



*Prairie Underground Artist Series: Sean Lockwood*

Opening reception: February 15th 6-8PM

2020

Visit <https://www.prairieunderground.com>

*Sauna for Keyboards*

Installation in decommissioned sauna room using facility materials; fatigue mats, thread/spools, dishwasher rack, keyboards; all courtesy of Prairie Underground

*“Lag” on TypeRacer*

Inkjet print

*Typing of the Dead logo*

Silver gelatin print

(2019)

*Lode Baggie*

Larger plastic baggie for Prairie Underground's used battery baggie

*Typing Game*

Video game music playlist to accompany typing games. 1:00:48 audio track playable through event equipment installed between the sauna and boutique; courtesy of Prairie Underground.

Cable management by artist.

Tracklist/order:

apple-pie order - Piano Concerto in F minor-2nd movement-  
Tamayo Kawamoto - Blue Sky As If Drawn In Picture  
Michiru Yamane - Deep Thoughts  
Shu - Freedom  
Shu - Flow  
Hidenori Shoji - Monkey Shot - Advanced Stage  
Yasuhisa Watanabe - Blow up  
Kunitaka Watanabe - Saronica  
bermei.inazawa - 握り拳ケン  
bermei.inazawa - dim of dusk  
bermei.inazawa - mid night summer magic  
Yasuhisa Watanabe - Roushinshi  
Kazuko Umino - House of Delusion  
June Chikuma - Oddman Hypothesis  
Ryuji Nishida, Daisuke Nakakaze, Masami Ozawa, Osamu Yoshida - Wild  
Boar Tree  
Michiru Yamane - Wakle's Portrait  
Ryuuji Nishida - Jupiter II  
Yuji Takenouchi - Stage 9-2

Products represented:

Landing Gear, Gungage, Super Monkey Ball 2, Elevator Action Returns,  
Death Crimson, Landmaker, Pu.Li.Ru.La, Carnage Heart EXA, Carnage  
Heart Portable, ChainDive

Platforms represented:

Arcade, Sega Saturn, Sony PlayStation, Sony PSP, Nintendo Gamecube

January 2020



Language follows clothing. Proper marketing technique dictates to us that products cannot simply exist and be bought—they must also be described. In any commercial context a step of knowing precedes purchasing. In an e-commerce context webpages should be filled appropriately with text here and there to function in the same way as dressing a boutique, stretching to ends of a rectangle as need be. Describing options or variations or suggested pairings or identifying solutions to identified problems requires some form of copy writing or numeric/non-numeric sizing information or color or short or long or style in order to describe the product. During my residency I was able to witness the tools, specifically computer keyboards, used for creating that description.

I've been really into typing games for some time now. I feel like a lot of people associate them with being young in school and learning touch-typing while being told how much of an essential skill it will be. I think it has mostly helped me with messaging comfortably. I like thinking about them more now because of how much they also feel like work simulators. Typing games typically consist of transcribing prescribed passages of text, and the game becomes a matter of copying these passages. Time management also plays a role because there are usually time constraints motivating you to finishing your copying quickly. All of the elements of industrial labor—repetition, accuracy, speed, etc. can be very straightforwardly encapsulated into a game to more or less pass time or feel busy. Games like these can also be an effective gauge for understanding storage solutions. Because the basic mechanic of any typing game hasn't ever needed to change, the same idea can be repackaged over and over again (maybe with slight variations on a theme) as new products. Every update in readable media formats occurring over the last few decades has shown that these kinds of products can be re-shoveled on to whatever tech, never questioning how much longer typing will be necessary. Only now as we see them disappearing from laptops do we see mechanical keyboards getting the final push into the tech fetish category of quirky peripherals. Their continued survival is an in-house chore, left to the domain of appliances whose design integrity will outlast them. Dishwashers can easily clean dust and food crumbs out of keyboards in one cycle.

At Prairie Underground, a once operational sauna fell victim to an illicit supply/demand chain concerning copper one night, rendering it defunct of its original use and relegating it to a storage closet. Since both a dishwasher and a sauna are on site, and because they both heat water to the same temperature when they're working, I wanted to introduce employee keyboards to them. So I went to the building at night, when I knew no one would be at work the next day, and removed employee keyboards from their work stations so that they could spend the following night, of the opening reception, in the sauna.

The playlist I made is for listening to while playing typing games. The music I chose to include in the playlist all comes from other video game soundtracks and is all composed by video game music composers. I tried to encapsulate the energy required to type fast and accurately in the tracks I selected. I eventually burned discs with the music playlist on it. For this I was mostly inspired by the backup of Prairie Underground Operations & Maintenance Manual to a CD. Some copies of the disc were given to customers as a lagniappe.

Thank you Davora & Mel for your support and generosity while facilitating this project, and thank you Ren & Nick who helped me a couple times in the building.













DATE  
CONTENTS





"lag" on TypeRacer - And The Secret To Unlocking The Fastest TypeRacer Scores  
Posted on January 29, 2018. Filed under: TypeRacer News

Come chat with other typists in the TypeRacer Discord!

