# Information on SIX-KEY BRAILLE ENTRY

To produce an electronic file in braille on your computer, you will need 1) a braille input program, and 2) a compatible keyboard. This document provides information on keyboards and software that may be used to create braille using your computer.

## SOFTWARE TO USE IN THE TRANSCRIBING COURSE

This course requires that the braille be written either with the use of a manual braille writing device, such as the Perkins Brailler or slate and stylus, or with the use of a program employing six-key entry on a computer. The following information is provided to assist if you plan to transcribe on your computer and submit lessons electronically for evaluation.

For the transcriber certification course, full features of translation software in which you type in regular print characters on a computer keyboard and then translate the file for braille output are not acceptable. The use of automatic "styles" for such items as headings, paragraphs, etc. is also not acceptable.

Perky Duck is a Perkins keyboard emulator allowing for six-key entry using a standard PC keyboard. It is a free program available from Duxbury Systems. Visit their Web site [www.duxburysystems.com](http://www.duxburysystems.com/). Choose the products link and then follow the link to "purchase" Perky Duck. There is no charge for this freeware as noted on the site. Download the program and install it on your computer by following the instructions given.

At this time, this program only functions in the Windows operating system, and there is not a version that works in Macintosh operating systems. However, software exists to allow the user to get to Windows on a Macintosh. Examples of such programs include

Fusion from VMWare:
<http://www.vmware.com/products/fusion/overview.html>

Parallels
<http://www.parallels.com/landingpage/dskd77/?source=g_us&gclid=CP7n_7qgoKwCFYHe4AodJhjG3A>

Perky Duck uses the letters F D S for braille dots 1-2-3 and the letters J K L for braille dots 4-5-6 (consult the *Instruction Manual for Braille Transcribing* for an explanation of the braille dot numbers). The spacebar produces a space, and the backspace key deletes characters. The enter key produces a hard carriage return. See below for information on keyboard issues.

Spacing and centering is done manually, and maximum line length must be used as directed in the instruction manual. Set the program for 40 characters per line and 25 lines per page. These settings may be defined in Perky Duck by selecting "embosser setup" from the program's global menu; select an embosser such as generic and then set these items. You can do this as follows:

1. Open Perky Duck

2. Go to the "global" menu and select "Embosser Set-Up."

3. Select Embosser: Generic

4. Select Paper: wide width 11 inch long braille paper

5. Select Characters per line: 40

6. Select Top margin: 0

7. Select Binding margin: 0

8. Uncheck the "emboss banner page" checkbox.

Perky Duck documents may be opened and embossed, viewed on screen, or reviewed with an electronic braille display. They can be saved either as a .dxb file or .brf file. For this course, we request that they be submitted as .dxb.

Remember that if you have access to a braille embosser and choose to emboss your files on paper rather than sending them by e-mail, the lessons must be embossed on one side of the paper (single-sided).