

# How court reporting is done

The most common method of court reporting, stenography, uses a stenotype machine — a word processor with a modified, 22-button keyboard. Spelling words phonetically, a trained stenographer can record more than 200 words per minute.

**Stenotype machine**

**Designed for speed**

The fingers of the left hand spell out the beginning of a syllable, the thumbs type the vowels, and the fingers of the right hand end the syllable. Single keys can be pressed, but keys are commonly pressed down in groups — like chords on a piano.

Initial consonants      Final consonants

## A sample

Stenographers spell out syllables phonetically, but there aren't enough keys to cover every sound. Combinations of letters are used to create missing consonants. For Example, there is no "N" on the keyboard, so "P" and "B" are used together to represent that sound.

A	A
K R O E R T	<b>court</b>
E R	<b>reporter</b>
K	<b>can</b>
W R EU	<b>write</b>
T H	<b>this</b>
TP A F T	<b>faster</b>
E R	
T H A PB	<b>than</b>
U	<b>you</b>
K	<b>can</b>
R A E D	<b>read</b>
T H	<b>this</b>

Sources: U.S. Bureau of Labor Occupational Handbook; Atkinson-Baker, Court Reporters; 2020 Captioning DOUG GRISWOLD — MERCURY NEWS

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For more information about careers in realtime reporting:

**Contact:**  
National Court Reporters  
Association (NCRA)  
[www.ncra.org](http://www.ncra.org)

**Contact:**  
Michigan Association of  
Professional Court Reporters  
(MAPCR)  
[www.mapcr.org](http://www.mapcr.org)

[www.careersincourtreporting.com](http://www.careersincourtreporting.com)

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