

# How to type Nigerian languages well with the Naija Type keyboard

Nigerian languages have different sounds and symbols from English. In the past it's been hard to type Nigerian languages correctly on systems, tablets and handsets but no more. There's one free keyboard you can install on all your devices to make it really easy to type hooked letters, special vowels, letters with accents, underlines and underdots and more: Naija Type. I'll tell you how to install it in a moment but first let me show you how to use it.

## On desktop

Type the base letter then the semicolon key **;** one or more times to switch between other forms of that letter. For example, to type the word

- **hudu** type **h** **u** **d** **;** **u**

To do a capital letter, type the capital before you press **;** like this:

- **Daya** type **shift** **-** **d** **;** **a** **y** **a**

After typing a vowel or nasal you can add a tone mark above it by pressing the **`** key repeatedly. This cycles through the following symbols: **ó ò ô õ ö**. (I can easily add more options if anyone needs it.)

Similarly you can press **shift** **-** **~** and this will put the nasal tilde mark above or remove it from the previous letter. So for example, to type the Gworog word

- **Zigwái** type **shift** **-** **z** **i** **;** **g** **w** **a** **`** **I**

Or to type Tyap word

- **Agwazá** type **shift** **-** **a** **;** **;** **g** **w** **a** **;** **;** **z** **a** **;** **;**

Or to type the Ishe phrase

- **shá jě anāṅa** type **s** **h** **a** **`** **space** **j** **e** **;** **shift** **-** **~** **space**  
**a** **n** **a** **shift** **-** **~** **n** **;** **a**

Or to type the Naira sign we do dollar then semicolon:

- **₦** type **shift** **-** **4** **;**

Or to type the Yorùbá greeting

- **Káàbò** type **shift** **-** **K** **a** **`** **a** **`** **`** **b** **o** **;** **;** **;** **`** **`**
- **È káàárò** type **shift** **-** **E** **;** **space** **k** **a** **`** **a** **`** **`** **a** **`** **r**  
**o** **;** **;** **;** **`**

If you ever used a 'deadkey' system you see this is the other way round – we type then change. This means we always see something change on the screen when we type a key.

## On touch screens (Android or iOS)

If you want to type letters then look for a letter that is similar to the one you want, and press and hold on it. More letter symbols will pop up. Without lifting your finger slide to highlight the letter you want to use. Then release.

To type a special capital, press the shift key  then press and hold, slide and release as with the small letters.

Press the  numbers button to show numbers and other symbols.

For extra diacritics type the main letter and then press and hold on the  key at the top left to choose an extra diacritic to add.

There are even more symbols you can find if you go looking.

## How to install it

Install Keyman for Android, iOS, Windows or macOS. (See [www.keyman.com](http://www.keyman.com))

Download the **naijatype.kmp** file from [blog.rowbory.co.uk/language/naija-type](http://blog.rowbory.co.uk/language/naija-type)

- On Windows, double-click this and click Install.
- On Android, open the file with Keyman.
- On iOS, open Keyman then from the menu choose Settings, then Install From File and choose the naijatype kmp file you downloaded.



## What symbols are included?

### Physical keyboard

Here are the symbols that the  key will cycle through:

direct	a	e	i	o	u	b	c	d	g	h	k	n	s	v	y	z	\$
1 <sup>st</sup> 	ə	ɛ	ɪ	ɔ	ʊ	ɓ	ç	ɗ	ɣ	ɦ	ƙ	ŋ	ʃ	v	ɣ	ʒ	₦
2 <sup>nd</sup> 	à	è	ì	ò	ù					ħ		ƚ	ș				£
3 <sup>rd</sup> 	ạ	ẹ	ị	ọ	ụ					ħ		ƚ	ș				'
4 <sup>th</sup> 			ï		ü							ƚ					

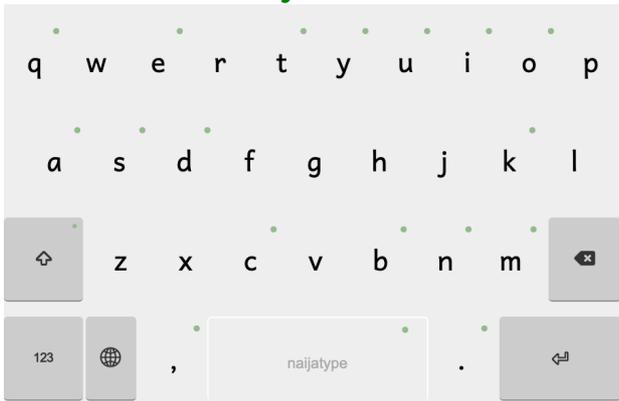
Unicode characters used:

- Combining tone diacritics are: U + 0301, 300, 302, 30C, 304.
- Tilde is U + 0303 (Combining tilde)
- Underline is U + 0331 (Combining macron below)
- Underdot is U + 0323 (Combining dot below)

## Touch keyboard

The touch keyboard has several different layers (default, shift, capslock, numbers/symbols and more symbols). In addition each key with a green dot above it pops up some alternative letters or symbols.

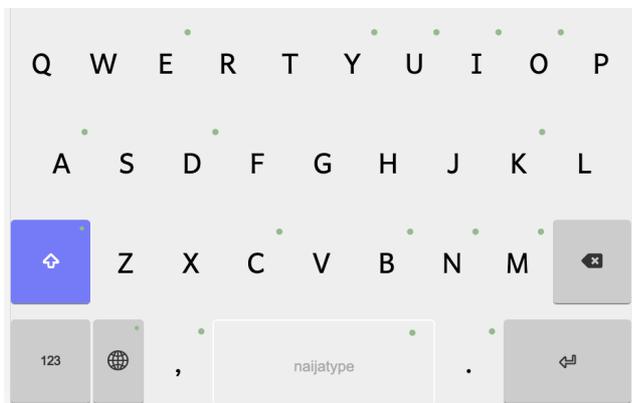
### The touch screen layers:



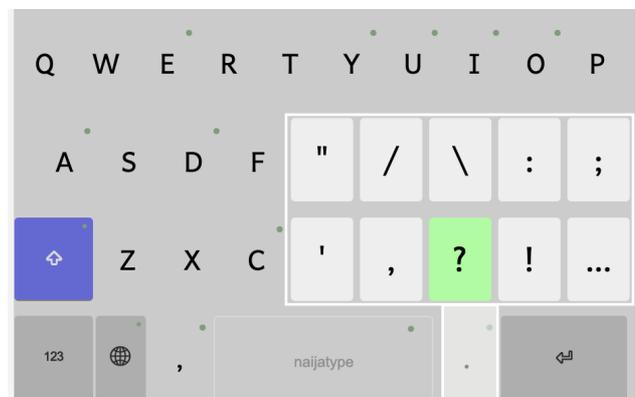
**Default layer.** See the green popup dots.



Above is the **numbers and symbols** layer.



**Shift layer:** for capital letters.



Lots of punctuation is inside the full stop / period and comma keys on either side of the space bar. Even the space bar gives you n dashes and m dashes if you press and hold down.



Pressing and holding the **a** key gives the above options.