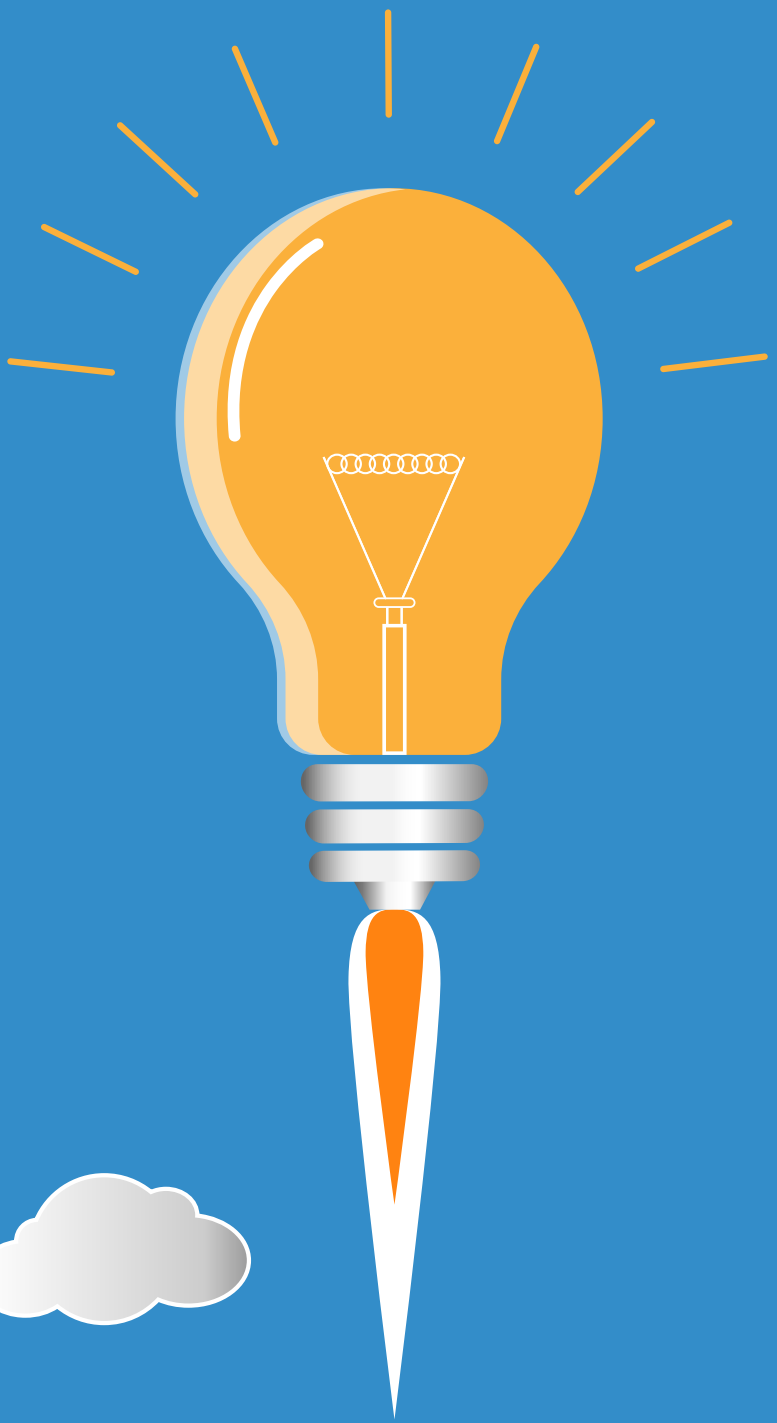


Welcome to the NCRA Career Day Tool Kit.

Find the resources you need, tips to succeed, and more inside this guide to help you promote the stenographic court reporting and captioning professions.

Table of Contents

Why present at career fairs 3

Identifying career fair opportunities 5

Valuable links to national organizations 6

Tips for promoting while on-site 8

Downloadable resources 10

- Business cards
- Flyers
- Yard signs
- Bumper stickers

Additional resources 13

Why present at career fairs

NCRA members across the nation have actively been participating in career fairs in middle schools and high schools, as well as a number of other venues such as at courthouses and local community events. These opportunities present some of the best stages for NCRA members to show off their steno skills and introduce people to the many benefits of a career in stenographic court reporting or captioning.

Below are some of what members have shared about their experiences.

NCRA Past President Jason T. Meadors, FAPR, RPR, CRR, CRC, a freelance court reporter from Fort Collins, Colo., had this to say about his experience participating in a local school career day.

