Both keyboards require the weight of the arm, hinged from the elbow, to depress the keys. Since the keys to the manual typewriter are actually mechanical and require the weight of the arm to depress them, people instinctively used their arms properly and typed with properly curved fingers. Electronic keyboards should be used the same way but people are, I guess, lazy and have begun typing with their fingers rather than their arms. The fingers are designed for poking and grabbing, not isolating and over extending.

Another danger with the electronic keyboard is that the arms can rest on a table top or designers developed wrist rests for them. This is very bad for the wrist because it isolates the hand from the arm and causes the typist to twist (ulnar deviation and radial deviation) the wrist. Also, resting the wrist on the table not only puts pressure on the carpal tunnel but it further isolates the fingers from the hand. The finger tip is connected to the finger which is connected to the knuckle which is connected to the wrist which is connected to the forearm then the elbow then the arm then the shoulder. The body is designed for all those parts to work together. Isolating one of those parts and overusing it will cause problems.

When typing, the arms should rest up and only go down to depress one key at a time. People think speed comes from isolating fingers but that just causes dual muscular pulls, eventual fatigue then injury.

The good news is that doctors can give you injections, splints, surgery, tell you to stop or prescribe wrist rests. OR, you can just type properly.

Nothing is wrong with either keyboard. It is the user that is the problem. But that is a great question. The easier keyboard is just making us lazy and move less properly.

Organists experienced the same phenomenon when organs used to have a mechanical tracker action and could only be played with proper ergonomics. When electronic organs were invented and organists didn’t need arm weight to play, injuries became epidemic. There is nothing wrong with the new organs but the body still needs to move properly, no matter how much easier technology makes it. The laws of mechanics and laws of physics never change.

A pen or pencil won’t give you median nerve entrapment but can exasperate it or be a contributing factor. Often, in “overuse” issues what happens is we actually MISUSE our fingers causing our long flexor tendons to become inflamed and they then press on the median nerve giving us the symptoms in the carpal tunnel. A syndrome, if you will.

Don’t death grip your writing instrument or pinch it. Hold it lightly with all five fingers. Don’t isolate any of your fingers. Don’t rest your arm on a table when writing. I know, most people do this but it creates ulnar and radial deviations of the wrist. It also causes you to compress your carpal tunnel. If your tendons are inflamed, the weight of your arm on the table will just add more pressure. What idiot invented wrist rests?

Instead, TRY to relearn how to write using the arm. I know, it will be hard and slow. When you write on a chalk board, notice that you write with your arm and shoulder, not your wrist or fingers. That is how you should write with a pencil, too.

I know, it will be hard and awkward. The alternative is surgery. There’s that.

Also, use high quality paper and high quality pens and sharp pencils so that you don’t have to press into the paper. The ink should flow effortlessly with a subtle contact to the paper. Fountain pens are excellent for this.

If you cramp while writing, it is because you are doing something wrong, not too much.