

**STENOTYPE**

**FINGER**

**TECHNIQUE**



By

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Over 400 intensified finger drills for rapid  
development of finger power and control  
in stenotypy

**COURSE IN FINGER POWER**

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## FOREWORD — READ CAREFULLY

This manual of finger training exercises is based on the author's experience as a stenotype reporter and teacher. These drills were developed not only for their RAPID effectiveness in overcoming finger difficulties, but also, as warm-up exercises to maintain finger efficiency and flexibility at a peak for actual stenotype operation. By faithfully following the instructions, the stenotypist can improve finger technique and control so that it will be possible to accomplish more in an hour's practice with a perfected technique than can otherwise be attained in two hours with a mediocre technique.

These skill building finger drills have a double purpose: to develop flexibility, and to strengthen weak finger muscles. Flexibility makes for light, easy strokes, and permits the fingers to reach and curl into the various stenotype combinations with the same facility throughout, with hand movement reduced to a minimum. That most students have dexterity is borne out by the fact that they can typewrite 40 words per minute which, although not fast, amounts to 200 strokes per minute. But it is flexibility that stenotypists need — the easy expansion and contraction of the finger muscles required in the multi-finger action on the stenotype.

It is common knowledge that it is easier to control a strong muscle than a weak one. A right-handed person naturally can do things more skillfully with the right hand than with the left because the muscles of the right hand being

stronger, he has better control over its movements. Most stenotypists have their greatest trouble with the third and fourth fingers as they are usually the weakest. They have less trouble with the first and second fingers because they are usually stronger.<sup>1</sup> This demonstrates that a weak finger is a poorly controlled finger. Accuracy, therefore, depends upon control, and control depends upon the strength of the individual fingers.

Advanced students interested in reporting devices such as SPW, STK, FRP, FRB, among others, which they were reluctant to learn or were compelled to drop because of lack of finger control over them, will find them increasingly easy to execute with consistent practice of these exercises. Blurred and indistinct outlines will disappear as the fingers gain in strength and flexibility. So-called difficult combinations will be executed with as much facility and ease as the simple combinations, and the feeling of uncertainty resulting from combinations that seem difficult, will vanish bringing a sense of confidence and accomplishment with the attainment of sharp control.

That stenotype "FEEL" in the fingers that one acquires after many hours of dictation, is quickly developed by these intensified drills. Students and reporters who have been away from the machine find that this stenotype "feel" quiet, fades with inactivity. Upon resumption, they will find that preliminary practice on these exercises, quickly restores the stenotype feeling of well-being to their fingers.

There are over 350 exercises in this manual, and including their variations, more than 700. They are divided into three main classes: strength building drills; initial and final consonant technic drills for fluency; and specialized drills for keeping the fingers close to the keys.

The author has observed stenotypists who, in an effort to overcome their individual weaknesses, have increased their speed from 20 to 40 words per minute in a week or two after continued application of these drills simply because the HESITATION resulting from difficult combinations was ELIMINATED by increasing their control.

This book is best used daily before dictation practice. The fingers must actually work through the contents to experience the beneficial effects thereof. It is suggested that beginners start with the drills on the initial and final combinations in sections 1A and 2A, before taking up the more difficult strength building drills. Before doing so they should read Section I, Page 7 on the practice method. When ease is developed the entire book should be practiced in one sitting. Ten or more repetitions on each drill concentrating on FINGER MOTION ONLY, hands quiet as possible, one hour daily, should produce a marked improvement in finger action and accuracy with an increase in ease and flexibility and the elimination of waste motion.

S. Sanford Heller

## PRELIMINARY PRERARATION

### HAND, FINGER PLACEMENT AND

STROKE: Assume the correct position at the stenotype, so that when the fingers rest in the home position, the wrists will be on a horizontal line with the elbows which are relaxed and close to the body. As the fingers rest lightly on the basic cracks, curve them. Imagine that you are going to lift the entire key board by the cracks, and automatically your fingers will naturally arch over the keys. Avoid flattening of the fingers when stroking. Always keep them curved so that the finger tips strike the keys. When the fingers are flattened, the palms of the fingers strike the keys and that results in loss of control and accuracy. Curved fingers permit greater finger motion and less hand motion. If hand and arm movements are used to assist finger action where finger action alone should be used, mistakes are more likely to occur and much more practice time will be necessary to obtain accuracy. Use a light, but definite touch with a quick release.

In the drills that follow, the finger next to the thumb is the 1st finger, the others being the 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers in consecutive order out to the small "pinky" which is the 4th finger.

