



The SkillCheck Audio Transcription and Shorthand Tests

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The SkillCheck Professional Audio Transcription Test



SkillCheck TestCenter with Transcription Test Selected

The *SkillCheck Professional Transcription Test* allows you to evaluate typing speed and accuracy when transcribing text that is read aloud. You may have one or more different audio transcription tests on your SkillCheck system covering different subject areas (including business, accounting, legal and medical documents).

The SkillCheck Transcription test simulates an audio transcription environment, allowing the examinee to start and stop, back up and move forward in the reading of the audio. Instructions for taking a SkillCheck Transcription test appear in this section of the SkillCheck documentation.

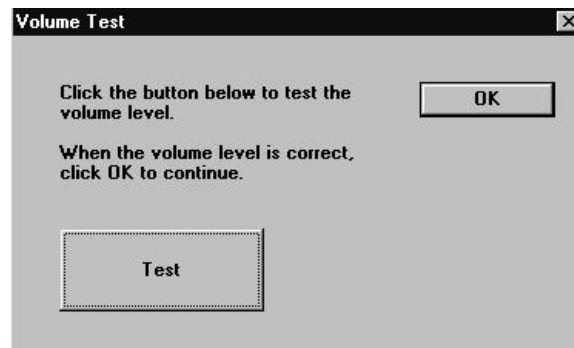
System Requirements/Installing

In addition to the standard system requirements for SkillCheck (**Minimum Requirements:** IBM PC or compatible computer, 486-66 processor, 8 MB of RAM, running Windows 3.1; **Recommended:** Pentium, 16 MB or RAM running Windows 95/98), the SkillCheck audio transcription test also requires:

- Audio capability (PC sound card and speakers)
- CD ROM (if running audio from CD) or 65 MB of extra hard disk space per audio transcription test if audio files are to be stored on your computer's hard drive.

When you install any SkillCheck package that includes an audio component (such as the audio transcription/shorthand or audio data entry test), you will be given the option to install the audio files on the computer's hard disk, or to run audio files from the CD ROM when giving an audio test. Since audio files are very large (up to 65 MB per transcription test audio file), it is recommended that you run audio from the CD. If you chose to read audio from the CD, you must have the audio CD in your computer's CD ROM drive while running any SkillCheck audio test.

Administering the Audio Transcription Test



Sound Check Screen.

If you have installed the SkillCheck Transcription test to read audio from the CD ROM, before starting a Transcription test, be sure the SkillCheck audio CD is in your computer's CD ROM drive.

SkillCheck Transcription tests can be run in sequence with any other SkillCheck tests, using the TestCenter as described in the TestCenter part of the SkillCheck documentation.

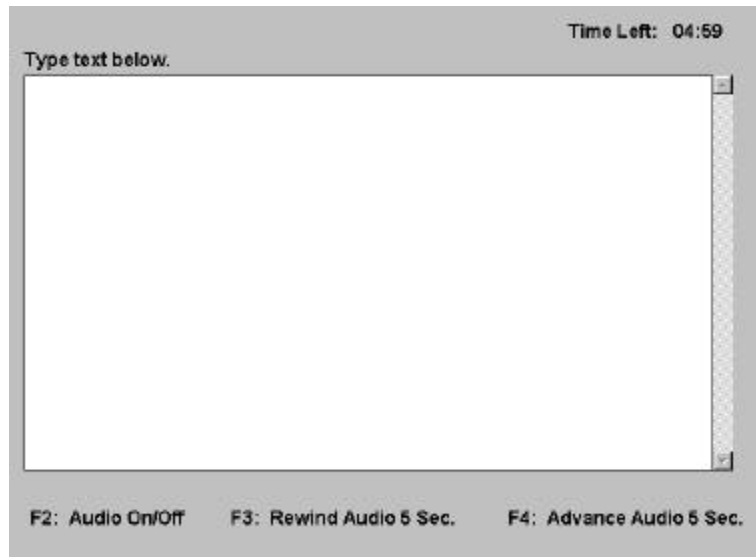
When you start a Transcription test, the first screen that appears is the Sound Check screen illustrated above. Click on the **Test** button to check the sound level of your system. You can continue to click on the **Test** button to check sound level, adjusting your computer's volume until the text is being read at the right level through your computer's speakers or earphones. When the level is correct, click on the **OK** button to continue.