> The students' questions were great, and the experience gave him hope for the generation to come, because they were bright, inquisitive, and polite. The experience also gave him an appreciation for the need for NCRA members to get their story out to younger people.
>
> "They wanted to know what type of training was involved, how much education, how much work per week, if travel was involved, what kind of people I ran across, what were my most and least favorite aspects of the job, if I got perks for airline miles – I don't remember them all, but the questions were very perceptive," he said. "They thought the machine and realtime display was pretty cool. They thought the traveling I do was pretty cool."
>
> Meadors, who said he would certainly participate in a career event again, advises others who decide to attend one to go prepared with a presentation they want to give, but to be agile, because the format they choose might not be the format that's best for the setting.
>
> "We really do have a fascinating profession. I gave my presentation in tandem with a lady who had the title of 'project manager,' and she kept complaining privately to me that she just sounded boring compared to the work we do," Meadors said.

NCRA member Penny Wile, RMR, CRR, owner of Penny Wile Court Reporting in Norfolk, Va., has been a court reporter for more than 30 years. She also showcased the court reporting and captioning profession to students in a paralegal course taught at her local community college.

> "I took the deposition of a risk management specialist for a national chain of stores. It was a run-of-the-mill 30(b)(6) document production deposition stemming from an accident that resulted in a personal injury claim being filed. Plaintiff and defense appeared via video-teleconference, and the witness and I were together at the deposition site," Wile said.
>
> "The deposition took most of the day, and during breaks the witness asked me questions about court reporting. We chatted about my profession and hers. Not only is she a risk management specialist, but she teaches a paralegal course locally, at Tidewater Community College on Thursday evenings.

"At the conclusion of the deposition, she asked if I would be interested in speaking to her class about court reporting. I eagerly agreed! Anytime I can attempt to recruit others to join the profession, I am happy to help.

"I spoke to the classroom of paralegal students. The students were eager to learn about the reporting profession. I started with a once-upon-a-time story of how I entered the profession. It's not a glamorous story but one that should be told. They appeared to appreciate how I entered the profession. These students work during the day, have family obligations, and attend college at night. They are real people with busy lives trying to receive an education. They asked me many questions and seemed to be engaged. I spoke to them about my work abroad, some of the more rewarding assignments I have covered in my career, some of the unusual assignments I have covered, and gave them court reporting 101 in two hours."

NCRA member Darlene Parker, FAPR, RPR, (Ret.), from Reston, Va., has participated in several career fairs at the high school her son attended.

"When I contacted the school, they were thrilled to hear from me," Parker said. "The woman said she had been trying for years to get someone to represent the court reporting profession.

"The kids were fascinated by the realtime we displayed. One girl's jaw dropped, and she did not close her mouth until the demo concluded."

Erminia Uviedo, RDR, CRR, CRC, CRI, a court reporter and captioner from San Antonio, Texas, and several of her colleagues, have participated in dozens of career fairs at local schools.

"Just like we, at one time, had someone enter our classroom, sit down at a little-known type of machine, spooling out little white paper covered in lettered ink, that piqued our interest then, we must remember that feeling of when our dream began, what sparked our interests, what made us go out and seek a court reporting school," said Uviedo.

"We need to remember how all it took was that one person to demonstrate machine shorthand to realize that's exactly what we wanted to do as a career and how it has led us to the point that we are now.

"When attending career fairs, we have learned that the next generation is technologically savvy and quite ambitious. Many are articulate and looking for a profession that provides perpetual education and holds their attention. They are captivated with our cool keyboards and are intrigued with the ability we have to write at the speed of sound. They quickly sit behind our writers and get so excited when we show them how to write their names. They squeal with joy as their names scroll across the computer screen as their friends watch.

"The excitement of a career fair is almost as exciting as attending a national conference. It rejuvenates our excitement in the profession.

"I have learned that nine times out of 10, your audience — teachers, counselors, parents, or high school students — will always be amazed with a realtime demonstration. Out of all the careers or schools spotlighted at career fairs, court reporting is always one of the most popular. The machine does most of the attracting on its own."

