Eye-Pal®

Training Guide and User Manual

for Blind Users

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What is Eye-Pal?

Eye-Pal is an electronic scanner that aids blind computer users to read printed material. Eye-Pal connects to your PC or laptop through the USB 2.0 port, no extra batteries or power packs required.

Eye-Pal is a portable camera that scans and the software program that runs on your computer. Since it folds easily and weighs about 1 pound, it fits in your laptop bag and is easy to carry.

Eye-Pal can be used to listen to the text-to-speech voice of your choice, to read books, magazines, newspapers, documents, medicine bottle labels, and anything else that has printed text or to read on a Braille display of your choice.

Eye-Pal is very easy to use: the user places a printed document under Eye-Pal® camera and presses the E key. In a few seconds Eye-Pal will start reading the text from the beginning of the page. There are no buttons on the device: everything is done from the computer keyboard.

Eye-Pal reads text documents aloud using sophisticated, natural language speech synthesizers. No third party software installation required—it's already included.

Eye-Pal allows the user to create books by capturing multiple pages under one name without destroying the books.

Getting Started Using Eye-Pal.

For installation instructions, refer to the Eye-Pal Installation Guide.

Once you have plugged Eye-Pal into the USB port of your computer, Eye-Pal is "on." Place any printed material at the Eye-Pal base and click on the Eye-Pal icon on your computer desktop.



The Eye-Pal window appears. It displays the document that you placed under the camera.

Eye-Pal's Speech Output Options.

You can customize Eye-Pal software in many different ways. When you start Eye-Pal for the first time it will work according to the default selection for the customizable features. One of these customizable features is Speech Output. By

default Eye-Pal will read menus, dialogs, etc. It will also tell you when the camera is on or off. If you do not want Eye-Pal to read menus, go to the *Application menu by pressing the Alt key then pressing the down arrow four times until you get to Settings, then hit Enter*. The Settings tool bar will be displayed. You are on the first Tab box titled "General Settings." Press the Tab key until you get to '*Speech output*' and then press the spacebar to uncheck this if you want Eye-Pal to not announce the camera status. You may also uncheck the '*Menus and dialogs*' if you do not want Eye-Pal to read menus and dialogs. Click OK.

There are two more options that can be used on all toolbars, message boxes, etc:

- 1. Speech output for the current control press shift.
- 2. Stop speech output for the current control press control.

Plugging in Eye-Pal.

Eye-Pal is a portable device that folds to take minimum space in your laptop bag. Unfold Eye-Pal in the following order:

1. Move the camera (housed in the square plastic box) until it locks against the stand (you will hear the click).

2. Unfold the 2 legs until they click. These are horizontal legs that should stay on your desk.

3. To make Eye-Pal even more stable lock each leg manually by rotating the levers located on each of the two legs.

4. Plug the USB connector into the USB port of your PC or laptop; since Eye-Pal runs off your computer's power, there is no separate power supply or extra battery packs.

Once you have plugged Eye-Pal into your computer, Eye-Pal will announce "Camera on." Eye-Pal is now ready to read or scan your books.

How to place a document under the camera.

Eye-Pal has two horizontal legs: the longer leg is 11 and a half inches long, while the shorter leg is 8 inches long. These two legs create a corner guide to assist the user in properly aligning documents to be scanned. Eye-Pal captures and saves the whole 11 and a half inches by 8 inch page. When you are placing your document under the camera try to make it as flat as possible and align it with the legs.

Orientation of the document doesn't matter.

Eye-Pal also allows you to read previously saved pages and books.

Eye-Pal is a self-learning system.

When you start using Eye-Pal to read a certain kind of document or books it could take a few extra seconds to hear the voice or to show Braille. But after reading the first page of the book Eye-Pal will teach itself about this book and each page will be read faster and faster. After reading first 3-5 pages, it will take Eye-Pal 1-2 seconds to read the next page.

Using Eye-Pal to Convert Printed Text to Speech.

Place any document under the Eye-Pal camera and click on the Eye-Pal icon on your computer desktop (press the Control key plus the M key to go to your desktop, then press the Z key until you hear "Eye Pal" and click on the icon). The image of the document appears on the screen immediately.

Start Reading from the Beginning of the Page.

