



Real People Reviews

by Daniel M. East

Product: Tactile Pro Keyboard for Mac **by Matias**
Macintosh USB replacement keyboard

pull quote: *“While this might LOOK like just a stock replacement keyboard, it is so much more.”*

First Impressions: When you find yourself in that position of needing a new keyboard by necessity versus knowing that you just “need to do it,” many people find themselves just either buying the Apple brand or going with the old standby brands. Matias may just be the next generation’s standby brand with the Tactile Pro. While this might LOOK like just a stock replacement keyboard, it is so much more.

Likes: First of all, this keyboard is solid. It responds accurately and types with a great feel. The look is “all-Apple” with the clear plastic and white combination we’ve all grown familiar with. The “action” (motion of the keys up and down) is excellent with a clean spring-like response. In addition, the option key characters appear on the keys so there is no need to fumble through other apps to remember what’s what. The inclusion of volume and eject keys makes this a standout compared to many others, and even the physical feel of the keys actually makes me want to type more in some ways. As in many similar products, having two USB ports on board helps as well.

Dislikes: My only issue with this keyboard is the sound level. While I love the feel, the ticking sound that goes along with it is not something you want if you are in an area where complete silence is required. In fact, the keystrokes are particularly audible given the frequency at which the sound is present, so it cuts through other sounds. The plus side of this is that you really know when you hit a key correctly versus incorrectly and it is a sound I have actually come to enjoy hearing to my own surprise.

How does this product compare: I have several USB keyboards, myself, and this one is really the best “feeling” and functional of them all. While the Kensington “Keyboard in a Box” is priced less than half of the TactilePro, it lacks the volume and eject keys and doesn’t have that nice clear-on-white look that matches my other Mac components so well. The Adesso Tru-Form USB has a nice little trackpad and

ergonomic arch, the keys don't have the feel of the TactilePro and, again, no color match. In fact, I was surprised that I preferred the TactilePro over the Adesso for comfort and keystroke accuracy.

Who might enjoy this product?: Why wait? If you feel your keyboard has lost its spring or is giving you problems, and even if it isn't; anyone who is a serious typist will really enjoy this very solid, very accurate, slightly loud (hey, your boss will know you're working!) keyboard for your Mac.

Final thoughts: As Mac users, we're very lucky in that we can use nearly any USB device from nearly any manufacturer on any platform just by plugging it in (shy of a few features in some cases). This stands up well and even makes it easier by giving you some simple visual cues as well. Much as I'm doing right now...

PRICE \$99.99
FROM Matias Corporation
PHONE 888-663-4263
WEB www.tactilepro.com
MAC OS OS 9 or X.2x with additional drivers or X.3x or better/USB

OVERALL RATING: 4 out of 5 VERY GOOD

Daniel East is the founder and president of The Mid-Atlantic Macintosh User Groups Team (MaMUGs) - a division of The Apple Groups Team; a member of The Apple Consultants Network (ACN); a member of The Apple Developer Connection (ACN); a panelist on "PC Talk Radio;" a live speaker/presenter and a freelance columnist for several Mac publications.

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