Check out our recent blog post about TypeRacerData.com reaching 39,000,000 races in 2017!

The question: Lag?

If you've spent some time on TypeRacer, you may have noticed a puzzling anomaly: sometimes your score at the end of the race doesn't match the score recorded in your typing replay -- both of which are displayed at the end of the race.

The "replay" score is only ever the same or faster than the "recorded score" -- if the recorded score is accurate, why is the replay score faster? If the replay score is accurate, why am I getting robbed of my true speed in the officially-recorded score? What's the difference? We'll get to the answers below.

I've been meaning to blog on this topic for some time now: tonight is the night. While playing TypeRace this evening -- amidst some problems with my connections -- I encountered the bane of gamers (and typists) everywhere: infuriating, punishing lag! (This is how bad it was.)

The lag was of an intensity reminiscent of 1990s dial-up internet on 56k modems -- the kind that induces sudden urges to tear out one's hair and scream, and the kind you may remember back when the internet would drop whenever your mom tried to make a phone call. (wiki links for younger TypeRacers: dial-up internet and 56k modems).

So what's really happening here?

The answer: Latency

The answer is that TypeRacer, like many online games, is fundamentally subject to network latency (in competitive TypeRacer parlance, "ping time"). In other words, it takes time (generally a fraction of a second) for your computer to talk to our servers. Factors such as your connection quality and distance from our servers work against you if they are poor/far, because they effectively cause our servers to "think" it took you slightly longer to finish the race (thus slower speeds) -- after all, it took slightly longer for our servers to receive confirmation that you finished your race.

Why are there sometimes two different scores, though? Because the speed recorded in the replay is calculated arithmetically based on the timing of each character you typed, irrespective of your internet connection. We still use the ping-inclusive speed as your official score, because it's calculated server-side and isn't susceptible to hacking or alteration by cheaters -- i.e., it's part of a secure design that ensures TypeRacer remains fair.

The good news:

- 1) Unless you're in the top 5% of fastest typists, this will likely have little to no impact on you.
- 2) If you're in North America and/or have a good internet connection, the impact will generally be negligible.
- 3) TypeRacer scales its quote length by skill level to ensure that races are long enough to be accurately measured (i.e., faster typists compete on longer quotes, and vice versa).

#1 and #2 are more or less self-explanatory, since a fraction of a second only matters for the fastest typists, and folks within the North America will generally have a speedy connection to our servers. On #3, many TypeRacer fans are unaware that typists at each skill level will only type texts within a certain range of length; these lengths aim to ensure that each TypeRace lasts around 30+ seconds, and generally no shorter than 26-27 seconds. At this duration, even a slow connection will have minimal impact on your recorded typing speed, guaranteeing accuracy. We also don't want races to be too short because we don't think people want ultra-short races -- how annoying would it be to wait 5-2 seconds for a race to start, for a racing experience that's just a fraction of that time?

It is at this point that things get interesting -- and controversial. As I write this, I am bracing myself for the yelling, the livid rants, etc. that will be directed at me on the TypeRacer Discord chat, through email, etc.

The Secret to Typing Ultra-Fast on TypeRacer -- and why Lag is Probably Your Fault

For folks who read this post eagerly looking forward to insightful typing advice, I'm sorry to disappoint -- this particular post gives no tips on improving your typing. However, I am going to tell you one way (read: "hack") to get better scores on TypeRacer -- the way the pros do it.

The operative idea is simple: most people can sustain higher speeds over shorter periods of time, and on shorter texts -- especially after practicing a specific text a few times.

To take advantage of this and get fast scores, we have two main options -- i.e. ways to type shorter content:

(1) Find a friend or random person who is a slower typist (beginner level, 0-24wpm) and race against the typing ghosts in his/her replays. This enables you to race ultra-short texts, even if you're a faster typist. (Saving these scores requires Premium.)

(2) Race against a slower (beginner level) friend in a private race track that he/she hosted. If you don't have a friend, you can simulate a friend by creating a new account (guest or registered), get a slow average by doing one purposefully slow race, and then hosting a "beginner racetrack" for yourself. Use two different browsers for your two accounts. Anyone who joins this racetrack will be served races on the shortest texts on the site.

This is how most of the recent single-race speed records have been set on TypeRacer: e.g., how Michael DeRoche broke 300wpm late last year.

So there you have it. Although we here at TypeRacer don't exactly endorse this type of racing, we don't have any reason (or a good way!) to prohibit typists from typing the content they want to -- even if it's not the appropriate length for their skill level. (Related: type ultra-long texts in our Marathon universe. One race might take you 20 minutes. Remember to set the display to show just one line of text.)

If you've never tried this before, you might find it fun to give it a try. Keep in mind that this is not what TypeRacer was designed for, and by actively seeking out the shortest quotes (even if you're a Megaracer), you're circumventing the fundamental controls that TypeRacer has in place to ensure accuracy of your recorded speeds: you'll be entering the wild wild west, and there's no guarantee that you won't lose typing speed due to "lag" or "ping time", especially if you're on a slower connection and/or far away from North America.

Good luck breaking those speed records!



