

Natural Keyboard Pro

by Microsoft

Reviewed by Ken Herbig

I have been using a **Natural Keyboard** for about a year and a half. I enjoy the shape and feel of it. Many have told me that they wouldn't want to use one because of the funny shape; on the contrary, the ergonomic design has helped me type faster and with less fatigue than I used to experience. I wasn't the world's fastest typist to begin with, so I got used to the split key design rather quickly.

The new **Natural Keyboard Pro** has the same comfortable layout as my previous one, except for a row of 19 buttons at the top, above the "F" key row.

For those of you that would rather use the keyboard to maneuver instead of constantly having to use the mouse, **This board is for you!**

The row of buttons that have been added to the keyboard are shortcuts to your favorite programs, from your e-mail program or your favorite web browser, to controlling your multi-media functions. I was very impressed with the install program, which is very user-friendly. While setting up the shortcut buttons, I had the option of using any web browser and any e-mail program. This was important for those that may not want to use Outlook Express or Internet Explorer. There are also two buttons that you could use for any function that you chose. I programmed one to start Excel and the other Windows Explorer.

The buttons are laid out with the button for your Email program in the middle. To the left are all your browser buttons. There are buttons for forward and back, stop, refresh, search and even your favorites. On the right are your multimedia buttons. They start with mute, volume (- & +), play/pause, stop, previous track, next track and a media button to select what program to start.



For those of you that use USB peripherals, the keyboard comes with two USB ports built in. This comes in very useful if you need to connect something quickly. You don't have to get in the back of your computer. Just plug it in the back of the keyboard and away you go. To use this function you must be running Windows 98 or Windows 2000 Pro.

For those of you that are fairly new to computing, they have also labeled the keys that you use for your CTR hotkeys.

I was very pleased with the feel of the keyboard. It is easy to remember the way the shortcut buttons are arranged and they are located conveniently for accessibility. I recommend the MS Natural Keyboard Pro.

MICROSOFT NATURAL KEYBOARD

(www.microsoft.com)

price: \$ 79.95

The board comes with a 3-year limited warranty

System Requirements:

486 or Pentium processor

16 MB RAM

35 MB hard drive space

CD-ROM drive

Microsoft Windows 95, Windows 98,

Windows NT Workstation or

Server version 4 with Service Pack 3 or

higher

A USB and PS/2 connection to your PC

(fulfillment card included a PS/2 to AT

(5-pin DIN) adapter.