

2741

IBM terminal with Selectric mechanism, came after the 1050. Smaller desk, no card reader option, no control switches. Weighed about 200 pounds and cost as much as a new Buick. Used a device dependent 6-bit character set related to BCD, but with shift codes to access the larger character set. Transmission speed was 134.5 baud. Widely used on CTSS and Multics; we used the 963 typeball, which was closest to ASCII. 2741s with the 938 "correspondence" ball were supported too; when you dialed up, dialup printed a special message in both dialects: one would be gibberish and the other legible, and if you typed `login` it chose one translation and if you typed `kigub` it switched to the other translation and assumed you had typed `login`. The effect was that you typed "login" and the system detected your character code and logged you in. There were also two special pre-login commands, `963` and `938` that would set up the TTYDIM to understand your typing. The code was simpler because the numbers were the same in both encodings. Most MIT 2741s used tractor-fed paper slightly narrower than printer paper.

In order to work correctly on Multics, 2741s had to have two special features installed: 4608 Transmit Interrupt Control and 5501 Print Inhibit. 🌐 [IBM 2741 Manual](#).

IBM sold the Selectric "golf ball" mechanism to other manufacturers, who made terminals that sold for about half the price of a real 2741. Some of these were much less reliable than real 2741s; as the industry matured, other brands became acceptable. In the long run 2741s and their clones had too many moving parts and tolerances to compete with simpler mechanisms, such as "daisy wheel" printers, wire matrix heads, and then "glass teletypes" and other video terminals.