Identifying career fair opportunities

- ✓ One of the easiest ways to find out about presenting at a career day event is to contact the local middle and high schools in your area to see if they offer such events and, if so, how you can participate.
- ✓ You can also reach out directly to your child's teacher, or to friends who have middle and high schoolers, to see if they know of any opportunities to promote the profession in their communities.
- ✓ Contact local history teachers and arrange a Veterans History Project interview in the classroom. The interview provides a history lesson for the students while the court reporter is provided an opportunity to showcase their skills.
- ✓ Ask your spouse if they can let his coworkers know you are seeking opportunities to showcase the profession.
- ✓ Reach out to local community colleges to see if they host any type of career fair event.
- ✓ Set up a table at a local community event such as a yard sale, cook-off, or other similar activities that attract an audience.
- ✓ Consider asking a local mall if you can set up a table for a day to showcase the profession.

Other local groups to contact include:

- ◆ Girl Scout and Boy Scout troops
- ◆ Civic Groups
- ◆ Local YMCAs
- ◆ Local Boys & Girls Clubs
- ◆ Local Chamber of Commerce

Valuable links to national organizations

Below is a list with links to national organizations to contact for information about state and local chapters. Often state and local chapters offer career fairs and other events that could serve as opportunities to promote the profession.

American School Counselor Association (ASCA)

ASCA supports school counselors' efforts to help students focus on academic, career, and social/emotional development so they achieve success in school and are prepared to lead fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. ASCA provides professional development, resources, advocacy, and more to school counselors around the globe.

National Black Home Educators (NBNE)

NBNE is a member-supported homeschooling organization that has a vision to transform education and families through homeschooling.

National Home School Association (NHSA)

NHSA provides parents with the knowledge, confidence, and tools needed to help their children learn and finds ways to help make homeschooling easy, fun and rewarding for everyone involved. They also support and encourage legislative efforts to improve homeschool laws.

Home School Legal Defense Association (HSLDA)

HSLDA has a contact list for every state homeschool association.

Association of Independent School Admission Professionals (AISAP)

AISAP is the primary resource for the support and advancement of independent and private school admission and enrollment professionals.

National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP)

NASSP is the leading organization of and voice for principals and other school leaders across the United States.

National Catholic Educational Association (NCEA)

NCEA is the largest, private professional education association in the world. Membership includes nearly 140,000 educators serving 1.6 million students in Catholic education.

National Council of Local Administrators (NCLA)

NCLA is a national synergy of career and technical education (CTE) administrators.

Career Technical Education (CTE)

The longest-standing national non-profit that represents state CTE directors and state leaders responsible for secondary, postsecondary, and adult career technical education (CTE) across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and U.S. territories.

Association for Career & Technical Education (ACTE)

ACTE strives to empower educators to deliver high quality CTE programs that ensure all students are positioned for career success.

Veterans' Transition Assistance Program (TAP)

TAP is a cooperative interagency effort among the Department of Labor, and the Departments of Defense, Education, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs, the Small Business Administration, and the Office of Personnel Management.

Military One Source

A resource of transitional assistance programs for active-duty service members, National Guard and reserve service members, or service member's spouse.

DOD SkillBridge

The DOD SkillBridge program is an opportunity for service members to gain valuable civilian work experience through specific industry training, apprenticeships, or internships during the last 180 days of service. SkillBridge connects service members with industry partners in real-world job experiences.

KIPP Public Schools

KIPP Public Schools is a network of 280 public charter schools with 15,000 educators and 175,000 students.

Tips for promoting while on-site

- ✓ Let the school know your needs for a projector and audio. Find out a time when you can come in early that day to troubleshoot so you're ready to go. You will lose students fast if you are not prepared.

- ✓ Bring along a short transcript to use as part of your demonstration. Let the students get a flavor for what goes on in the courtroom or the deposition suite by letting them have a turn at being the judge, the prosecutor, the defense attorney, or the defendant.

- ✓ Bring a partner to present the demonstration with you. Have a speaker and a realtime writer.

- ✓ Have someone who can reel in the students while someone else demonstrates.

- ✓ Make sure your machine is front and center.

- ✓ Explain how your machine works.

- ✓ Ask the kids what their names are and write them so they can see how steno works.

- ✓ Let them sit at the machine and try writing.

- ✓ Encourage students to take selfies with the machine. This will be a lasting image they take with them.

- ✓ Be sure to note that job opportunities are plenty and readily available and that you do not need a four-year degree to start working.

- ✓ Share the many places court reporters and captioners work both inside and outside of the courtroom.

- ✓ Share that gamers, musicians, and fast texters often make great candidates for this career because of their dexterity.