## SECTION I

### RIGHT HAND STRENGTH BUILDING EXERCISES

EGT:ELS

EXPLANATION: Strike EGT ONCE, then ELS ONCE, then EGT, and again ELS, thus alternating from one to the other. This is a two stroke exercise, the colon indicating the second stroke. FEEL THAT THE FINGERS ALONE ARE DOING THE WORK, and concentrate on as pure a finger motion as possible. Thus the third and fourth fingers should move without moving the hand back and forth. Practice this drill 15 or more times, slowly at first, then more quickly as it becomes easier from day to day, until you can do it as fast as you possibly can. PRACTICE ONE DRILL AT A TIME UNTIL IT BECOMES EASY THEN PROCEED TO THE NEXT DRILL. REPEAT THIS PROCESS THROUGHOUT THIS MANUAL. Give special practice to any drill found to be particularly difficult, with 25 to 50 repetitions if necessary. Weak spots must receive special treatment and check off those drills that are troublesome for special practice. Work down the left hand side of the paragraph first. Try the left hand exercises and the specialized drills when you get tired working on the right hand. Use the same procedure throughout the manual.

When ease is developed on all the exercises the entire book should be practiced in one sitting

### Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building Exercises

for an hour daily with 5 or more repetitions on each drill. This is a substitute for typewriting as a means of finger training with the added advantage that all the finger work takes place on the stenotype keyboard.

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: The following exercises are designed primarily to strengthen weak fingers; develop skill by increasing flexibility and control; to develop smooth and fluent execution on the keyboard. Where they incidentally contain final consonant combinations, they are so indicated. Concentrate on finger motion only, hands quiet as possible.

For 3rd and 4th fingers; LS, GT, GD

EGT:ELS

(\*S means S under D)

UGT:ELS

UGD:EL\*S

EGT:ULS

EGD:EL\*S

EGD:UL\*S

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building ExercisesFor 4th finger control;MENTS, KS, KD, KT, KTS

(These are 3 stroke exercises)

EFPLT:EFPLS:EFPLTS    EKD:EK\*S:EKDS

EFPLTS:EFPLS:EFPLT    EKDS:EK\*S:EKD

EFPLD:EFPL\*S:EFPLDS    EFPT:EFPS:EFPTS

EFPLDS:EFPL\*S:EFPLD    EFPTS:EFPS:EFPT

EKT:EKS:EKTS    EFPD:EFP\*S:EFPDS

EKTS:EKS:EKT    EFPDS:EFP\*S:EFPD

For 3rd and 4th fingers; KT, KD, MS

EKT:FMS    UM\*S:EKD

UKT:EMS    UKD:EM\*S

EKT:UMS

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building ExercisesFor 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers;FS, NT, FD, FG, ND

EFS:UNT    UFG:INTS

UFS:ENT    EFD:INT

EF\*S:ENT    UFD:ENT

EF\*S:UNT    EFD:UNT

UF\*S:ENT    UFD:INT

ENT:UPS    EFG:UND

UNT:EPS    UFG:END

EFG:UNT    EFGS:UND

UFG:ENT    UFGS:ENDS

EFG:INTS    UFG:IND

For 3rd finger clearance control; SH, FRP

EFRPS:ERBTS    EFRPS:ERBDS

EFRPS:ERBT    EFRPS:URBD

EFRPS:URBTS    IFPPS:IR:BT

UFRPS:ERBTS    IFRP:ISHD

EFRPS:URBT    UFRP:ISHT

UFRPS:ERBT    IFRP:USHT

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building Exercises

For all fingers; BLT, BLTS, FRP, KTS, NG

EFRPS:EBLTS      UFRPS:EGT

UFRPS:EBLTS      IGT:UFRP

UFRPS:EKTS      EFT:UNG

UGT:EFRPS      UFT:ENG

EFRPS:UBLTS      EFD:UNG

EFRPS:UKTS      UFD:ENG

For MGS combination

URD:EMGS      EFPLT:UMGS

ERD:UMGS      UFPLT:EMGS

URBGS:EMGS      UKT:EMGS

ERBGS:UMGS      EKT:UMGS

For RPS, SHD, FS, NL combinations

URPS:ERBD      UFG:ENL

UFPLT:ERBTS      EFG:UNLS

URBTS:EFPLT      UFG:INLS

EFG:UNL      EFG:ENLS

UFS:ENL      EFS:UNL

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building Exercises

For 1st and 4th fingers;

