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**Therapi Galwedigaethol Plant**  
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Ffordd Croesnewydd, Wrecsam LL13 7TD

**Children's Occupational Therapy**  
Wrexham Child Health Centre,  
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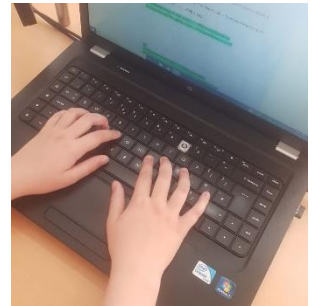
## Learning to Type

Learning to type is an important skill for all children to learn but can be particularly beneficial for children with motor co-ordination difficulties. Typing requires less input than handwriting and therefore can make writing tasks easier for some children. Typing should still be encouraged to develop handwriting skills as this is still important for the child, but where there are large pieces of written work required, a child may benefit from using a keyboard to type their work to ensure that their work represents their ability.

### Touch typing

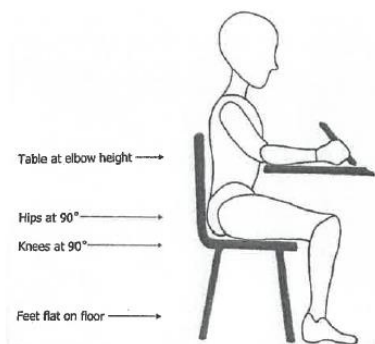
Children can begin learning to touch type from around 6-7 years of age, the earlier the child learns this skill, the less likely they are to develop bad habits.

There are lots of free websites which offer programs to teach children to learn how to touch type. We use the BBC Dance Mat; (<https://www.bbc.co.uk/bitesize/topics/zf2f9j6/articles/z3c6tfr>).



This breaks down the skill into different levels and allows the child to practice their typing skills.

### Posture



Like handwriting a good posture should be encouraged when typing to help prevent back, neck and wrist pain. Good sitting posture should be used as shown with feet flat on the floor, back straight and shoulders relaxed (not raised). It is also important that the wrists are not pressing on the edge of the table or are bending to use the keyboard. The keyboard should be placed on a flat surface at least 4 inches from the end of the surface and at the same level as the elbows. When typing for long periods of time the child may benefit from a gel pad to support the wrists or a rolled up towel can also help. Position the screen to avoid reflections from lighting or sunlight, the top of the screen should be at eye level to prevent having to stretch the neck to look down.

## Using a Keyboard

When typing each finger is responsible for a specific key on the keyboard. Fingers should start on the middle row of the keyboard with a finger resting on each of the keys as explained below, this is called the 'home row'. Fingers should return to the home row position after each letter.

### Home Row

Finger	Left hand	Right hand
Smallest finger	A	;
Ring finger	S	L
Middle finger	D	K
Index Finger	F	J
Thumb	Space bar	Space bar

Complete the activity on the next page, use the colour key to identify which fingers are used for each letter and symbol on the keyboard.

### Remember

- When typing you should look at the screen and not at your hands, this will take lots of practice.

## Using a Mouse

Using a mouse can be a tricky skill to learn for children, though it is an important skill for children to learn early to reduce bad habits being developed which can be difficult to break later on.

