



## hp calculators

### HP 12C Keyboard

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## HP 12C Keyboard

### The Basic Organization of the Keyboard

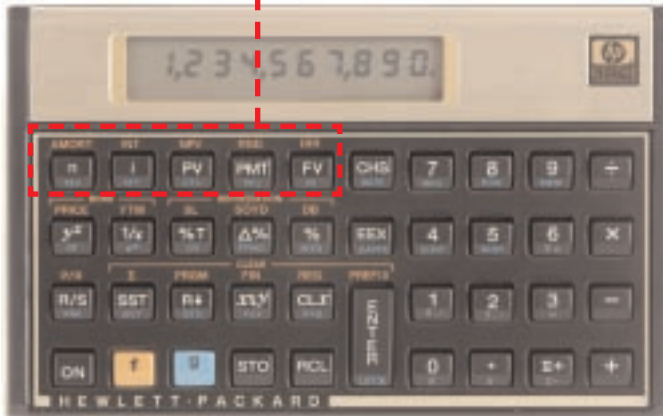
There are a lot of keys—and much writing on (and around) them—on the HP 12C keyboard. It may seem a bit much at first, but if you notice certain groupings and organization, it makes more sense.

First, note that the keys themselves are printed with white lettering. This lettering tells what each key will do when you press it alone. This is the most convenient and common use of the key.

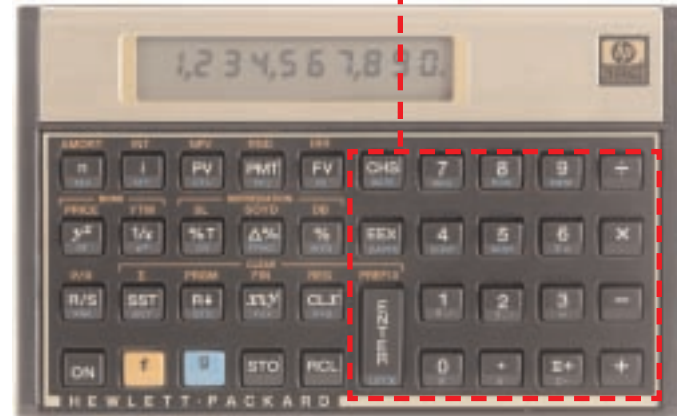
Then, above many of the keys, is **GOLD** lettering. This tells what those keys will do when you press the gold **f** key first. And on the bevelled faces of many keys (below the white lettering) is **BLUE** lettering, telling what those keys will do when you press the blue **g** key first. The **GOLD** and **BLUE** functions are those you use somewhat less often. (More about the **f** and **g** keys below.) But in many cases, they are *variations*, *extensions* or *inverses* of the corresponding white-printed functions.

Take a quick tour of the keyboard now, and notice the groupings.

On the top row (left) are the 5 financial keys, used a lot for [Time Value of Money \(TVM\)](#) calculations. (The gold and blue functions on those keys are related to financial calculations, too.)



The keys on the right half of the keyboard (including the **ENTER**, **EEX** and **CHS** keys) are where you do your [Basic Arithmetic](#). (The statistical functions are there, too—mainly in blue.)

