Printable Steno Keyboard Layout Cutout Sheet: Paper Practice Board

Original tasks 1, 2, 3 / complete keys

Task 1

A planned sheet has three vowel keys in a row. Each key is a hypothetical 18 mm wide with 3 mm gaps. Calculate the total width from the left edge of the first key to the right edge of the third key.

Answer: 18 + 3 + 18 + 3 + 18 = 60 mm.

Reason: Add the three key widths and the two gaps between them. Keep all values in millimetres.

Check: Measure the placed row with a ruler. It should read 60 mm. If not, check that both gaps are 3 mm and that no key overlaps.

Task 2

A learner labels a key with a handwritten letter. The baseline is at 0 mm and the midline is at 4 mm. The letter's x-height reaches 4 mm, its ascender reaches 7 mm, and its descender reaches -2 mm. State whether the label follows the stated convention and why.

Answer: Yes. The x-height is measured from baseline to midline, 0 to 4 mm. The ascender above the midline and descender below the baseline are allowed by the convention.

Reason: The convention fixes x-height as baseline to midline but does not forbid ascenders or descenders. Legibility and distinctness are the remaining checks.

Check: Confirm the baseline and midline marks on the sheet, then check that the label is readable at arm's length and distinct from neighbouring labels.

Task 3

A base outline shows four asterisk key positions. A learner places cut keys and finds the second key overlaps the third by 2 mm. The planned gap is 2 mm. Describe one adjustment that keeps the layout consistent.

Answer: Re-cut or reposition the second and third keys so the gap is 2 mm. Do not change the base outline unless the diagram is also updated.

Reason: The overlap means the placed keys do not match the planned gap. Correcting the cut or placement restores consistency with the reference diagram.

Check: Measure the gap between the second and third keys. It should read 2 mm. Check that the first and fourth keys still align with their base marks.

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Original tasks 4 / complete keys

Task 4

A planned sheet lists hypothetical dimensions in millimetres: key width 22 mm, gap 2 mm, number bar height 10 mm. A learner converts only the key width to inches and leaves the other values in millimetres. State the problem and give a fix.

Answer: The sheet mixes units, so comparisons and checks become unreliable. Fix by converting all values to one unit or by returning all values to millimetres and labelling the unit clearly.

Reason: Consistent units are required for checkable arithmetic. A single converted value creates a mismatch with the diagram and the cut guides.

Check: Scan every dimension label on the sheet. All should use the same unit symbol. Recalculate one row span using the stated values to confirm consistency.

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Source rubric / reflection

- [ ] Layout diagram shows number bar, consonant banks, asterisk keys, and vowel bank in correct relative positions.
- [ ] Every key has a readable label placed within its rectangle.
- [ ] Cutout guides are visible and follow key rectangles without ambiguity.
- [ ] Base outline matches the layout diagram and supports assembly.
- [ ] All measurements use one consistent unit system.
- [ ] Handwritten labels follow the x-height convention and remain legible; alternative styles are accepted.
- [ ] Assembly steps are stated in plain text and can be followed without an image.

Reflection: What did you check, what did you change, and what will you try next?