To start reading from the beginning of the page place the page under the camera, press the E key. You will hear the shutter sound as soon as the image is scanned. Than you will hear the beeping sound for a few seconds and than the voice reading the document. To stop the voice please press the E key again. To pause, press the X key. To resume the voice, press the X key again.

If there is no text on the page you will hear "Text not found".

If you hear the beeping sound for more than 10-15 seconds press the Esc (Escape) key. The reason for long beeping sound is that the page has graphics with patterns that Eye-Pal is trying to interpret as letters and to convert to text. To start reading a new document, place it under the camera, restart the camera (press a space bar) and press the E key.

Page description.

A page may have text, pictures, graphics, etc. We define sections as page elements or parts of the page that can be easily visually separated from the rest of the page. For example, if the page is a newspaper, than each column will be a section. If the page has a picture in the middle of the page, then the text above the picture is first section and the text below the picture is the second section. The key combination Shift + E will describe the page layout. It will tell:

- 1. How many words are on the page.
- 2. How many sections are on the page.
- 3. How many columns are on the page.
- 4. How many titles are on the page.
- 5. What percentage of the page is text.

Eye-Pal will also tell if the page is up side down. This feature helps you to know that you started saving a book from the beginning or from the end.

Moving To the Next or Previous Word, Sentence, Section, or another Document.

Eye-Pal allows the reader to move around the page in order to read the next or previous word, sentence, or page.

To move to the next word press the Control + right arrow;

To move to the previous word, press the Control + left arrow.

To move to the next sentence, press the down arrow.

To move to the previous sentence, press the up arrow.

To move to the next section, press page down.

To move to the previous section, press page up.

Refer to the Quick Reference Guide to find the keystrokes on the keypad for the above reading functions.

To read the new page, turn the Eye-Pal camera on by pressing the space bar. Eye-Pal will tell you that the camera is now on.

Place the new page at the Eye-Pal base and press the E key.

Reading through columns and tables.

By default Eye-Pal analyzes the text, identifies columns and reads the first column, then the second and so on. If you feel that information in columns is connected press Control + T and Eye-Pal will read through the columns. For example, if the first column contains names of products and the second column contain prices of these products it will make sense to read through these two columns.

This feature is not yet perfect. If the page layout is complex there is no way to tell Eye-Pal in what order to read different sections. For example, if the page has 4

columns, and you need to read through 3 left columns first and then read the fourth column from top to bottom you will have to browse through the page more than once.

Changing the Voice Parameters

You can change the voice parameters by going to the *Application* menu, then to the *Settings option, then to the Voice Tab*.

Press the Tab key to test different voices, select one you like and click on the Apply button.

You can also change the speed by clicking the shift + Q keys or F9 to make it faster or the shift + Z keys or F8 to make it slower.

You can also change the speed by going to the *Application menu, then to Settings and then to the Voice Tab*, where you can use the slide bar on the Speed setting to speed up or slow down the speech rate.

On the same *Voice Tab* you can choose your favorite voice.

Using Eye-Pal to Convert Printed Text to Braille Display.

Eye-Pal can be used to read printed text on Braille display.

At the time of writing this manual you can use 3 Braille displays: Handy Tech, Alva BC-640, and Freedom Scientifics' PacMate. Please, check our website to find out when more Braille displays will be added.

From the Braille display you will be able to start or stop the camera and find out the status of camera and of the text processing operation.

On all Braille displays left two Braille cells are designated for status. Status codes are:

- CS Camera started.
- PR Processing.
- R Text is ready.
- LO Camera's LED on.
- LF Camera's LED off.
- TN Text not found.

Customization Options while using Braille Display.

You can change two parameters that define how you use Braille display by going to the *Application* menu, then to the *Settings option, then to the Braille Tab.*

The first parameter is Two Left Braille Cells are used to display status. The default is that the box is checked. To turn this feature off, uncheck the box.

The second parameter is Do Not Break the Words. If this box is not checked than all Braille cells are used while displaying the text, so to read the last word you may need to move to the next 40 characters. If the box is checked, the last word will not be displayed if it does not fit to the line.

Braille Display Keys Definition.

Each Braille display has a different set of buttons and keys. The following section describes which keys are used for Eye-Pal operations on different Braille displays.

HandyTech:

Right Space: next line. Left Space: Previous line.

S – Start camera.

E – Stop camera and process image.

