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Use AnySoftKeyboard

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Category: Software

Your smartphone keyboard is an astoundingly sensitive piece of software. You use it to type everything from the most innocent of messages to the most crucial passwords. In terms of messaging on encrypted chat applications like Session or Signal, your smartphone keyboard bypasses encryption. They could know what you are searching about even on private search engines like SearX. This is because your keystrokes are unencrypted. With respect to passwords, your smartphone keyboard, if invasive, can potentially view your bank account details. This means that an individual who can access your smartphone keyboard does not need to utilize advanced techniques to view your data. Therefore, in terms of trust, you should make sure you absolutely trust your smartphone keyboard not to store your written text.

When you keep the above statements in mind, it gets unhealthily fear-inducing when you read how [SwiftKey had a cloud syncing glitch which led to users being able to view other users' email addresses](#). It is also scary how [SwiftKey that shipped by default on 600M Samsung Galaxy smartphones had a vulnerability that allowed hackers to setup a proxy server to access sensors and install apps without the user knowing](#). There was also a keyboard called [ai.type](#) that had over 40M users. Out of these, [31M users had their data leaked because the MongoDB database had no password](#). This included information like [phone numbers, full names, device names and models, screen resolution, Android version, IMSI and IMEI numbers, email addresses, country of residence, social media profiles, IP addresses and even locations](#).

What is the solution to this madness? Fortunately, if you are on Android, you have [free software](#) options. By using [free software](#) keyboards, you can ensure that none of your keystrokes are stored or sent to a server. This brings us to [AnySoftKeyboard](#). AnySoftKeyboard is a free, libre and open-source keyboard for Android that has multiple modes, layouts, theme customizations and more. It has all the features you would expect. Gesture typing, keyboard effects, corrections, emojis, you name it. Most importantly, it does not track any of your keystrokes. I have been using it for almost an year. It has been fast and efficient due to the minimalism and has saved me a lot of time. It has many niche features like a terminal layout that has arrows, tabs, pipes and forward slashes for ease of use in Android terminal emulators like [Termux](#).

If you are on an iPhone, the best option is ironically Gboard. You can block Gboard's tracking using iOS' tracker blocking. Gboard does not log the text you store and instead uses federated learning to improve its autocorrect. There are no private options for an iPhone so it is better to choose the best out of two evils.

All in all, the keyboard you use should be a factor for everyone. Use a different keyboard and do not use the default one unless you are on [LineageOS](#) or [GrapheneOS](#).