The 10-letter keyboard that will make your head hurt

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The ASETNIOP keyboard [1] is one of those things that may be great for future generations but will have a tough time integrating itself into the current workforce.

The keyboard works on the premise that the traditional setup for typing is structurally inefficient, and you really only need 10 buttons to type. The primary keys are: ASET and NIOP. When you're typing on a normal keyboard, those eight letters are the most commonly used letters for each finger. For example, on a normal QWERTY keyboard, your left middle finger would rest on the "D" key. But the designers point out you actually use the finger to push the "E" key more than you use it for the "D" key. Basically, the keyboard structure is flawed, so the ASETNIOP keyboard uses the most popular keys as a base. From there, varying combinations or "chords" of fingers create the other 18 letters. For example, pushing the right middle and pinky fingers simultaneously will produce the letter "K".

Is your mind blown yet?

You can try it out on your desktop here. [2] I warn you: It was physically painful to try and use the "J" and "A" to make a "Q", so don't do this if you're particularly stressed or prone to high blood pressure. Muscle memory is a powerful thing.

Eventually, the goal would be to lose the 10 keys altogether and just freehand it, but they give you an area to aim for in the beginning.

Thinking about how this keyboard works—forget actually using it—makes my head hurt a little bit. At first, I was totally against it, mostly because it would mean retraining my fingers to type in "chords" instead of just hitting the corresponding key, like I've been doing for the past ten years. That being said, it could actually be a good thing. Realistically, we're almost restricted by the structure of a keyboard.

Yes, we can reconfigure it for comfort by splitting the keyboard into two areas or make it flat and portable or even make it as small as a smartphone, but we always have to include at least 26 keys. However, if 18 of the 26 keys were just combinations of fingers, it might actually make it easier to use.

Would you use the ASETNIOP keyboard? Sound off in the comments

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Links:
[1] http://asetniop.com/
[2] http://asetniop.com/tryit_desktop.html