ALVA BC-640:

Smartpad key 1 (left key with three horizontal lines) – Start camera. eTouch key 3 (right upper key) or right thumb key – Next braille line. Use this key to start reading. eTouch key 1 (left upper key) or left thumb key – Previous braille line. Smartpad key 0 (right key with three vertical lines) – Stop camera.

Freedom Scientific PacMate:

Push left wheel – Start camera. Push right wheel – Stop camera. Scroll either wheel – scroll through the text.

Document Management Operations.

You can:

- Save a document as image (jpg file).
- Load previously saved document.
- Save document as text file.

To save a document as an image:

Place your document under the Eye-Pal device, aligning it with the two legs of the document guide.

You can save document with default name as date/time stamp in My.Documents\EyePal\Images\Quick folder using CTRL + SHIFT+S keystroke. The Quick folder will be automatically created when you save your first document by using CTRL + SHIFT+S keystroke.

You can also save image in any directory and give it any name by going to the *Application* menu, then down arrow to the *Save Image option and press Enter*.

A Save document dialog box will appear. Type in the name for your document, and click the Save button. Document will be saved in the default directory C;My Documents/EyePal/Images.

You can select another directory in which to save the document.

To save a document as text:

To save the document as text the camera must be stopped. If you are reading the text the camera is already stopped. If you want to save text without reading the document you need to press Space Bar to stop the camera. To quickly save text with default name as date/time stamp in the default directory My.Documents\EyePal\Temp and immediately display the text file on the screen press Control+SHIFT+W.

You can also save text in any directory and give it any name by going to the *Application* menu and down arrow to *Save text* then press *Enter.* A Save text dialog box will appear. Type in the name for your document, and click the Save button. Document will be saved in the default directory C;My Documents/EyePal/Texts.

You can also select another directory in which to save the document.

To read previously saved document:

1. Go to the *Application* menu and then down arrow to *Load Document,* and press Enter.

A Load Document dialog box will appear.

2. Select the document and click Open. The document will appear on the screen.

3. Click E to start reading.

You do not need Eye-Pal to be plugged in in order to read previously saved documents.

Creating and Managing Zoom-Books

A Zoom-Book is an electronic copy of a book that you can create using Eye-Pal. Eye-Pal allows scanning and saving multi-page documents on a computer, but also viewing these documents later on any computer where Zoom Office software is installed, even if the Eye-Pal device is not plugged in. While reading a Zoom-Book you can use all the same document browsing, magnification, and formatting capabilities that are available for viewing documents with Eye-Pal. You can also listen while the book is read to you page by page. You can save the whole book as text and use any third party software to read the text file.

Why Would I Need Zoom-Book?

If there is a book or an article that you are likely to read more then once, or if you want to read the book when you are flying across the country, or if you have not yet bought your own Eye-Pal device and want to save the book in the library and read it at home, use the Eye-Pal device to save it once, and read it conveniently with Eye-Pal from then on, as many times as you would like anywhere you like, by simply opening the saved book or article.

Eye-Pal can be used separately from the Eye-Pal device, to read the saved Eye-Pal documents on your other computers.

Creating and Managing Zoom-Books

Have a book or a multi-page document handy for scanning and reading with Eye-Pal.

Place your document under the Eye-Pal device.

The Book menu has the following sub-menus:

- 1. Create new book.
- 2. Open book.
- 3. Close book.
- 4. Save current book as.
- 5. Save current book as text.

6. Add pages.

- 7. Delete book(s).
- 8. Delete current page.

Creating a new book

You can scan and save any kind of book using Eye-Pal – small paperback books, large books with page size up to 8.5'x11', magazines, etc.

To create a new book go to the Book menu by pressing Alt plus B and then click the Enter key.

The **Create Book** dialog will appear: Type in the book title and the author's name, note. You can also enter the Starting page number if it differs from the default value of 1. By default the book will be saved in C:\Program Files\EyePal\books. You can also click the Browse button and select another directory where you want to save your book. Click the **Create** button.

The dialog will go away; the **Add Pages** bar will appear instead.

Choosing how to scan and save a book.

This bar has three sets of controls:

a) Information about page numbers – current and next page numbers. The next page number is the number you entered in the previous dialog.

- b) Scanning Options.
- c) Scanning Mode.

