

Keyboard Mastery Lesson 4 Tips

In Lesson 4, you'll learn the M, C, and Left Shift reaches.

This lesson is set up similar to Lesson 3 with twelve 15-second timings (Lines 1 through 12); three 30-second timings (Lines 13 through 15); and three 1-minute timings (Lines 16 through 18). Remember that you can't have any errors with the 15- and 30-second timings; so if you make a mistake during one of these timings, click the Timer button to restart the timing.

The lesson starts with three 15-second warm-ups. Start with Line 1 and type as much as you can for 15 seconds. If you finish the line, press ENTER and type the line again. **Type until the timer stops.** When you have a score for Line 1 you can move on to Line 2. And when you have a score for Line 2, you can move on to Line 3.

The Reach to the M Key

Lines 4 through 6 are 15-second timings where you'll learn the reach to the m, which you type with your right pointer finger from the j key. This reach is fairly easy for a bottom row reach. Find the j and m keys on the right side of your keyboard, and let's practice.



Watch as you curl your right pointer finger down from the j key to the m key. Concentrate on keeping your other fingers curled on the home row keys as you move your pointer finger. Watch as you practice this reach enough times to feel comfortable with it. When you're ready, close your eyes and practice another 25 times.

Now that you have the feel of the m reach, give it a try online with Lines 4 through 6.

The Reach to the C Key

Lines 7 through 9 are 15-second timings for the reach to the c key. The reach to the c isn't an easy one because it's on the bottom row. Use your left middle finger to strike the c, so the reach is from the d to the c. After you strike the c, return your middle finger to the d on the home row. The more curved your fingers are on the home row keys, the easier this reach will be.

Find the d and c keys on your keyboard, and let's get a feel for the reach.



Watch as you curl your left middle finger down to the c and then back up to the d key. Concentrate on keeping your other fingers on the home row keys as you move your finger from the d to the c and then back to the d. Watch as you try the reach again. This reach is difficult; you may need to raise your pointer finger off the f key slightly.

Once you have the feel of the reach, close your eyes and practice the reach from the d to the c at least 50 times. You be the judge of how many times you need to move your finger back and forth to the two keys to be comfortable with the reach.

When you feel comfortable with the reach, do Lines 7 through 9, one line at a time, of course! If you make errors on a 15-second timing, you need to type the line again.

Learn the Left Shift Key

For most of your typing, you'll use a SHIFT key to type a capital letter—most commonly when you type the first letter of the first word in a sentence and for proper nouns such as your name.

All computer keyboards have two SHIFT keys, one on the left and the other on the right, usually located at the ends of the row of keys above the space bar. Computer and keyboard manufacturers vary in where they put the SHIFT key and what shape and size it is. So you should study the particular characteristics of your keyboard and practice moving your little fingers to the SHIFT keys from their home position to achieve dexterity.

Look at the SHIFT keys on your keyboard. Are they the same size and shape? On my netbook computer, the right SHIFT key is smaller than the left SHIFT. But the right SHIFT key on my other two keyboards is larger than the left SHIFT. This is something that I have to adjust to as I go from one keyboard to another.

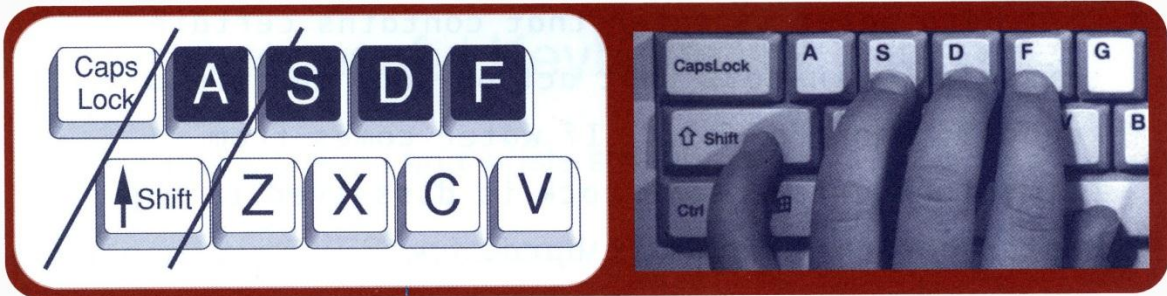
To type a capital letter, press down and hold one of the SHIFT keys with either pinky finger while you type the letter you want to capitalize with a finger of the opposite hand. Use the right-hand SHIFT key to capitalize any letter you strike with the left hand, and use the left-hand SHIFT key to capitalize any letter you strike with the right hand. Which SHIFT key would you

use to type the first letter in your name? I use the left SHIFT to type the K in Kathy because I use my right hand to type the k.

You also use the SHIFT keys to type the characters you see on the top of keys. For example, there's an at sign (@) on the 2 key, the dollar sign (\$) on the 4 key, and the asterisk (*) on the 8 key, which are all on the top row of a standard keyboard. To type the asterisk, hold down the left SHIFT key while striking the 8 key.

Typing capital letters will seem slow at first, but when you've gained enough skill with your typing, you'll do it without conscious effort. As a beginner, you want to develop a smooth, even operation and to avoid any break in your typing rhythm.

Learn the Left Shift Key **Reach with the 'A' finger**



Place your left hand on the home row. Keep your 'F' finger lightly on the 'F' key while you use your 'A' finger to hold down the Left Shift key; with the Left Shift key down, press the 'J' key with the right hand. Return the left hand to its home row position. When the Shift key is down, and a letter key is pressed, it makes a capital letter. Why do you think it is important to leave the 'F' finger on its home row position while you press the Shift key?

The reach to the left SHIFT is from the a key to the SHIFT with the pinky finger on your left hand. Some people find the SHIFT key reaches awkward because of pinky size and the downward reach.

To capitalize a letter that you strike with your right hand, use the left SHIFT key. For example...

- Reach over with the pinky of your left hand and depress the SHIFT key.
- While holding down the SHIFT key, use a finger on your right hand to press the letter you want to capitalize.
- Release the SHIFT and return your left pinky to the a key.

When you feel comfortable with the reach, do the 15-second timings for Lines 10 through 12 where you'll type the following capital letters: J, K, L, O, N, H.

You'll get a chance to practice sentences with capital letters with the 30-second timings in Lines 13 through 15 and the 1-minute timings in Lines 16 through 18. Space once after the semi-colons in these lines. Remember that no errors are allowed for the 30-second timings. If you

finish a line before the timer stops, press ENTER and type the line again. Continue typing until the timer stops. If you stop typing, the program will time you out and you'll have to type the line again. If you make more than one error, click the Timer button to start the timer over.

Good luck!