COMPUTER KEYBOARDS

To give commands to a computer or to enter data into it, a user needs an input device. An input device can be built into the computer, like the keyboard in a laptop, or it can be connected to the computer by a cable. Some input devices, like remote keyboards, send directions to the computer by means of an infrared signal and use no cabling at all.

# QWERTY Keyboard

Keyboards can be external devices that are attached by means of a cable, or they can be attached to the CPU case itself as they are in laptops. Most keyboards today are QWERTY keyboards, which take their name from the first six keys at the left of the first row of letters. The QWERTY design was invented in the early days of mechanical typewriters to slow down typists and thus keep keys from jamming.

# DVORAK Keyboard

The DVORAK keyboard is an alternative to the QWERTY keyboard. On the DVORAK keyboard, the most commonly used keys are placed close to the user’s fingertips and speeds typing. Software that emulates a DVORAK keyboard on a QWERTY keyboard can be installed. The ability to emulate other keyboards is convenient, especially when working with foreign languages. Keyboards have different physical appearances. Many keyboards have a separate numeric keypad, like that of a calculator, containing numbers and mathematical operators. Some keyboards are sloped and “broken” into two pieces to reduce strain. All keyboards have modifier keys that enable the user to change the symbol or characters that is entered when a given key is pressed.