To navigate between the sets of controls use the Tab key.

First, select one of the three Scanning Options:

1. To scan one page at a time.

Use this option to scan a small number of large pages.

2. To scan only odd or only even pages.

Use this option to scan a large number of pages of a large book. Open the book and place the left or right page under the camera. If a portion of the second page also appears under the camera, Eye-Pal will ignore it. While scanning the book this way, you do not need to move the book until you scan all odd pages.

Once you are finished scanning odd pages, do the same for even pages:

a) Turn the book 180 degrees. Be sure that the even pages are now under the camera. The fact that the pages appear upside-down does

not matter. You will be able to rotate the images before you start reading the book.

b) Change the Next Page Number to the first even page number. You need to go to the previous set of controls.

c) Start saving even pages.

When you finished scanning even pages, click the **Done** button. Eye-Pal will sort and keep all pages in the right order automatically.

3. To scan two pages at once.

Use this option to scan small size books. If you place the open book under the camera and both pages are inside the Eye-Pal legs, you can save both pages at once. While using this option, book orientation is important – always put the book in the landscape format and align the edges of the book with Eye-Pal base.

When you scan two pages at once, both pages will be saved with their respective numbers. When you read the pages, saved this way, you will view each page separately.

If Zoom-Book failed to separate two pages, it will be indicated by error sound and will save both pages as one page. In this case you can delete that page (Read Deleting a Page in a Book section), adjust the book and save the same pages again.

The error sound will also be heard if one of the two pages is blank.

Note: The default selection is **Scan one page at a time**.

Second, select the scanning mode- the next set of controls. You have two choices:

1. Manual Mode.

In this mode, you press the **A** key or click the **Add** button to scan and save the page.

2. Auto Mode.

In this mode you have to click the **Start Auto Mode** button only once to start scanning/saving pages. Then simply turn the pages. The Eye-Pal camera with motion detection will save each page as soon as the page image stays still for a few seconds; it will wait while you turn the pages. Auto Mode allows you to use both hands to hold the pages in place, since you don't have to operate keyboard to push the **Add** button.

Note: The default selection is Manual.

Adding pages to the new book.

Now you've chosen how to scan/save the book and are ready to start adding pages.

1. If you are in the **Manual** mode:

a) Put the first page of your document under the Eye-Pal camera: it should appear on screen.

b) Click the Add (A) button. Use your hands to keep the book flat. In a second you will hear a shutter sound. The page is now saved, and the Current page field should display 1, while the Next page number should display 2 if you are saving one page at a time or 3 if you are saving two pages at a time, or even (odd) pages.

c) Put the next page of your document and click the **Add** button or press **A** on the keyboard.

d) Save as many pages as you need by repeating the previous step.

e) If you are saving a lot of pages, you can always take a break and continue saving pages later.

2. If you are in the **Auto** mode:

a) Click the **Start Auto Mode Button (**note that button will automatically changed to **Stop Auto Mode.** So when you finish saving pages you need only to click enter because the cursor is already in the right place).

b) Place the open book under the camera, keep it still using both hands. In ten to fifteen seconds you will hear the shutter sound –this pages has been scanned and saved.

c) Turn the page, keep it still and in two to three seconds you will hear the same sound.

d) Continue turning pages and saving them.

e) When you are done saving pages or need a break, click the **Stop Auto Mode** button (just click Enter) and remove the book from under the camera.

When you are done saving pages, click the **Done** button – click the Down Arrow and Enter. Once you have clicked the **Done** button, the Add Pages book bar will disappear, and the Read Mode book bar will appear.

Note: You can add more pages to this book later. Read *Adding Pages to an Existing Book* section of the manual for more details.

The Read Mode book bar allows you to easily read your saved book via convenient navigation buttons. For more information on reading your book with Read Mode book bar, read the *Reading a Saved Book* topic below.

If you are done with your book for now, click the **Exit** button to close the book.

Troubleshooting and Useful Tips on Selecting Scanning Options.

1. You can save **Two pages at once** only if there is a wide (half an inch) white space between the pages. If two pages are very close to each other Eye-Pal can't distinguish the separate pages. In that case, hold the book as flat as possible, and use the **One page at a time** option.