FTS, FDS, KT, NLS, UND

EKT:UFTS      IKT:UFTS

UKT:EFTS      EKD:INLS

EKT:UFDS      UND:IFTS

UKT:EFDS      IND:UFTS

UKT:IFTS      EKT:UFDS

For 1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers

EFB:URP      UPG:EBL5

UFB:ERP      UBLS:EPG

EPG:UBL      EBL:UGT

UPG:EBL      UBL:EGT

For all fingers; FN, FRB, FRP, IL5

ERBGS:UFN      ERBGS:UFRP

URBGS:EFN      URBGS:EFRP

UMTS:ERB      UFPLT:ILS

UFRB:EMTS      UFPLT:EFRB

UFS:ERB      EFPLT:ERB

UFRB:ELS      UFRB:EGT

EFD:UFN      UFD:EFN

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building Exercises

For 2nd and 3rd finger clearance control

ERBGS:EFT      EFPLT:URS

ERBGS:EFD      UFPLT:ERS

URBGS:EFT      EFPLT:ERS

ERBGS:UFT      UFPLT:URS

ERBGS:UFD      EFPLD:URS

URBGS:EFD      UFPLD:ERS

EFPT:UBLS      UFPT:EBLS

For FRB

EFPLD:UFRB      EFLD:EFRBS

UFPLD:EFRB      UFLD:UFRBS

After facility is developed on these drills, and they have become easy, the vowels may then be interchanged or substituted in each of the foregoing drills. Where E is used, the I may be inserted; where U is used the E may be inserted; where I is used, either E or U may be substituted. Thus the E, U or I may be substituted to make a new exercise, the consonants always remaining the same. In this manner the maximum benefit may be derived from these exercises. For example, the very first exercise,

Sec. I Right Hand Strength Building Exercises

EGT:ELS may be changed to the following, the consonants remaining the same:

IGT:ILS      EGT:ULS

IGT:ULS      UGT:ILS

UGT:ULS      EGT:ILS

The same may be done with all of the exercises herein. The vowels are changeable, but the consonants remain constant.

SECTION I-A

## TECHNIC DRILLS ON FINAL

COMBINATIONS

OBJECTIVES: To write final consonant combinations smoothly and easily, and simultaneously increase finger strength and control with the quickest possible stroke and recoil; for precision in location of combinations and fluency in execution. Concentrate on finger motion only, hands quiet as possible. Practice one drill at a time until it becomes easy, then proceed to the next one. See explanation of practice method on Page 7, Section I.

EKD:UFR

EFD:UNS

UKD:EFR

ILT:EKD

UND:IFR

URG:EMS

UBGS:IFL

URG:EMT

EBGS:UFL

EMD:USH

URT:EFL

UFRT:EFLS

ERT:UFL

UFLD:ENTS

URS:EFN

URPD:EFTS

UFN:ERS

ULDS:ERPS

UM:EFD

UFT:ERDS

Section I-A Technic Drills on Final Combinations

EFD:URM

URTS:INDS

UPT:ESH

UMTS:ISHD

UFPLT:ERN

ET:ULS

UFGS:ERL

EL:UFD

UPT:ERG

UL:EFD

URL:EFPT

UFS:ERPD

URG:EMS

URNS:ERLD

URM:EBL

EPG:UNT

UFT:EBD

UR:EPS

UFT:ERK

UF:ERS

URJ:EBS

URGS:EFD

URT:ELS

ERGS:UFD

URS:ELS

URS:ECH

URS:ELT

ERS:UCH

UPT:ELD

URLS:ECHD

ULD:EPT

ERLS:UCHD

EPS:UJD

UPG:END

UPG:ENT

EPG:UND

EGS:UND

UPGS:ENDS

Section I-A Technic Drills on Final Combinations

UBLS:ERNT	EPGS:UNDS
URLS:EBLD	UNDS:EMS
EFPLT:URGS	EMD:URMS
ILTS:ERKS	EFS:UJD
UFS:EJD	UM:EPS
UG:ELD	EM:UPS
EG:ULD	EK:UPD
UG:ELS	UK:EPD
EG:ULS	URPD:EFGS
EL:USH	ERPD:UFGS
UL:ESH	UND:ELS
ELS:UND	END:ULS
ULS:END	EN:UCHD
UF:ESHD	UN:ECH
EF:USHD	URLS:ESHD
UF:EPD	ERLS:USHD
EF:UPD	UFGS:END
ULS:ECH	EFGS:UND
ELS:UCH	UFS:EPD

Section I-A Technic Drills on Final Combinations

EFS:UPD	IFS:UPD
URS:UPD	IFGS:UPD
EPD:URS	URD:EMGS

After these drills can be executed with ease, the stenotypist may then interchange the vowels, substituting in each drill, I for the E or U and vice versa, as the student may desire. But the consonants always remain the same.