The next screen that appears provides instructions (both on screen and read aloud) on how to take the SkillCheck Transcription test. At this point, examinees have the option to:

- Click on the **Start Warm-Up** button to begin a two-minute, ungraded practice exercise, allowing them to practice using the features of the audio transcription before they begin the graded part of the test. (It is highly recommended that any candidate take the warm up exercise before taking the graded test.)
- Alternatively, examinees can click on the **Skip Warm-Up** button to skip the practice exercise and go immediately to the graded test.
- **Important:** The warm-up exercise and the actual test can be exited at any time by holding down the **Control** and **Shift** keys and pressing **F4**.

When examinees finish the warm up exercise (or if they skip the warm up), a screen appears that repeats instructions on how to take a Transcription test. These instructions are described in detail on the next page. When examinees are ready to take the test, they can click on the **Start Test** button to begin the graded test.

Taking a Transcription Test



Audio Transcription Typing Screen

Both the warm-up practice exercise and the graded Transcription test ask examinees to type in the screen illustrated above. The screen simulates a standard word-processing environment. As examinees type, words will automatically wrap to the next line, just as they would with a word processor.

When the warm-up exercise or the graded test first start and the screen illustrated above appears, examinees can press the spacebar to begin the reading of the audio. Examinees should type the words being read to them as quickly and as accurately as possible.

While typing, examinees have the capability to start and stop the audio, or to “rewind” or “advance” the audio five seconds. The audio is controlled using the following function keys:

- The **F2** key will stop the audio. Pressing **F2** again will restart the audio.
- The **F3** key rewinds the audio five seconds.
- The **F4** key advances the audio five seconds.

During the warm-up practice and the graded Transcription test, examinees are in complete control of the audio, and can stop and start or advance and play back the audio just as they would if they were using standard audio transcription equipment.

When typing text in a SkillCheck Transcription test, examinees should keep in mind the following:

- While typing, text will automatically wrap to the next line (just as it would with a word processor). The document is typed as a single paragraph, with no new paragraphs started within the document.
- Punctuation is read aloud in the document audio. The reading indicates punctuation marks in the document by using the words “period,” “comma,” etc. Examinees should type the punctuation correctly (not typing the words “period,” “comma,” etc.).

- Commas should be followed by one space, periods by two spaces whenever they occur in the document.
- Examinees can use the **Backspace** key, the **Delete** key and the arrow keys when entering text to fix errors.
- Numbers should be typed with commas. Five thousand would be entered as “5,000”. Unless otherwise stated, currency will be in the format “\$5,000” with no space between the dollar sign and the number and no cents for whole numbers.
- The warm-up exercise and the graded test can be exited at any time by holding down the **Control** and **Shift** keys and pressing **F4**.

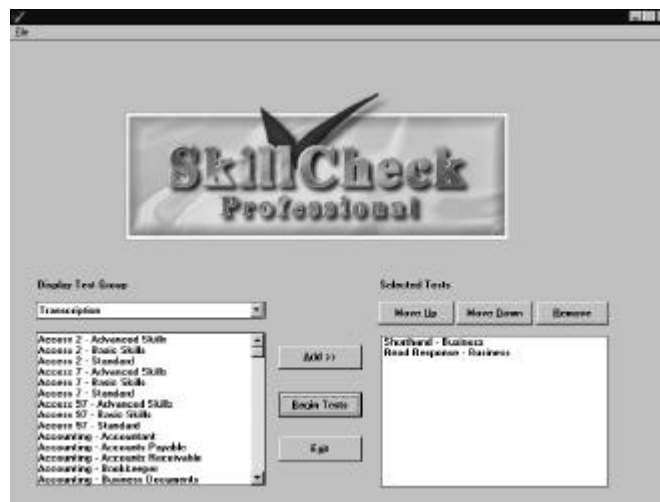
During the test, a timer appears in the top right corner of the screen indicating the amount of time the candidate has left. The warm up exercise is two minutes in length. The graded part of the Transcription test is five minutes in length.

When taking a Transcription test, examinees should continue typing until the message “Time Expired” appears at the top of the screen. At this point, examinees should stop typing. After a few moments, a screen will appear indicating that the test is complete. Examinees should click **OK**.

- If other tests were selected in the SkillCheck *TestCenter* after the Transcription test, the next test in the sequence will begin.
- If the Transcription test is the last test selected for the examinee, the *Contact Test Administrator* screen appears. At this point, examinees should contact the Test Administrator who can retrieve scores by providing a password. (If no password dialog box is on the screen, press **F2**.)
- If the password dialog box appears, type in the password and then click **OK**. If the password has been entered correctly, the test results for examinees will appear on screen, print, or both. (Passwords for your SkillCheck system should be included with your SkillCheck package. See the *Test Administrator* documentation for instructions on changing passwords. See the *TestCenter* documentation for instructions on setting the test score display and print options.)

