

There are a number of settings and tools called accessibility features that can be used to make it easier to use computers, tablets and smart phones.

You can explore the accessibility features and other options for easy access in the following places:

- **Windows 7:** Control Panel > Ease of Access
- **Windows 10:** Settings > Ease of Access
- **Android:** Settings > Accessibility
- **Apple iOS:** Settings > General > Accessibility



Hearing

Sounds and music are an important part of the experience with technology. Sounds are often used to tell you something needs attention or that something is happening. Learning how to adjust the volume or mute sounds may be helpful for everyone.

Adjust the volume

You can adjust the volume in several ways depending on the program or app. In Windows, the shortcut is to look for an icon in the bottom right hand corner of the screen – it looks like a speaker. On tablets and smart phones you will usually find the volume buttons on the side of the device. You may also find volume, sound effects (FX) and music options within apps themselves.

Alternatives to sound

You can enable a visual version of alert sounds on computers. In Windows 7 look for 'ShowSounds' and 'SoundSentry'. In Windows 10 these settings are in the 'Other Options' section of 'Ease of Access.' On some tablets and smart phones, vibration may be used as an alternative to sounds.

Closed captions

Some videos have captions available, but they generally need to be turned on. Each on-screen video player is different. Explore the window the video is playing in to find settings. In Windows 10 you can customise the caption settings, including: font size, background colour, and text colour, to help with readability.



Interaction

When learning to use a mouse, keyboard or touchscreen, hand and finger movements can be a challenge. Adjustments can be made to make movements easier when interacting with technology.

Mouse settings (Windows 7 & 10 only)

Adjusting the mouse pointer size, speed, and colour can make it easier to see and move on the screen.

Mouse keys (Windows 7 & 10 only)

The keyboard can be used to move the mouse pointer around the screen and for mouse clicks.

Voice assistant

Many tablets and phones now have voice assistants. The Windows 10 voice assistant is called Cortana. Voice assistants allow you to use natural speech to ask questions and perform tasks. You can set a timer, ask about the weather, set reminders and search the internet.

On-screen keyboard

When text input is needed on a tablet or phone, a keyboard will appear on the screen. In Windows you can use an on-screen keyboard with a mouse. Settings for the on-screen keyboard can also help with repeated key presses and modify how the keyboard appears to make it easier to use.



Vision

It is important to ensure there is enough lighting, even lighting, limited direct sunlight and that computer screens can be moved to a comfortable distance, prior to starting. Computer screens often have their own settings that can be accessed by buttons on the front or side of the screen. After that, learning to navigate on a screen can be made easier with settings for different vision needs.

Screen resolution: (Windows 7 & 10 only)

Changing the screen resolution, by going lower in numbers (e.g.1280x800) means everything on the screen will appear larger. The shortcut to screen resolution is from the Windows desktop, right-click in the middle of the screen and a menu will appear.

Font size

Making the font size larger can make using technology much easier. When you enable larger fonts on tablets and smart phones, not everything will appear larger. Websites and some apps don't recognise the settings.

Zoom & magnification

Learning to "pinch-&-zoom" on touchscreens is an important skill to enable easy viewing. When that function doesn't work with some websites and apps, magnification can be turned on. Settings in Windows, tablets and smartphones provide full-screen or a window of magnification and the ability to zoom in and out on anything displayed on the screen.

Colour & contrast

Changing to high contrast can help reduce glare or improve the clarity of the display. Some people may also benefit from inverted colour which improves readability and contrast.

Screen readers

Features that turn text-to-speech and read the screen support people with vision loss to navigate and listen to text. Called 'Narrator' in Windows, it can be used in conjunction with the mouse and keyboard to provide move information. Using screen readers on tablets and smart phones changes the way the touchscreen works. The settings provide tutorials on what touch gestures need to be used for each.

Learn more

For more information on accessibility features:

- **Windows 7:** <https://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows7/>
- **Windows 10:** <https://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows10/>
- **Android:** <https://support.google.com/android/accessibility>
- **Apple iOS:** <https://www.apple.com/au/accessibility/>