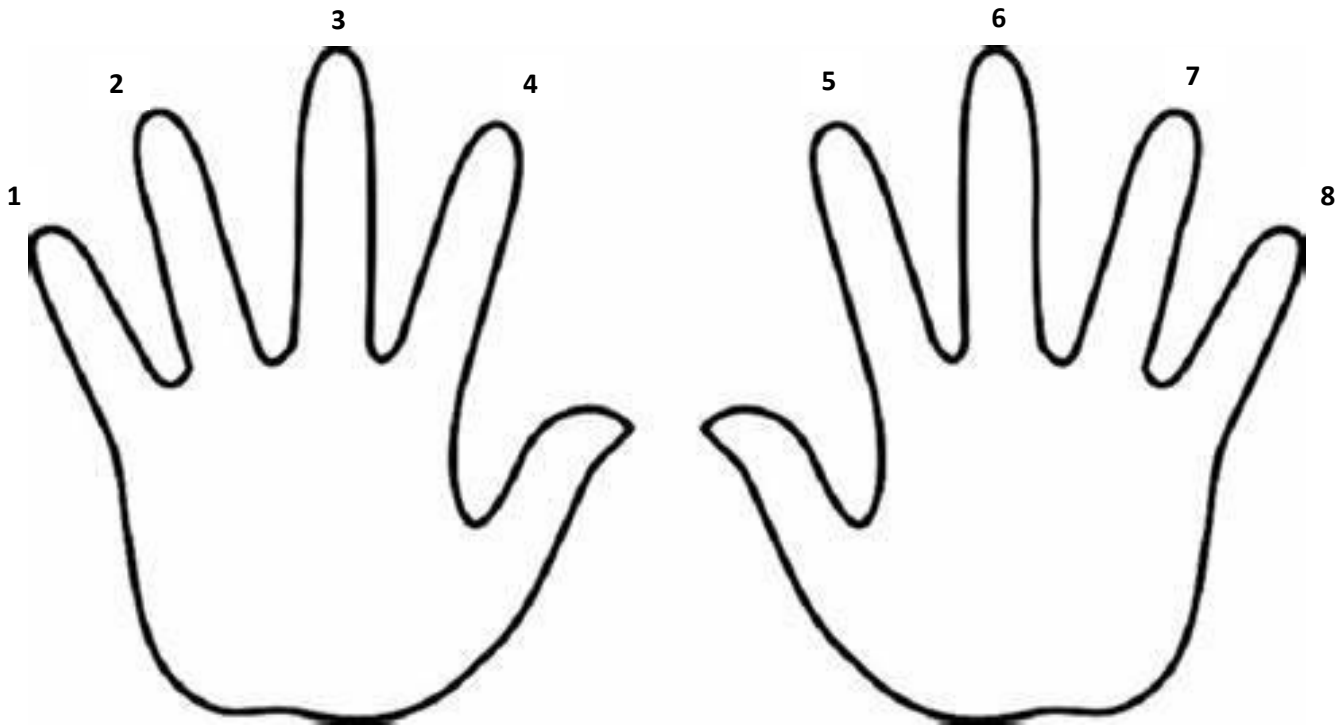
### Holding a mouse

- The palm of the hand should be placed at the base of the mouse.
- The thumb should be placed on the side of the mouse closest to the computer to support movement
- The index finger should rest on the left button
- The middle finger should rest on the right button with remaining fingers resting on the far side of the mouse.
- The wrist should be kept straight at the same angle as the arm.



### Remember

- Look at the screen when moving the cursor rather than looking at the hand.
- Move the mouse with the arm not the wrist
- A mouse can be connected to a laptop to help the child to practice this skill.
- There's lots of free games available to help children practice their mouse skills.



**Colour each finger and the keys in which they control;**

Left Hand

- Finger 1 – Z, A, Q, 1
- Finger 2 – X, S, W, 2
- Finger 3 – C, D, E, 3
- Finger 4 – V, F, R, 4, B, G, T, 5
- Thumb – Space bar

Right Hand

- Thumb – Space bar
- Finger 5 – N, H, Y, 6, M, J, U, 7
- Finger 6 – , K, I, 8
- Finger 7 – . L, O, 9
- Finger 8 – / ; P 0

Practice using the correct finger placement to type the letters and word shown.

asdfgf ;lkjih asdfgf hjkl;lkih gfdsa asdfgf jkl;lki gfdsa  
dad lad sad had lass fall salad flask ask hall fad has  
fed lid fell said kell hill sell kiss heal hear jug fur lard  
day tag lay tar toad for tow few pad pod rod read



## Hints & Tips

- Touch typing is a great skill to learn during school holidays.
- Keep session short, sessions should around 10 minutes at a time.
- Once the basics have been mastered, work on accuracy before speed.
- Be patient, this is a lifelong skill and takes time to get it right.

## Additional Strategies

- Place stickers or tape letters to the student 'home row'.
- Create a line between the keys in the centre of the keyboard.  
This can help to highlight which side each hand should be on.  
You could use coloured tape, Wikki Stix/pipe cleaners or straws.
- Try covering the child's hands when practicing to stop them from seeing the keyboard so they can learn to type from touch. You could use a tea towel or some paper taped down.
- Children with visual or attention difficulties they may benefit from high contrasting keyboard stickers.
- A colour coded keyboard can help children learn.
- Keyboard with large keys can be purchased for children that he sized keyboards.
- Stickers with lowercase letters can be used to stick onto the keyboard for children that have difficulty with recognising capital letters.
- An alternative style of mouse can be used.

