

[9.22] Minimize TI-89 alpha entry inefficiencies

The TI-89 alpha characters share keys with other functions. The characters are in alphabetic order except that [X], [Y], [Z] and [T] are dedicated keys. Some users find it very tedious to key in alphanumeric entries such as function and variable names. These tips may make alpha entry more efficient.

- Learn the keyboard. While this seems obvious, some users become quite proficient.
- Use [CUT], [COPY] and [PASTE] to reenter variable and function names.
- Use the [MATH] and [CATALOG] menus to enter function names. Use [F4] in the CATALOG display to enter user function and program names. Variable and function names can also be entered from the VAR-LINK menu.
- Use [ANS], as well as [UP], [DOWN] and [ENTER] to retrieve entries and answers from the history display, then edit them in the command line.
- Use simple variable names, especially those with "x", "y", "z" and "t". Remember, though, that y1 - y99, z1 - z99 and t0 are reserved system variable names and cannot be used.
- Take advantage of the custom toolbar menus. The default toolbar menu set includes many common commands, but using your own menus, with the commands you frequently need, will save even more time. Refer to other tips for ways to enhance custom menus.
- Consider assigning shifted-key characters to custom toolbar menu items. For example " and " is useful with *solve()*. You may even want to make menu entries for "{" and "]" to speed list and matrix entry.
- Remember that you can have up to nine 'keyboard programs' which are executed with [DIAMOND] [1] to [DIAMOND] [9]. These are particularly effective when each keyboard program is assigned to a different custom toolbar menu.
- Some users prefer to hold [alpha] while typing characters. This can be more convenient than using the alpha-lock ([a-lock]) key.