

Master Gecko's Home Row

Operating Instructions

Master Gecko's Home Row provides a fun way to help users of all ages learn the basics of typing, develop typing speed and accuracy, and learn a variety of geography, science, and grammar facts. As the lion, you will visit Master Gecko, complete a variety of typing lessons, and complete quests in order to help Master Gecko's friends. There are three primary levels of difficulty with fifteen lessons per difficulty level.

Refer to the Teacher's Manual on the CD for an explanation of the tracking function and for more detailed descriptions of the game play and interface. Please note that the manual is available in a variety of formats, including HTML and PDF. Therefore, if you have a web browser or Adobe Acrobat Reader, you may wish to use the HTML or PDF version.

It is possible to run this program either directly from the CD or from your hard drive. To run the program from your hard drive, you may simply copy all contents of the CD onto a designated place on your hard drive. The CD should remain in your drive. To play the game, proceed as follows:

- 1.** Start the program, and click past the opening screen.
- 2.** Upon entering the program, you will have a choice of three different exercises. To begin one of the three exercises, click on one of the three buttons in the upper portion of the screen: "Keyboard Basics," "Typing Tutor," or "Play the Game". To select Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced difficulty, click on the scroll in the left portion of the screen. To set a goal words per minute, or the words per minute you would like to type, click on the purple arrow buttons in the right portion of the screen, in the section labeled "Goal." To reference which keys will be taught in that lesson, look at the "Keys Covered" diagram in the lower right portion of the screen.
- 3.** When you select "Keyboard Basics" or "Typing Tutor" from the Menu Screen, you will be transported to the Typing Tutorial screen. To use this portion of the program, type the text that is on the screen; as you complete each page, the next page will automatically appear. The letter you should type is indicated by an arrow above the letter. If you type the letter correctly, it turns blue; if the incorrect letter is typed, the letter turns red and the correct letter appears above. Spaces (which should be typed using the space bar) are indicated by "_". To return to the previous screen, click on the "Back" button in the upper left portion of the screen. To pause the program so that no words per minute will be lost, click on the "Pause" button in the lower left portion of the screen. The achieved words per minute and keystrokes per hour versus the goal words per minute and keystrokes per hour can be located in the lower left portion of the screen.
- 4.** There are two ways to enter the Game Play portion of the program. You may select "Play the Game" at the menu screen, or once initial exercises are completed in the "Typing Tutor" mode, you will be transported automatically to the Game Play section of the program. This section of the program combines typing skills with spatial navigation abilities.
- 5.** You will maneuver a map in search of scrolls, which contain important messages that the student will type for Master Gecko. The lion is surrounded by four arrows facing up, down, left, and right. Each arrow is marked with a letter. To maneuver the lion around the screen, type the letter that corresponds to the arrow that points in the same direction you would like to go. For example, if there is a scroll on the screen directly above the lion, type the letter that corresponds to the up arrow.

6. Once you have located three scrolls, you will be transported to the typing tutorial screen and will be asked to type the contents of the scroll. The contents of the scroll may be an exercise designed to focus on specific typing skills, a short fact, or a detailed description of a concept of chemistry, grammar, or another academic subject. When you have finished typing the contents of the scroll, you should search for one of Master Gecko's friends. Once you have found one of Master Gecko's friends, you will type another exercise or fact. After typing the fact for Master Gecko's friend, you will be transported back to the game play screen; this time, you should find Master Gecko, and you will be rewarded for your good work.

7. If at any time you would like a map to help maneuver around the screen, click on the "Menu" button in the upper left portion of the screen or type the "Return" or "Enter" button. Upon selecting "Menu" or hitting the "Return" or "Enter" key, you will be transported to the Map screen. On this screen, you can deduce your location on the screen in relation to the scrolls and Master Gecko's friends. The lion's location is in pink, the area in which the scrolls can be found are in blue; the location of Master Gecko's friends can be found in yellow.

Troubleshooting Problems and Answers

Problem: The program runs slowly on my computer.

Answer: This occurs on some system configurations that have intensive use of existing RAM. If increasing virtual memory is not effective, restarting with extensions off (by holding down the SHIFT key as the computer is turned on) or quitting all other open applications may help. To gain even more speed, you can also have a qualified technician add additional RAM.

Problem: The help buttons do not work and I can't hear the music.

Answer: All of these messages are audio. Therefore, if you have a computer that does not have a sound card, when you click on these buttons, nothing will happen. However, you should be able to operate the software without these messages by consulting the "Operating Instructions" and the "Teacher's Manual", or simply by experimenting with the program.

Problem: The "Save" button in the "Save" dialogue box is inactive ("grayed out"), and I cannot save my game or tracking information.

Answer: You might be trying to save to a CD-ROM or locked diskette. Designate a different location for the saved document (e.g., a folder on your hard drive).

Problem: When I attempted to print my tracking information, I received an error message.

Answer: If there is no printer set up with your computer, you may receive an error message. If you do have a printer, check your printer settings and connections.

Problem: I left the program running; when I returned, portions of my screen had disappeared.

Answer: If your screen saver is activated while the the program is running, a portion of your screen may disappear. If your screen saver interferes with regular game play, try disengaging the screen saver program.

Problem: When I tried to navigate the lion around the Game Play screen, he would not move.

Answer: To make the lion move on the Game Play screen, the letters must be typed exactly as they appear. For example, if the letters on the four arrow keys are lowercase, they must be typed as lowercase letters; otherwise, the lion will not move. If the lion will not move, make sure your caps lock key is disengaged.