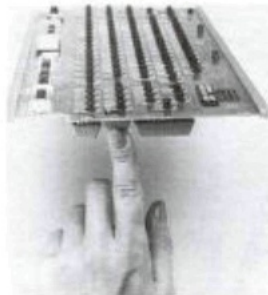




(Above) Key Tronic P2402-19 keyboard (Right) Digitran KD131 keyboard (Left) Closeup of the KD131's "capacitance in reverse" key



Keyboard OEMs offer new designs

Key Tronic Corporation of Spokane, Washington, has introduced a new keyboard that is plug-compatible with the IBM micro but corrects some of the mistaken key placement on the PC.

The Key Tronic P2402-19 has the left Shift and right Return keys in the traditional touch-type locations. Also, instead of placing arrows on the Shift and Return keys, Key Tronic has scribed the words SHIFT and RETURN.

Another complaint voiced by IBM keyboard users is the inability to determine when the Caps Lock key is on or off. Key Tronic has added LED indicators on all lock keys.

A spokesman for Key Tronic said that many computer distributors and users have expressed interest in having an option to the IBM keyboard. IBM currently only sells the Personal Computer with its own keyboard, so a user who prefers the Key Tronic keyboard design will have to purchase it extra, at a cost of \$235.

The P2402-19 is also compatible with some of the IBM look-alike computers.

Digitran Keyboard

Digitran, a manufacturer of custom keyboards in Pasadena, California, has introduced a new slim, lightweight model using an unusual design approach.

According to Digitran, the KD131 has the lowest profile of any keyboard on the market and meets international specifications. The company claims that you can use this keyboard without a frame, since the keys are attached directly to a printed circuit board.

Most keyboards work by pushing a moving plate towards the circuit board in order for the key to make contact. The KD131 uses a "capacitance in reverse" technology in which a moving plate is pushed away from the board.

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