The keyboard is an input device that allows you to enter letters, numbers and symbols into your computer. The keyboard keys include the alphanumeric keys (letters and numbers), numeric keypad (may not be available on netbooks/laptops), special function keys, mouse cursor moving keys, and status lights.

**The Keys**

1. **Space Bar** - The *Space Bar* puts a space between words or letters.

2. **Shift** - Is used to type a capital letter by press the *Shift* key and a letter at the same time.

3. **Caps Lock (Capitals Lock)** - Is used to lock the capital position. (Note: On the numeric key pad, a light over “Caps Lock” will come on and the letters you type will be capitalized (ABC). If the light is off, the letters will appear in lower case (abc).

4. **Home** - The *Home* key brings the text cursor to the beginning of the line. (Text cursor is the flashing bar were the text will start when you are typing)

5. **End** - The *End* key will bring the text cursor to end of the line.

6. **Enter** – The Enter key can be used to perform several tasks on a computer. When typing a letter the Enter key is like a return on a type writer and will bring you text cursor to the next line when you are typing. It is also used to “submit” an Internet for or address ([www.ippl.info](http://www.ippl.info)) and opening a program on your desktop once it has been selected.
7. **Up Arrow** - The *Up Arrow* moves the text cursor to the *top* line of the page.

8. **Down Arrow** - The *Down Arrow* moves the text cursor to *last* line of the page. Note: If you pressed the Enter key without typing anything, your last line may be blank.

9. **Left Arrow** - The *Left Arrow* moves the text cursor to the *beginning* of a line of text.

10. **Right Arrow** - The *Right Arrow* moves the text cursor to the *middle* of the line.

11. **Delete** - The *Delete* key is used to erase a few letters to the *right* of the text cursor. Be careful you can accidently delete files from your computer if the file has been selected and you press the delete key.

12. **Backspace** - The ← *Backspace* key is used to erase a few letters to the *left* of the text cursor.

13. **Insert** – The insert key can be used to either insert or type over data.

14. **Tab** - The Tab key will indent a line or new paragraph.

15. **Page Up** - The *Page Up* key to bring your text cursor to the beginning of the first line.

16. **Page Down** - The *Page Down* key to bring your text cursor to the end of the last line.

   - **Num Lock (Numbers Lock)** (Not available on all laptops/keyboards) - The Num Lock key activated the numeric key pad section of the keyboard.

17. **Windows** - The *Windows* key quickly display the Start menu.

18. **Esc (Escape)** - The *Escape* key is used to exit a menu or quit a task you are performing.

19. **Ctrl (Control)** - The *Control* key is combined with other keys to perform a command.

   - For example, the key combination CTRL+ALT+DELETE (Control + Alternate + Delete) can be used when a computer freezes or is unresponsive to display a screen with options to shut down or restart the computer, change a password or user, close a program, etc.

20. **Alt (Alternate)** - The Alt key is used to change (alternate) the function of other pressed keys. Two popular Alt functions are “Alt & F4” to close a Window & Alt & Tab to switch between windows.

**Virtual Keyboard**

A *virtual keyboard* is a software component that allows a user to enter characters.