An illustration and description of reports created at the end of a Transcription test appear on page 8.

Shorthand and Read Response Tests



SkillCheck TestCenter with Shorthand and Read Response Tests Selected

SkillCheck offers two different options for testing shorthand speed and accuracy, an automated **Shorthand Test** and a **Read Response** test.

- In both the Shorthand and Read Response tests, a document is read aloud to examinees. As the document is read, examinees can transcribe the document in shorthand using whatever shorthand system is being tested.
- Once the five-minute reading is finished, the Shorthand test asks examinees to type the document, using their shorthand notes, into a typing screen. In this case, the typed document is scored automatically, as described on pages 8-10.
- In some cases, scoring of a shorthand test needs to be done manually. For example, a test administrator may want to review examinees' actual shorthand notes to be sure the correct shorthand symbols were used to transcribe the spoken text. Or an administrator may want examinees to read their notes aloud to check the accuracy of their transcription. The Read Response test ends at the end of the audio reading without requiring examinees to type their shorthand notes at the end of the reading. Use the Read Response test if your test administrator will be doing the final grading of the test manually.

The Shorthand test measures the speed and accuracy of the entire shorthand process from taking notes while a document is being read aloud, to transcribing those notes into a word processor. The Read Response test gives test administrators a means to check examinees' actual shorthand notes for accuracy.

You may have one or more different sets of Shorthand and Read Response tests on your SkillCheck system covering different subject areas (including business, accounting, legal and medical documents). Choose whichever Shorthand or Read Response test is appropriate for your shorthand assessment needs.

Taking a Shorthand Test



Shorthand Screen

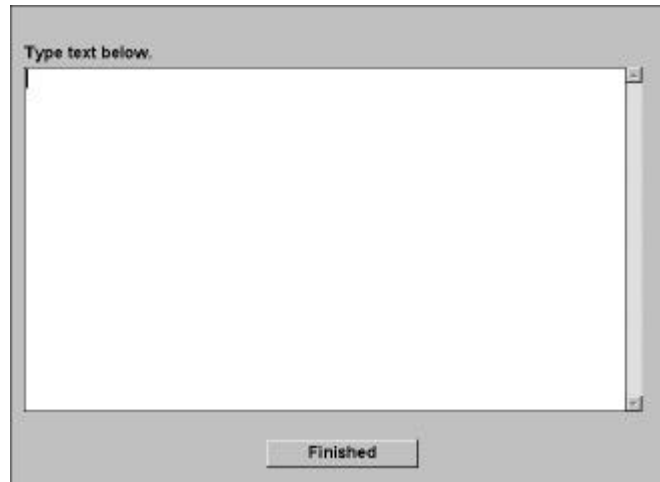
When taking either a Shorthand or Read Response test, the screen like the one above will appear with instructions on how to run the test and transcribe into shorthand a document being read aloud.

After reading the instructions, examinees can click on the **Begin** button to begin the reading of the audio. As with the Transcription test, the audio is controlled using the following keys:

- The **F2** key will stop the reading. Pressing **F2** again will restart the reading.
- The **F3** key rewinds the audio five seconds.
- The **F4** key advances the audio five seconds.

As the audio is being read, a timer appears on the screen indicating how much time is left in the test. When the time is complete, the system will beep indicating that time has expired.

- If examinees are taking a Read Response test, the test ends once the time expires and examinees instructed to read or provide their shorthand notes to a test administrator for grading.
- If the examinees are taking a Shorthand test, the **Transcribe** button becomes enabled once the time expires. Examinees can click on the **Transcribe** button to display the typing screen illustrated on the next page.



Shorthand Typing Screen

When the typing screen appears, examinees should use their shorthand notes to transcribe the document that had been read to them. The typing screen acts like a word processor, wrapping text at the end of each line. There is no time limit to this part of the test. Once examinees have completed transcribing the shorthand notes into the typing screen, they can click on the **Finished** button to complete the test.

- If other tests were selected in the SkillCheck *TestCenter* after the Shorthand or Read Response test, the next test in the sequence will begin.
- If the Shorthand or Read Response test is the last test selected for the examinee, the *Contact Test Administrator* screen appears. At this point, examinees should contact the Test Administrator who can retrieve scores by providing a password. (If no password dialog box is on the screen, press **F2**.)
- If the password dialog box appears, type in the password and then click **OK**. If the password has been entered correctly, the test results for the examinee will appear on screen, print, or both. (Passwords for your SkillCheck system should be included with your SkillCheck package. See the *Test Administrator* documentation for instructions on changing passwords. See the *TestCenter* documentation for instructions on setting the test score display and print options.)