- ✓ Mention that most positions are flexible, allowing you to set your own schedule.
- ✓ Be sure to mention that the career offers great salary potential in addition to a rewarding, exciting career full of adventure.
- ✓ Tailor your presentation to the local school if you can.
- ✓ Promote all NCRA certified court reporting schools. Inform students that there are brick-and-mortar and online schools. Make sure they are aware that NCRA, NCRF, and many state associations offer scholarships.
- ✓ Share your personal stories of why you chose this profession and why you love it.
- ✓ Offer interested students the opportunity to shadow you or a colleague in whatever area of your profession may be of interest to them. Give them the chance to see just how exciting this career really is.
- ✓ Run a video loop or a PowerPoint presentation on an extra laptop on your table.
- ✓ Have an array of handouts available for students to take with them.
- ✓ Have some giveaways if possible – candy, pens, notepads, etc.
- ✓ **The most important tip of all – *have fun!***

Downloadable Resources

Below are samples of the many downloadable resources available to help you promote the profession. Below each sample are the links to download it as well as some tips for using it. Each of these can be downloaded and printed by the user or by a nearby printer such as FedEx, Staples, or a local printer. It also never hurts to ask the vendor if they would consider printing these items for free in exchange for your giving them recognition at your display.

Business cards



Business Card – Ask me about a career in court reporting or captioning

Purchase precut business card stock and print these business cards. You can put your name and contact information on the back and hand them out at career fairs or anywhere you see fit. Or you can have them printed professionally and include your contact information on the back.

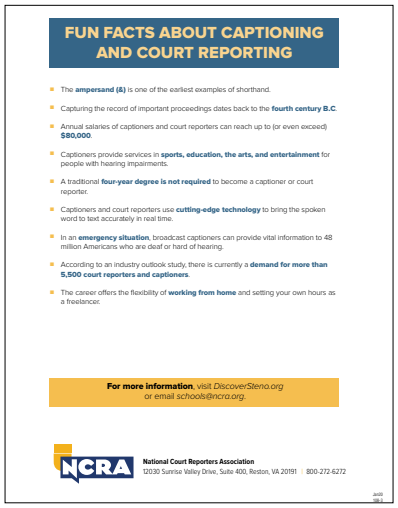
Flyers

The images below represent a sample of the flyers that can be downloaded, printed, and used for handouts and displays. Contact a nearby printer such as FedEx, Staples, or a local printer and ask if they will print them for free in exchange for your giving them recognition at your display.

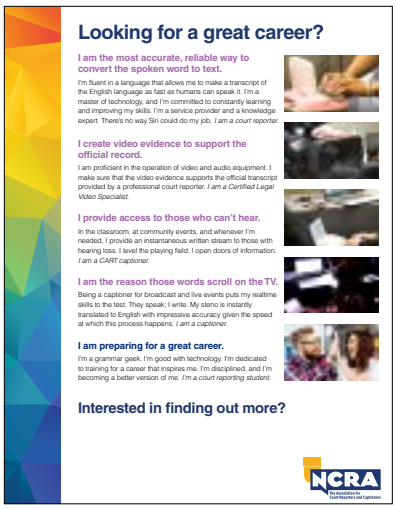


A career in court reporting or captioning





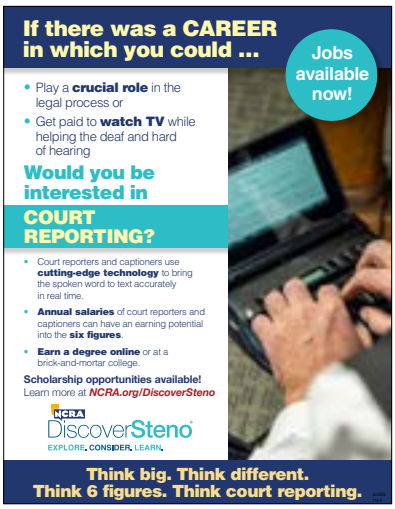
Court Reporting Explained – two-page flyer



[Looking for a great career? - customizable]



[NCRA DiscoverSteno®]



[Interested in court reporting?]



