

## DVORAK & COLEMAK KEYBOARDS

Darryl Francis  
Brampton, Cumbria, England  
darryl.francis@yahoo.co.uk

Previous editions of *Word Ways* have identified the longest words and names which can be typed on each of the individual rows of the QWERTY keyboard. For example, PROTEROTYPE is one of the longest words which can be typed on the QWERTYUIOP row, FLAGFALLS is one of the longest words which can be typed on the ASDFGHJKL row, and BZZZBZZZ is the longest word which can be typed on the ZXCVBNM row.

A previous article investigated typable words from the various rows of keys on the AZERTY and QWERTZ keyboards. In this article, I look at the layouts of the Dvorak and Colemak keyboards.

### The Dvorak Keyboard

Dvorak was an American professor who patented his design in 1936, believing that the QWERTY layout was uneconomical and uncomfortable—and therefore wasn't the perfect layout. Dvorak believed that his layout was more efficient, and some studies seem to agree. Here is the layout of the standard Dvorak keyboard (feel free to ignore the non-letter characters):



The top row here has GLYCYL (Webster's Third) as the longest typable word.

The second row offers a multitude of long words which can be typed, the longest probably being the 20-letter plural UNOSTENTATIOUSNESSES (Webster's Third).

The bottom row has the familiar BZZZBZZZ as its longest typable word.

## The Colemak Keyboard

The Colemak keyboard layout is meant to appease those who are uncomfortable with the QWERTY layout but don't feel like adopting a whole new layout. Instead, it makes 17 changes to key layout, and also does away with the Caps Lock key. Interestingly, the Caps lock key is replaced with a second backspace key, for those of you who make double the amount of mistakes! Here's the layout (but do ignore all the non-letter keys):

~	!	@	#	\$	%	^	&	*	(	)	-	=	←	Backspace		
Tab	Q	W	F	P	G	J	L	U	Y	:	{	}		\		
←	A	R	S	T	D	H	N	E	I	O	"	'	↵	Enter		
Shift	Z	X	C	V	B	K	M	<	>	?	/	↵	Shift			
Ctrl	Win Key	Alt											Alt Gr	Win Key	Menu	Ctrl

The longest words which can be typed on the top row are:  
 PLUGUGLY (hyphenated in most dictionaries, but spelled solidly in the Random House Dictionary, Unabridged edition, 1965), FLUFFY (W3), PLUFFY (W3), JUGFUL (W3).

The longest typable word on the second row is: DISINTERESTEDNESSES (W3)

And here's our familiar friend on the bottom row: BZZZBZZZ

There's more information about Dvorak and Colemak keyboards at:  
[mentalfloss.com/article/52483/6-non-qwerty-keyboard-layouts](http://mentalfloss.com/article/52483/6-non-qwerty-keyboard-layouts)