

How do I adjust the key contacts on my élan Mira/Cybra?

The Key to Contact Adjustments

Adjusting your élan Mira / Cybra to your writing style is as important as adjusting your car seat in order to reach the accelerator. One of the most important adjustments is the key contacts. It is a simple process once you understand the concept of key contact. Spending a few minutes now to adjust your steno machine means maximum performance and time well spent. There are three simple steps to adjust your machine and should be done in the following order:

- Adjust the **tension** of the keys (firm stroke, soft stroke, somewhere in between).
- Adjust the **depth of stroke** (this is important before adjusting the key contacts).
- Test the **contact** of each key and adjust accordingly.

Tension:

1. Open your élan Mira/Cybra cover.
2. Locate the keyboard tension adjustment wheel. It is the white wheel in the upper left-hand corner of the élan Mira/Cybra.



The tension adjustment wheel controls the "feel" of the keys. You can set the tension to be a soft touch, a firm touch or somewhere in the middle.

Depth of Stroke:

1. Locate the depth of stroke adjustment wheel. It is a red wheel located in the front left corner of the élan Mira/Cybra.

The depth of stroke adjustment changes the height of the number bar and steno keys for how you write. You can set a deep stroke, a short stroke or somewhere in between.

2. To adjust, put one hand on the 10 keys on the right hand side of the keyboard and press the keys down halfway. This will make it easier to turn the depth of stroke adjustment wheel.



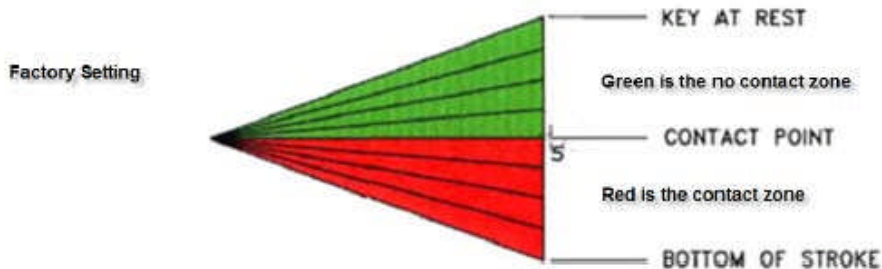
- For a shorter stroke, while slightly depressing the keys on the right side of the keyboard, turn the wheel "down" towards the bottom of the machine.
- For a longer stroke, while slightly depressing the keys on the right side of the keyboard, turn the wheel "up" towards the top of the machine.

Once the keyboard tension and depth of stroke is set to your writing style, your next step is to adjust your key contacts.

Please note: The lightest keyboard tension and the shortest depth of stroke may result in some stacking.

STOP: The depth of stroke setting plays an important part in accurate contact settings, so make sure your depth of stroke is set to your writing style before adjusting the key contacts.

Key Contacts:



The key contact concept is simple if you think of it in the terms that the "key" can either be in the "green" or the "red" zone. In the example above, the contact point for this key is the factory setting of 5 on the Accudial contact adjustment. The green zone is the travel area (while pressing the key down) before the key makes contact or after the key has been released (on the up stroke) and is no longer making contact. The red zone is when the key is making contact. In order for a key to be considered released, it must (after making contact) return to the "green zone."

The depth of stroke (the shallower the stroke, the less green zone) and the setting in which the key makes contact (dial 1 through 8 settings), determines how much "red" zone you have. Having more or less green/red zone is not the goal; the goal is to adjust the keys to your writing style so the keys make contact appropriately.

The following instructions are going to strongly recommend you press each key very, very slowly in order to hear the beep (the point in which the key makes contact) and at the same time "feel" the stopping point of the key. (The "stopping point" is the first real resistance and does not mean the point at which the key can no longer move.)

This procedure is very important to determine the best key contact position for your writing style and ultimate performance of the steno machine. The élan Mira/Cybra have a key contact mode that allows you to test the position in which each key is making contact.

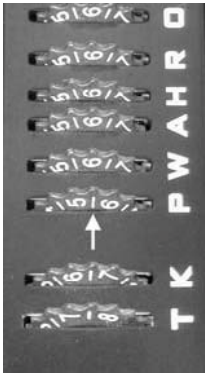
1. Close the cover of the élan Mira/Cybra.

