

Cleaning and maintaining your keyboard:

Computer Keyboards can get dirty very easily, to clean the surface of a keyboard is very straight forward, in this guide however we will show you how to clean your keyboard thoroughly as well as giving it a quick once over, we will guide you through with the aid of photos and diagrams.

We have split the guide into two parts, the first part is for keyboards that just need a quick clean, the second part is for membrane keyboards (most standard keyboards) and includes removing the keys for a thorough cleaning.

What you will need:

- lint free cloth.
 - dry cloth or duster.
 - suitable cleaning fluid (isopropyl alcohol).
 - cotton buds.
 - Can of compressed air or vacuum cleaner.
 - Flat tip screwdriver (optional for thorough clean).
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Moderate cleaning (quick and easy)

First, shutdown your PC and remove the mains plug, unplug the keyboard (remember which socket) and hold it upside down to release any debris from in between the keys (pressing the keys is a good way to release it).

If you have a can of compressed air then use it to blow any debris from around and under the keys, if not then use the hose of a vacuum cleaner to remove it.

Now take one of the cotton buds and put a couple of drops of the cleaning fluid on it, use the cotton bud to clean the sides of the keys as seen in **fig 1.1**.

After cleaning the sides of the keys take your lint free cloth and dampen it with your cleaning fluid (don't put the liquid directly on the keyboard), give the surface of the keyboard a good wipe over using the cloth to trace the contours of the keys (see **fig 1.2**).

When you have finished give the keyboard a wipe over with the dry cloth/duster, you should now have a nice clean keyboard, to clean it more thoroughly follow the guide below.



Thorough cleaning (takes longer and requires patience)

Standard membrane keyboards only (not laptops or non-membrane keyboards)

Shutdown your PC and remove the mains plug, unplug the keyboard (remember where it was plugged in) and hold it upside down to release any debris from in between the keys.

This is where the patience comes in, make a note of the position of all the keys or you will have trouble putting them back correctly, alternatively just remove the letter keys **A - Z** from the keyboard (which is where the most of the dust/debris will be) and refer to **fig 1.4** as a reference to put them back.

All the keys can be removed although the larger keys (space bar, enter key, shift keys, backspace, caps lock, etc) can be difficult to put back so you might avoid removing them.

Remove the keys using the screwdriver, ease the screwdriver under the key and gently lift the key top off (see **fig 1.3**).

note: don't forget to make a note of their position !!

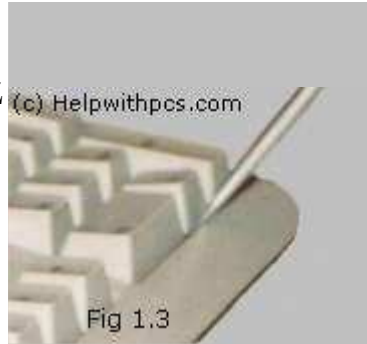


Fig 1.3



fig 1.4

When you have removed all the keys (except any keys you wish to avoid) use the compressed air (or vacuum cleaner) to remove any dust and debris from inside the keyboard.

Now is a good time to give the keys a proper clean, for best results clean each one individually (the patience thing again) with the cloth and cleaning fluid, when clean, wipe them over with the dry cloth.

Before replacing the keys, take your lint free cloth and dampen it with your cleaning fluid (don't put the liquid directly on the keyboard), give the surface of the keyboard a good wipe over ensuring to clean as much as possible any keys that you haven't removed.

When the keyboard is nice and clean replace the keys according to your notes or if you have just removed the letter keys use **fig 1.4** as a guide, to put the keys back on position the key in place and press gently but firmly until it clicks home.

After replacing all the keys give the keyboard a quick wipe over with your dry cloth and you have a nice clean keyboard.

Another technique (advanced):

Cleaning your PC Keyboard

This technique is for PC keyboards and not laptop keyboards.

1. Turn the keyboard on its back and remove all the screws that hold it together. Some have more screws than others.
2. Now turn the keyboard over and gently remove the two halves. If it does not come apart, turn it back over and gently pry up the rubber feet, as some screws could be hidden underneath. When you take the two halves apart watch the cable so it does not break.
3. Now that you have the two pieces apart you will see the half with the keys themselves, they will not fall out. On some boards you can remove individual keys and on some screws will be holding down the entire key portion. Once you have the keys removed, depending if they are individual or as a unit you can now clean them.
4. For individual keys one way is to put them all in an old stocking or put the key plate itself (generally in two halves) in a stocking.
5. Now remove all of the electrical parts (pay attention to the screws that hold them down and their location. Now you will have all the plastic parts of the keyboard apart. Take these pieces (including the stocking if used) and place them in a dishwasher (keys facing down) on the top rack - YES A DISHWASHER. Wash them in a light or standard dishwasher cycle. You will be amazed what the board will look like when done.
6. Note: When removing the keys only remove the cap with the lettering (mark down which position it is in) don't remove the lower end. Leave the keys with springs in them, normally the bigger keys e.g., space bar enter etc.

Another way to clean is use a parts brush or even a pastry brush to clean in between the keys and other areas. You can use a q-tip soaked in rubbing alcohol to clean the electric boards and or the keys where they touch the particular sensor.