2. When saving just one page at a time via **One page at a time** option or the **Only odd or even pages** option, make sure that the page you do not intend to save is not fully within the camera view . If both pages fully appear on screen, consider saving them by using the **Save two pages at once** option. If only a portion of the other page appears on screen, Eye-Pal will know to ignore it.

Useful Tips on Saving a Book.

1. Place a piece of white paper under the camera and place a book on the paper. Then Eye-Pal will not try to scan the background as part of your document.

2. The book under the camera should be as flat as possible. If you are saving a thick book with a lot of pages choose the **Auto mode** and use both hands to flatten the book.

3. When you are saving a book in Auto mode, Eye-Pal will automatically adjust brightness to the light conditions at that time. If you are taking a lot of time saving all of the pages, take a break occasionally– click Stop Auto Mode and then click Start Auto Mode – to allow Eye-Pal to readjust brightness according to the illumination of your room as it may have changed.
4. When you are saving a lot of pages in Auto mode and notice that you have to wait longer to hear the sound that the page has been saved, it could be due to one of three reasons:

a. Camera detects some motion – wind, unstable hands, etc.;

b. Camera missed a motion when you flip the page; or

c. Eye-Pal turned the camera off because the conditions have changed – for example, somebody turned the lights in the room on or off.

It is OK. You can always restart the camera and click the **Start Auto Mode** button again.

Reading a Saved Book.

In order to browse through the saved pages of your document:

1. Click Alt B to go to the **Book** menu and select **Open Book**...

2. The **Open Book** dialog will appear. This dialog will show the books in the default folder C:\My Documents\EyePal\Books. If you want to open the book that was saved in another folder, use the Browse button to select desired folder. The location of the selected folder will be displayed in the Book location field. The list of books in this folder will be displayed on the screen.

Note: Make sure you select the folder that contains all your books, and **not** the folder that bears the name of a specific book.

In that folder you might find the folder which bears the name of the specific book - do **not** select it.

3. Select the book you would like to view, and click the **Open** button.

Note: The **Open** button is disabled if no book is selected; as soon as you click any book in the list, the **Open** button will become enabled and clickable.

The **Open Book** dialog box disappears. The "Read Mode" book bar appears at the top of the screen; the first page of the chosen document is displayed on screen as well.

The "Read Mode" book bar has the **Previous** and **Next** buttons, along with the **Go to page** field and **Go** button to jump to a page out of order. The Read Mode book bar also has the **Current Page** field, which displays the number of the page currently being viewed.

Eye-Pal will tell you the current page number.

4. You need to rotate the first two pages to make them properly oriented. Eye-Pal will rotate the rest of the pages automatically. This will make start reading much faster.

5. Click the E key to start reading the page.

6. Click the **Next** button or letter **N** on the keyboard to go to the next page of your document; or click the **Previous** or letter **P** button on the keyboard to go to the previous page; or put in a page number out of sequence, and click the **Go** button to jump to that page.

7. When you are done browsing the book, click the **Exit** button.

Note.

When the cursor is on the "Current Page" or "Go To Page" field and you are moving from page to page using Previous (P) or Next (N) buttons, you will hear N or P instead of the "Next" or "Previous". To avoid this use TAB to move the cursor.

Adding Pages to an Existing Book.

In order to add pages to an existing book:

- 1. Open the book of interest via **Book** menu->**Open Book...** menu item.
- 2. Once the Read Mode book bar will appear, go to **Book** menu and select the **Add Pages...** menu item.

3. The Add Pages book bar will appear, replacing the Read Mode book bar.

4. Place the page you want to scan under the camera, set its page number, and press **Add** or letter **A** on the keyboard. You can also use Auto save mode and/or save two pages at a time. Read Creating a new book section for details.

5. Repeat step 4 for as many pages as you need.

6. When you finish adding new pages, click the **Done** button. If you were saving pages in **Auto** mode, click the **Stop Auto Mode** button first and then click the **Done** button. The Add Pages book bar will disappear, and the Read Mode book bar will appear again.

Deleting a Page in a Book.

In order to delete a page in a book:

1. Open the book of interest by going to the **Book** menu, and clicking the **Open Book...** menu item. The Read Mode book bar will appear.

2. Navigate to the page that you want to delete by putting the page number into the **Go to page number:** field and pressing **Go**.

