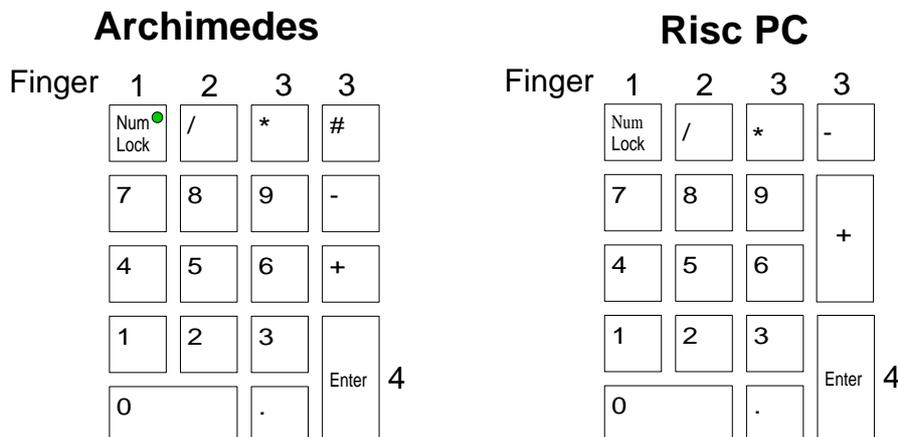
Under the diagonal method, the left shift key (4th finger, left hand) is always used in preference, exceptions being capital Q and A, where the right shift key (4th finger, right hand) must be used as 4th finger left is pressing the Q or A key.

The keys on the side of the keyboard differ between the keyboard drivers supported, but are all controlled by the appropriate little finger. See extra documentation drawings on the discs.

Numerical Keypad

Most users will already have developed some system for using the numerical keypad. The keypad should be used when entering a large set of numbers, such as in a spreadsheet, or when typing a long number, such as a phone number.

TypeTutor does not actually cover the numerical keypad, as the use of it is fairly simple. The following suggested method is included for those who have not yet developed their own system. This is fairly obvious, with 456 being the home keys. You may like to use your thumb on the 0 key, and perhaps finger 4 on '.' but this is not compulsory.



Appendix B - File Conversion Using TypeFile

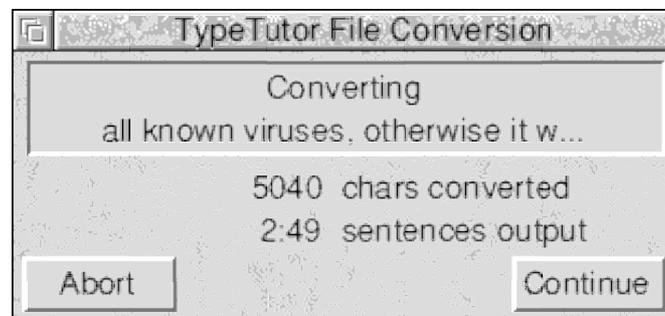
TypeFile is a desktop file converter for text files, to convert them to the format used by *TypeTutor*. This procedure is quite complex, and the conversion of even a short file can take some time.

To load *TypeFile*, double click on the *!TypeFile* application on your hard disc or backup of the original *TypeTutor* disc.

TypeFile takes a plain ASCII text file, as saved from *Edit* and most other text related packages, which should be dragged onto *TypeFile*'s icon bar icon. This file should be free of unusual characters and control codes (this can be done by hand using *Edit* or by certain PD programs). Please note that files should not be word-wrapped (a feature in versions of *Edit* for RISC OS 3). If you want to convert a word-wrapped text file, load it into *Edit*, turn **Wordwrap** off (from the **Misc** menu) and then reformat all the paragraphs, or *TypeFile* will convert each line as if it were a separate paragraph, causing alternate long and short lines.

When you have dragged a suitable file onto the *TypeFile* icon, a **Save As** Dialogue box will be displayed to allow you to save a *TypeTutor* compatible version of the file.

The conversion procedure will then start. This procedure is multi-tasking, and a progress window will appear in the bottom left corner of the screen.



This window gives details of what the program is doing (reading, writing, converting, etc) and how much has been converted (the two numbers) The **Abort** button will stop the conversion, whilst **Pause** will temporarily pause the conversion, until **Continue** is pressed (**Continue** button replaces **Pause** button).

Points To Note about The Conversion Process.

- Any multiple blank lines will be removed, but paragraph ends will be correctly adhered to.
- For files which convert to longer than 50 typing sentences, multiple files will be produced. These will have the same name, suffixed as to their order. Eg: *Typing1*, *Typing2* etc. You will be able to see these files appearing, and the Sentences Output record on the Conversion window will show a file number prefix (EG 3:23 is the 23rd sentence of the 3rd file.)
- Single preceding spaces for sentences will be removed, but multiple spaces will not. The occurrence of these should be avoided as it is hard to see the correct number when displayed in the main window. It is wise to use Search & Replace in the original file before converting to avoid this (search for double space, replacing with single).
- The source file will be preserved unaltered.
- The destination file and source file must be on some form of media (discs or RAM), they may NOT be loaded directly into programs or saved from programs directly into TypeFile.
- It is always advisable to check converted files with a text editor, to ensure nothing has been missed, and to avoid errors caused by the computer's lack of comprehension of English. For example, the conversion procedure will split a file into two parts at every 50th line (TypeTutor only handles up to 50 lines in an exercise) This split, however, may not be where you want it - it might be better on a paragraph break for example. This can be changed by hand.

Appendix C - Credits

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Thank you to *everybody* who has reported bugs and suggested improvements