- To set the élan Mira in Key Test mode, turn the Mira On. At the opening menu (no file is open), press More, Diag, and then Key Test.
- To set the élan Cybra in Key Test mode, turn it On and press the 2nd and 6th gray buttons simultaneously. The writer beeps and the speaker icon displays on the LCD.

3. Slowly (very slowly) press the initial S so that you hear the beep corresponding with the key hitting the stopping point on the down stroke. Press the key very slowly so that you can "feel" the stopping point and hear the beep to determine if they correspond. This is crucial to the success of adjusting the key contacts.



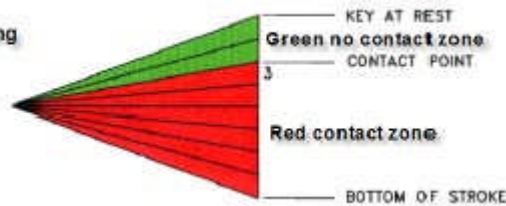
When making a contact adjustment, you will use the Accudials to make the adjustment for each key. Each Accudial has settings from 1 through 8. It is unlikely that each key would have the same contact point, so it is important to use this same method to test each key, including the number bar.



3. To adjust a key, open the cover and do the following:

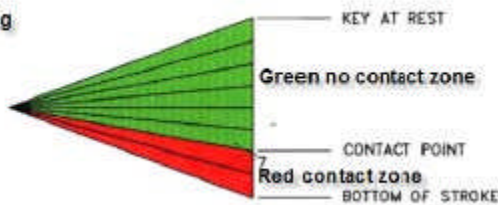
- If you hear the beep and feel the stopping point at the same time, your key is properly adjusted.
- If you hear the beep before you feel the stopping point, move the contact to a "later" setting. In other words, set the key so the beep occurs "later" in the down stroke. For example, if the current setting is 2 ½, move the dial to 3, which is a "later" setting.

Early Contact Setting



- If you feel the stopping point before you hear the beep, move the contact to an "earlier" setting. In other words, set the key so the beep occurs "earlier" in the down stroke.

Late Contact Setting



For example, if the current setting is 7 ½, move the dial to 7, which is an "earlier" setting.

4. Repeat this for each key, including the number bar. Once you have adjusted the key contacts for each key, exit the key test mode.

- To exit the key test mode on the élan Mira, press F1 (the first soft gray button) twice.

b. To exit the key test mode on the élan Cybra, press the 2nd and 6th buttons at the same time.

5. Here comes the best part: Turn on CNN or MSNBC and write as fast as you can for about 10 – 15 minutes and see how your steno outlines are translating. Minor adjustments to individual keys will likely be necessary to suit your writing style.

Inquiring Minds have asked. . .

1. Sometimes I get strokes that overlap (commonly called stacking). What causes that?

The overlapping of strokes usually occurs when the keys of one stroke do not fully return to the original position (green zone) before the keys of the next stroke are depressed and make contact (red zone). All keys must return to the green zone to indicate the stroke is complete. By adjusting each key to your writing style as outlined in this document, the instances of overlapping strokes should be reduced.

2. What is SmartStroke?

The SmartStroke option is available on the élan Mira and may help reduce the overlapping of strokes. But it is not for everyone and you may want to turn the SmartStroke feature Off if:

- After adjusting your key contacts, you experience an abnormal amount of strokes which are separated and shouldn't be.
- Your steno theory requires that the asterisk key be pressed while already holding down a stroke.

3. I have noticed a character is missing from an outline. Why does that happen?

If a character is consistently missing from an outline, it means the key has not made contact (red zone). You should repeat the key

test process for the individual key as it sounds like you need to make the contact point earlier in the down stroke. And remember.... Adjusting key contacts are not a one-time adjustment. After a steno machine is "schlepped" to and from jobs daily, adjustments will be necessary. If you notice a change (increase in overlapping or missing characters in your steno outlines), take a few minutes to run through the key contact adjustments. Keeping your writing machine fine tuned will benefit you as much as properly maintaining your automobile.