[Looking for a new career? - customizable]



[Take a seat. Beginning of a great career]



[Work life balance]

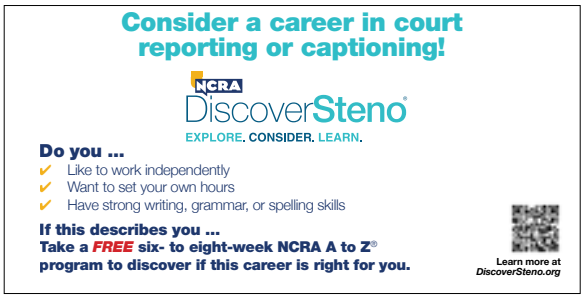


[Love steno career]

Yard signs

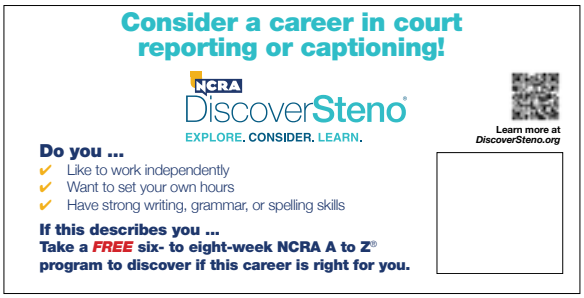
During COVID, members of the Maryland Court Reporters Association placed yard signs promoting court reporting and the NCRA A to Z® Intro to Steno Machine Shorthand Program at unemployment offices, COVID-19 testing stations, high schools, neighbors' yards, grocery stores, gas stations, learning centers, and more. That practice has spread throughout the country. Make sure you obtain permission before posting any sign on any property.

Download the sign you want and take it to a nearby FedEx, Staples, or a local printer.



[DiscoverSteno yard sign size 24x12]

[DiscoverSteno yard sign size 24x18]



[DiscoverSteno yard sign size 24x12 - fillable]

[DiscoverSteno yard sign size 24x18 - fillable]

Bumper stickers

These bumper stickers can be printed on label paper as handouts at your career fair.



[NCRA A to Z bumper sticker: Think big]



[NCRA A to Z bumper sticker: NCRA can help]



[NCRA A to Z bumper sticker: Want to learn]



[NCRA A to Z bumper sticker: Looking for a new career]

Additional resources

PowerPoint

Careers in court reporting and captioning

Download this PowerPoint presentation that includes a QR code. The QR code lets anyone interested in learning more about a career in stenographic court reporting or captioning to learn more or review later. Or download/print the ***pdf*** version.