## SECTION II

### LEFT HAND STRENGTH BUILDING EXERCISES

GENERAL OBJECTIVES: To strengthen the fingers of the left hand; develop flexibility, finger control and fluency on the key board. Where they incidentally contain initial combinations, they are so indicated. Use the same method of practice that was used for the right hand. Concentrate on finger motion only, hands quiet as possible. Practice one drill at a time until it becomes easy then take the next drill.

#### For 1st, 3rd and 4th fingers; TW, SPL, DM

TWRO:SPLA

JA:DMO

TWRA:SPLAO

JO:DMA

TWRA:DMO

SWRO:DMA

TWRO:DMA

SWRA:DMO

The vowels are interchangeable in these drills, but the consonants remain the same throughout. A may be substituted for O, or AO for either A or O and vice versa, whenever the exercises with the indicated vowels become easy to execute. Thus the first exercise would be changed to TWRO:SPLAO, or to TWRA:SPLAO, and TWRAO:SPLA, etc., there being a substitution of vowels in the first or second stroke as the student may desire. Use the same procedure with all the exercises that follow.

#### Section II Left Hand Strength Building Exercises

##### For 1st and 2nd fingers; KP, KPL, J

TWRO:KPLA

KPA:TWRO

TWRA:KPLD

KPO:TWRA

STPHO:KPLA

JO:KPLA

STPHA:KFLO

JA:KPLO

##### For 1st, 2nd and 3rd fingers;

DM, DP, WH, PR

TWRO:DMA

DPO:WHA

TWRA:DMO

DPA:WHO

DMO:PRA

SWRO:DPA

DMA:PRO

SWRA:DPO

##### For all fingers; KH, KM, STR, DW, SM, FW

KHA:DWO

KMO:STRA

KHO:DWA

KMA:STRO

SMO:DWA

JA:DPO

SMA:DWO

JO:DPA

KHA:FWO

KHO:FWA

### Section II Left Hand Strength Building Exercises

For 2nd, 3rd and 4th fingers;

STK, TH, SH, GR

STKPO:THA      SHO:GRA

STKPA:THO      THA:SWRO

SHA:GRO      THO:SWRA

JA:STKPO      TWRO:STKPA

JO:STKPA      TWRA:STKPO

PRO:STKA      MO:STKA

PRA:STKO      MA:STKO

For KPW

TWRO:KPWA      STPHO:KPWA

TWRA:KPWO      JO:KPWA

STPHA:KPWO      JA:KPWO

For SPW, TH, KPWL

TRO:SPWA      STRA:SPWO

TRA:SPWO      STRO:SPWA

DPRO:SPWA      THA:SPWO

KPRA:SPWO      THO:SPWA

### Section II Left Hand Strength Building Exercises

STPHA:SPWO      THO:SPWRA

STPHO:SPWA      THA:SPWRO

JO:SPWA      TWRO:SPWA

JA:SPWO      SPWO:TWRA

TWRA:KBLO      TWRO:KBLA

For all fingers; SH, TH, KH, SPR

THO:KHO      THO:KHA

{very rapidly}      KHO:SHA

THO:KHO:DHO      KMO:SHA

{very rapidly}      SHO:KHA

DHO:KHO:THO      KHA:SPRO

{very rapidly}      KHO:SPRA

MA:KHO      KMA:SHO

For 1st, 3rd and 4th fingers; FL, SH

JO:FLA      STO:SKA

JA:FLO      STA:SKO

SHAO:DO      SHO:DAO

## Section II Left Hand Strength Building Exercises

SHAO:DA      SHA:DAO

SKRO:FLA      SKRA:FLO

For 1st and 2nd fingers

PRO:WHA      PRA:WHO

For 2nd and 3rd fingers

TWO:KPA      TWA:KPO

For 3rd and 4th fingers

Place left hand on the base position, fingers curled over the initial consonant keys, and the left thumb resting lightly and diagonally across the vowel keys A and O. Now shift the hand one key to the right so that the S finger rests on the crack between T and K, and the first finger on the crack between the star and the space keys, and the left thumb on the vowel key E. From that position practice the following:

TWE:KPE

TWI:KPI      (Rest left thumb on I)

TWU:KPU      (Rest left thumb on U)

Always keep in mind as pure a finger motion as possible; that the fingers alone should do the work.

## SECTION II-A

### TECHNIC DRILLS ON INITIAL COMBINATIONS

OBJECTIVES: To write initial consonant combinations smoothly and easily and at the same time increase finger strength and control with the quickest possible stroke and recoil. Concentrate on finger motion only, hands quiet as possible. Practice on one drill at a time until it becomes easy, then take the next one. See explanation of practice method on Page 7, Section I.