3. Go to the **Book** menu, and click the **Delete This Page** menu item.

4. You will be asked to confirm your instruction. Click yes.

5. The page will be deleted; the display will automatically move to the next page, or to the previous page if the deleted page was the last page of the document. If it was the only remaining page of the document, the screen will go black, and a message will appear informing you that the book you have open no longer has any saved pages.

Deleting a Book.

In order to delete a book:

- 1. Go to the **Book** menu, and click the **Delete Book...** menu item.
- 2. The **Delete Book** dialog box will appear. Select the book that you wish to delete and click the **Delete** button. You cannot delete the open book.
- 3. You can use the Browse button to select another directory.
- 4. The dialog gets dismissed, and the selected book is deleted.

Note: You can delete more than one book at the same time, by selecting many books in the dialog (press the Ctrl key while making the selection with the mouse button to select more that one item in the list).

Closing a Book.

When you are done reading and working with your book, you need to close it. In order to close the book you can click the Exit button or go to the **Book** menu, and click the **Close Book...**menu item. The book will be closed, and the book bar dismissed. You can now open a different book to read or create a new one.

Saving Book As Text.

After you have scanned the book you can convert the whole book to one text file. Go to the Book menu and use the **Save Current Book As Text** menu item to save the book as text file. The text file will be created in the same directory as the scanned book, will have the same name and txt extension. Depending on the power of your computer it could take approximately from 3 to 6 seconds to save each page. So, for 200 pages the process may take from 10 to 20 minutes. Eye-Pal will tell you the number of the page it is currently saving.

Copying the Book.

The fastest way to initially save the book is to save it on the hard drive. After you have scanned your book, you can use the **Save Current Book As** menu item to copy the book onto a CD or a memory key.

1. Go to the **Book** menu, and click the **Save Current Book As ...** menu item.

2. Use the **Browse** button to select the drive and/or folder where you want to copy the book.

3. Enter the **New Name** for the book.

4. Click the **Save** button.

It takes a few seconds to save the book.

You may view and read the copy you made using Eye-Pal software on any IBM compatible computer.

Useful Tips.

1. If you are working with more than one windows application at a time, Eye-Pal window may loose focus. You know that it lost focus if you try, for example, to turn camera on or off by pressing the space bar and nothing happens. Click the mouse anywhere on the screen to bring focus to Eye-Pal application.

2. There is a check box on the General tab of the Settings window: "Use arrow keys to simulate X-Y table". The default is unchecked. The unchecked option allows you to use arrow keys while reading the text - to move to the next word, sentence, etc. If you noticed that arrow keys do not behave properly for reading, please, check this setting.

3. There is a check box on the Voice Tab of the Settings Window: "Check if page is upside down". The default value is checked. You can uncheck it if you are sure that you place the document under the camera in a correct way.

4. Eye-Pal will inform you when any message box is shown on the screen. You need to press the shift key to hear the text of the message.

Quick Reference Guide.

General Keystrokes.

Speech output for the current control – press shift. Stop speech output for the current control – press control. Save image - press control and the S key. Stop processing document (while you hear the beeping sound) – press esc.

Reading Keyboard Keystrokes.

To Start/stop camera – press space bar. To Start reading - press the E key. To Pause or Resume voice – press the X key. To Jump to the next or previous character – press right or left arrow. To Jump to the next or previous word - press control and right or left arrow. To Jump to the next or previous sentence - press up or down arrow. To Jump to the next or previous section - press control and up or down arrow.

Reading Keypad Keystrokes.

To Start/stop camera – press insert + delete. To Start reading - press insert + 2. To Pause or Resume voice – press insert + 1. To Jump to the next or previous character – press 6 or 4. To Jump to the next or previous word - press insert + 6 or insert + 5. To Jump to the next or previous sentence - press 2 or 8. To Jump to the next or previous section - press control +2 or control + 8.

ZoomBook Keyboard Commands.

To Add a page while saving a book - press the A key. To go to the Next page press the N key. To go to the Previous page press the P key.

ZoomBook Menu Accelerator Keys.

ALT-B is an accelerator for the Book sub-menu.

To go to Book Menu, to Create a new book press the B key.

- To Open Book press the O key.
- To Delete Book press the D key.
- To Close book press the L key.
- To Save current book as press the V key.
- To Save current book as text press the A key.
- To Add pages press the G key.
- To Delete this page press the T key.