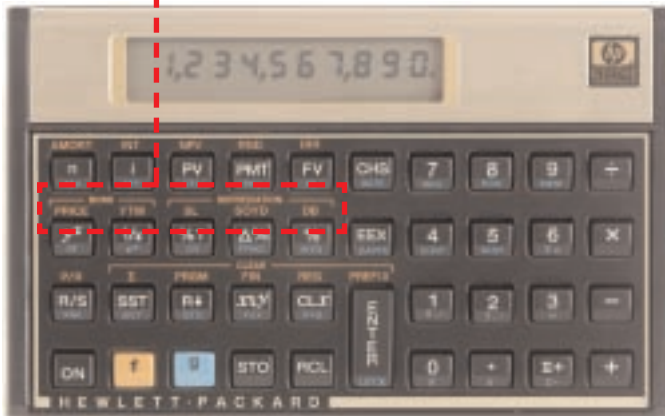




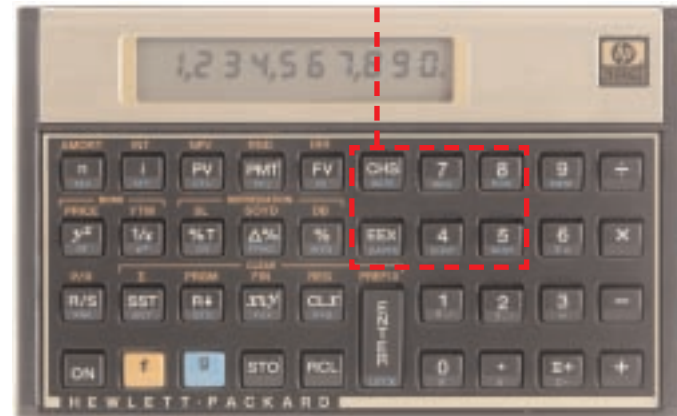
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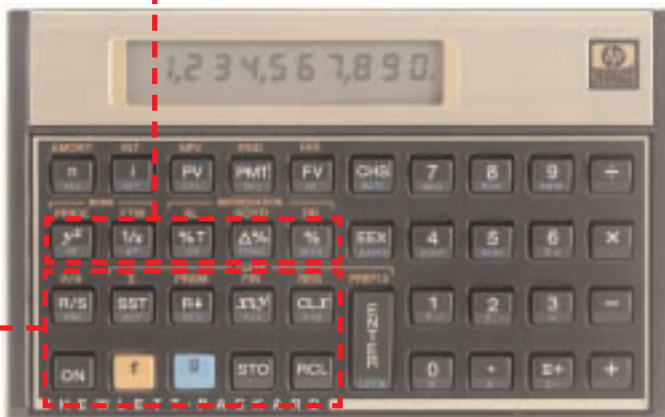
Other calculations related to money are the gold functions of the keys on the second row on the left (near to the other financial functions just above): bond and depreciation functions.



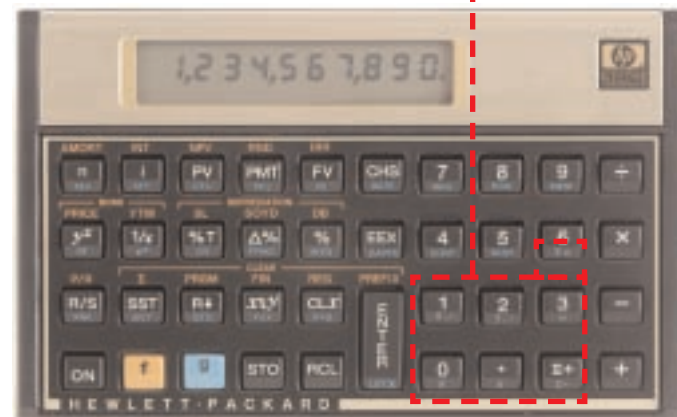
On the upper right side, in blue, are keys for controlling various operating modes, plus some miscellaneous date calculations.



On the second row on the left are keys (white and blue) for doing percentages, powers and other mathematical operations.



On the right side, in blue (lower keys), are the statistical functions. (The  $\Sigma+$  key is in white because you use it more than the others.)





The bottom left keys clear, store and move numbers around. Notice all the clearing keys in gold on the third row (left). And of course, the bottom row has the  $\text{ON}$  key and  $f$  and  $g$ , too.



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### The Two Shift Keys ( and .

As you know, the gold-lettered functions above the keys are what you get if you press the  key first. Likewise for the blue-lettered functions and the  key. Try an example.


**Do this:** Find the square root of 196.



**Solution:** Press 196  .

Notice that the square root function is written in blue (second row, first key). So first you put the number into the **X** register, then you tell the calculator to take the square root. (As with most mathematical functions, the HP 12C does the math on the number in the **X** register.)

Try another example.

**Do this:** Find 4!

**Solution:** Press 4   Get the idea? There's nothing much to it.

One note here: The  and  keys are called “shift” keys because they operate much like the upper-case shift keys on a typing keyboard. But notice that, unlike a typing keyboard *you don't need to hold down the HP 12C shift keys* while you press the other key. Instead, the calculator display will tell you that you have already pressed the shift key down—by showing a tiny little **f** or **g** *annunciator* (a little sign that appears on a row under the main number line) in the display. When that annunciator is showing, you know that now the next key you press will perform its gold or blue function (depending on which annunciator is lit).



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### Those Gold Brackets Above Certain Keys

As you read above, there are certain functions grouped together because they logically belong together. And in the case of some of the gold-lettered functions, these groupings are indicated with brackets.

For example, on the second row of keys, the bond and depreciation key groups are clearly indicated like this.



But notice on the third row (left side), the other gold-bracketed group. These are the keys that clear various storage registers in the machine. Sometimes this bracket leads to confusion because the space was too tight to write **CLEAR** over every key.

Just realize that when you see this:



It means this:



(There's more information available on what these [Clearing](#) keys do.)



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### What's Not Shown on the Keyboard

That's about it for a tour of the keyboard—except one more note:

*There is one group of gold functions that does not have gold lettering on the keys.*

If you press the **f** key, then any of the number keys (**0**, **1**, **2**, ... **9**, or **.**), you will be setting the display to show you a certain number of decimal places of the value in the **X** register. (There is more about this topic and the other mode keys in [Display and Operating Modes](#).)

**Try it:** Press **f4** or **f9**, etc.

No big deal, right? So, *why* aren't these mode changes noted on the keyboard (similar to the other mode keys, such as **BEG**, **END**, **DMY** and **M.DY**)?

It simply would have cluttered things so much over on the right side of the keyboard. (And anyway, what exactly should be written in gold above each key? **DECIMAL PLACES**? If so, wouldn't it be the same lettering over every key?)