PLA:DWO      THRO:KPA

PLO:DWA      TRO:SWA

PRA:SWO      TRA:SWO

PRO:SWA      STRO:KLA

BLO:SHA      STRA:KLO

BLA:SHO      KRA:SMO

SNA:BRO      KRO:SMA

SNO:BRA      YA:GLO

SWA:THO      VO:GLA

SWO:THA      STA:KPO

DRA:TWO      STO:KPA

DRO:TWA      SPA:DO

Section II-A Technic Drills on Initial Combinations

FRO:SKA	SPO:DA
FRA:SKO	TWO:SKRA
PRO:SKHA	PRA:SKHO
FLA:SKWO	TWA:SKRO
FLO:SKWA	SPRA:KHO
SLA:KWO	SPRO:KHA
SLO:KWA	SPLA:DO
THRA:KFO	SPLO:DA

In the above drills the vowels may be interchanged but the consonants remain the same. A may be substituted for O, or AO for either A or O and vice versa, whenever the exercises with the indicated vowels become easy to execute.

SECTION III

SPECIALIZED DRILLS

To keep fingers close to keys, left hand

(whole key board on initial side plus vowels  
for the second half)

STWH:STKPWHRAO
SKPR:STKPWHRAO
STWHO:STKPWHRAO
SKPRO:STKPVHRAO
STWHA:STKPWHRAO
SKPRA:STKPWHRAO
SKM:STKPWHRAO
STWR:STKPWHRAO
SKMA:STKPVHRAO
STWRA:STKPWHRAO
SKMO:STKPWHRAO
STWRO:STKIPWHRAO

### Section III Specialized Drills

#### To keep fingers close to keys, right hand

(whole final side plus vowels for the second stroke)

FBL<sup>S</sup>:EUFRPBLGTS

RPGT:EUFRPBLGTS

FPGS:EUFRPBLGTS

RBLT:EUFRPBLGTS

When these are mastered, insert E in the first strokes, and when that is mastered, insert U in the first strokes.

#### For both hands simultaneously

STWH=FBL<sup>S</sup>:SKPR=RPGT ?

STWHO=EFBL<sup>S</sup>:SKPRO=ERP<sup>G</sup>T.

STWHA=UFBL<sup>S</sup>:SKPRA=URPGT

STWHAO=IFBL<sup>S</sup>:SKPRAO=IRPGT

The above are two stroke exercises, both hands working simultaneously. If this is found to be difficult, practice with the left hand alone; then use the right hand alone, and finally use both hands together.

### Section III Specialized Drills

#### Number Drills

OBJECTIVES: To practice moving from consonant positions to numeral bar and to develop precision in locating numbers; to increase efficiency on numbers at a touch.

1 and 1 half	6 and 6 sevenths
2 and 2 thirds	7 and 7 eighths
3 and 3 fourths	8 and 8 ninths
4 and 4 fifths	9 and 9 tenths
5 and 5 sixths	10 and 10 elevenths

Practise the above drill until you can write it as fast as you can say it, and do the same with the remaining drills.

1 and 2 thirds	7 and 8 ninths
2 and 3 fourths	8 and 9 tenths
3 and 4 fifths	9 and 10 elevenths
4 and 5 sixths	10 and 11 twelfths
5 and 6 sevenths	11 and 12 thirteenths
6 and 7 eighths	

#### Reverse Drill

11 and 10 elevenths	8 and 7 eighths
10 and 9 tenths	7 and 6 sevenths
9 and 8 ninths	6 and 5 sixths

Section III Specialized Drills

5 and 4 fifths      2 and 1 half

4 and 3 fourths      1 and 2 thirds

3 and 2 thirds

Practice in 5's and 10's, etc.

5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60,

65, 70, 75, 80, 85, 90, 95, 100, 105, 110,

115, 120, 125, 130, 135, 140, 145, 150,

155, 160, 165, 170, 175, 180, 185,

1890, 1995,

10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100

50, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 54, 53, 52, 51, 50

5, 15, 25, 35, 45, 55, 65, 75, 85, 95, 105

For Spelling

To keep spelling speed at a peak, writing the alphabet forward and reverse is a very good drill.

Z Y X W V U T S R Q P O N M L K J I H

G F E D C B A

Both Hands Simultaneously - 30 Repetitions

1st stroke: STWH:FBLS

2nd stroke: STKPWHRAO:EUFRPBLGTS  
(home position struck)

3rd stroke: SKPR:RPGT

4th stroke: STKPWHRAO:EUFRPBLGTS  
(home position struck again)

1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th must be struck  
to make one repetition.