An illustration and description of reports created at the end of a Shorthand Test appear on page 8.

A score report is generated for each Transcription or Shorthand test taken by an examinee. The report can be viewed on the screen or printed. Below is an illustration of a report generated at the end of an audio Transcription test. An audio Shorthand test will produce a similar report.

Text typed by
examinee with
errors clearly
marked

```

This•has•been•a•remakable•year•for•this•unique•
      ^^^^^^^^^^                      ^^^^^^^
→
and•distinguished•university•..We•are•closing•teh•
                                     ^^
book•on•this•century•on•a•high•note,•having•just•
received•the•most•donations•for•a•single•year•in•
history•..This•annual•report•on•giving•for•997•
                                     ^^
----•and•1998•fiscal•year,•which•ended•June•30,•
1997
1998,•recognizes•the•support•of•all•memers•of•oru•
                                ^^^^^^      ^^^
famiyl•who•have•played•a•role•in•our•success•..
^^^^^^

```

The score report displays both gross and net typing speed. See page 10 for an explanation of how net typing speed is calculated.

Explanation of Score Report Details

The *SkillCheck Professional* Transcription and Shorthand tests reports a variety of scoring details, including:

Report Detail	Explanation
Test Duration	The time it took for the examinee to take the test. Note: Since the test does not end until an examinee completes typing a word, test duration may be greater than the original setting by one or two seconds (5:04, for five minutes, four seconds, for example).
Gross Typing Speed	The total number of words typed by the examinee divided by the number of minutes it took to complete the test. (Typing speed is measured in words per minute and keystrokes per hour.)
Number of Errors	The number of errors the examinee made during a test.
Errors per Minute (x3)	The number of errors per minute the examinee made during the test multiplied by an error multiplier (normally 3). Page 10 explains how the test uses the error multiplier to calculate net typing speed.
Net Typing Speed	Gross typing speed minus the number of errors multiplied by the error multiplier. The net typing speed is the most accurate measurement of an examinee's typing speed over time because this value takes into account the examinee's typing speed and the time it takes to make corrections. Page 10 explains how net typing speed is calculated.
Missing Words	Number of words the examinee left out when taking the test. Each omitted word is counted as a single error.
Extra Words	Words the examinee added when taking the test. Each added word is counted as a single error.
Joined Words	Words typed correctly but with the space between the words missing are counted as a single error.
Split Words	Words typed correctly but with an extra space within the word are counted as a single error.
Misspelled Words	Words typed incorrectly—this includes misspelled words and words with incorrect capitalization (for example, “oNe” instead of “one”). Incorrect spacing is also counted as a misspelling. For example, if you place two spaces between words, this is counted as a misspelling for the first word. Also, if a sentence has two spaces after the period, and the examinee only types one, this is counted as a misspelled word error. Each misspelled word is counted as a single error.

Net Typing Speed Score Calculation

To understand how the error multiplier affects net typing speed, assume it takes one second to type a word incorrectly (typing “ADN” instead of “AND” for example). In a word-processing environment, it usually takes another second to delete the incorrect word (using the **Delete** or **Backspace** key) and a third second to type the word correctly. In order to take these factors into account when calculating net typing speed, the Transcription test multiplies the errors per minute by three.

When calculating net typing speed, the following formula is used:

$$(\text{Gross Typing Speed}) - ([\text{Number of Errors}] \times [\text{Error Multiplier}]) = \text{Net Typing Speed}$$

For example, if someone types 82 words per minute (gross typing speed) and makes 3 errors in five minutes (or 1.4 errors per minute), Net Typing Speed equals:

$$(82 \text{ words per minute}) - ([1.4 \text{ errors per minute}] \times [3]) = 77.8 \text{ words per minute Net Typing Speed}$$

Detailed Report Text Symbols

If the **Detailed Report** option has been enabled, the text typed by examinees appears on the score report. The following symbols appearing below the text indicate where and what type of mistakes were made:

-----	Missing Words
+++++++	Extra Words
*****	Joined Words
#####	Split Words
^^^^^^^	Misspelled Words
•	Spaces appearing before and after words and punctuation marks are marked with a dot. If too many or too few spaces have led to a misspelled word error, you can check the number of spaces before and after words and punctuation marks on the detailed report.