Downloadable handouts

Steno Keyboard

Steno Keyboard with examples

Quick links

NCRA DiscoverSteno®

NCRA A to Z® Intro to Steno Machine Shorthand program

NCRA A to Z® Intro to Steno Machine Shorthand program sign up sheet

Videos

Careers in court reporting

General resources

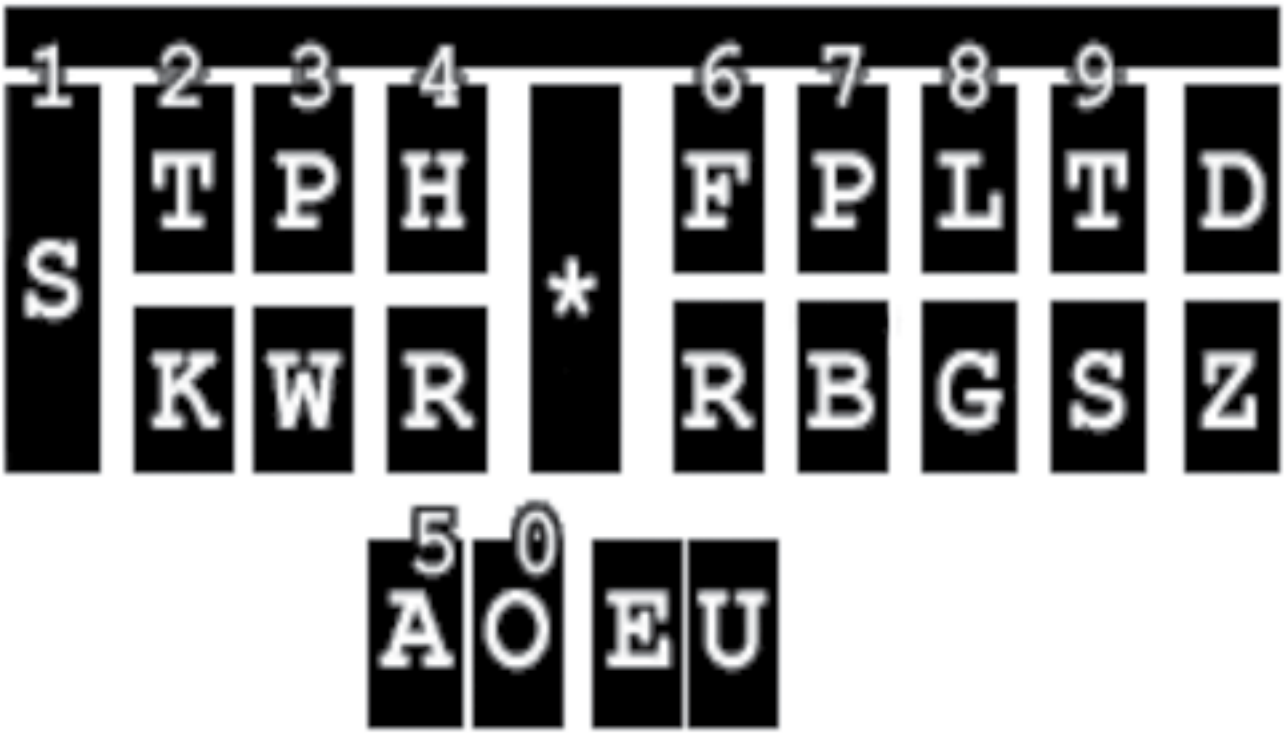
More about NCRA

NCRA certification handout

Finally

Remember to share your career fair experiences with NCRA by sending stories and photos to ***pr@ncra.org***.

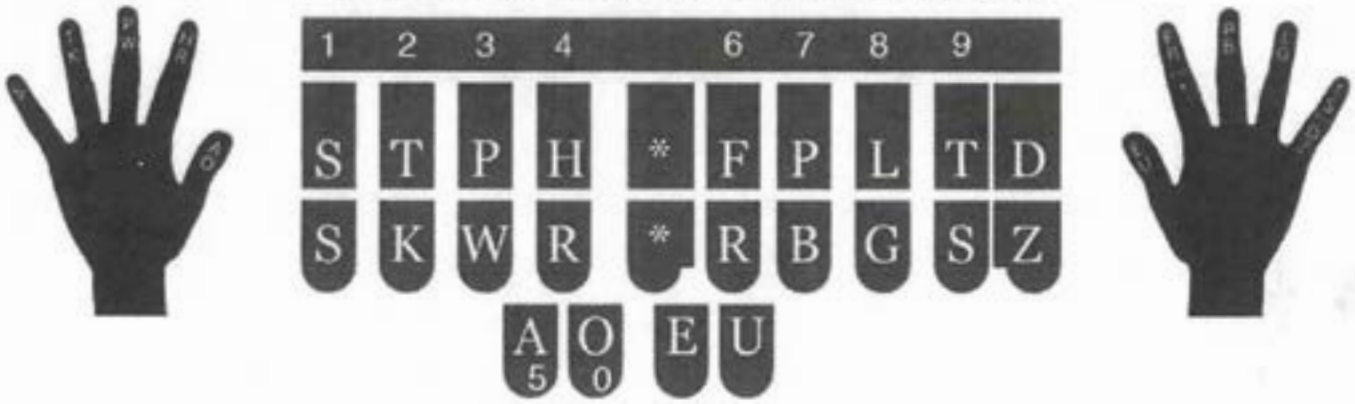
Keyboard steno machine layout



Keyboard steno machine information

The need for Court Reporters, Closed Captioners, and CART Providers is HUGE and continues to grow!*

CHECK OUT THE STENO KEYBOARD



Left Hand (consonants)

B = PW	K = K	S = S
C = KR	L = HR	T = T
D = TK	M = PH	V = SR
F = TP	N = TPH	W = W
G = TKPW	P = P	X = KP
H = H	Q = KW	Y = KWR
J = SKWR	R = R	Z = STK

Thumbs (vowels)

A = A
E = E
I = EU
O = O
U = U

Right Hand (consonants)

B = B	L = L	S = S
D = D	M = PL	T = T
F = F	N = PB	V = *F
G = G	P = P	X = BGS
J = PBLG	R = R	Z = Z
K = BG		

Confused? Look at these examples to see how some common English words look in steno:

English Word	Steno Word
bad	PWAD
dip	TKEUP
bam	PWAPL
pit	PEUT
fan	TPAPB
dad	TKAD



Your turn! Match the English word with the correct steno word:

English Word	Steno Word
dog	SKWROB
bag	KAT
sun	TKOG
job	PHOPL
cat	PWAG
mom	SUPB

NCRA A to Z Program

Sign up and learn for free!

Are you interested in free training with NCRA's **A to Z Intro to Machine Shorthand**® online class?

Are you interested in becoming a court reporter/stenographer?

Print name	Email address	Grade

We hope this

Career Day Tool Kit

will help you with your next career fair.

Feel free to send additional tips you think could be useful for future editions of this Tool Kit to ***pr@ncra.org***.