

Digital tools and settings for people with motor impairments

There are tools and settings that can make phones, tablets, laptops and browsers easier to use for people with motor impairments, reduced dexterity or limited hand and arm movement including Parkinson's, arthritis and Reynaud's. Some settings or tools may not be available or work on older phones, tablets or laptops.

You can find settings for Android, iOS/iPadOS, Microsoft Windows and Apple macOS in the tables below. These include simplifying layouts, reducing distractions and using voice commands to control your device. Look for the cog icon . This is usually on your home screen, in your app list on phones and tablets, or in the Start menu on Windows.

[My Computer My Way](#) from AbilityNet also offers step-by-step instructions to change settings to meet your needs.

You can set up shortcuts on your smartphone for quick access to settings you find useful.

Contact Alice Holland, Digital Inclusion Worker, with any questions or if you would like support to change your settings.

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Keyboard

- Full keyboard access – control everything on the screen using only the keyboard, without needing a mouse
- Sticky keys – press key combinations one key at a time instead of holding multiple keys at once (e.g. Ctrl + C)
- Filter keys – set the sensitivity of the keyboard so it can ignore brief or repeated keystrokes
- Toggle keys – makes a sound when Caps lock, Num Lock or Scroll lock are pressed
- Slow keys – adjust the delay between when you press a key and when it's activated, reducing accidental key presses
- On-screen keyboard, Accessibility keyboard – virtual keyboard controlled by mouse, pointer or switch
- Word suggestion, predictive text, text suggestions – show suggestions for the next word to speed up typing and reduce the number of key presses needed

Pointer and touch

- Accessibility menu / AssistiveTouch – a large on-screen menu of your most-used controls such as screenshot and pinch to zoom, available as single tap buttons rather than complex gestures
- Mouse keys – use the numeric keypad to move the mouse pointer instead of a mouse
- Pointer speed – adjust how fast the mouse pointer moves across the screen
- Mouse pointer size, colour, trails - make it easier to see what you're pointing at
- Dwell control – clicks or taps automatically when you hover the pointer for a set time rather than having to physically click or tap
- Touch and hold delay, Hold duration – increase the time before a tap-and-hold action is triggered

- Time to take action – choose how long to show temporary messages that ask you to act
- Touch Accommodation – change how the screen responds to taps, swipes and other gestures
- Ignore repeat – multiple accidental or involuntary taps are read as a single tap
- One-handed mode, Reachability - slides the top half of the screen down so you can reach everything without stretching your hand
- Back tap, Quick tap – tap the back of the phone twice or three times to trigger an action that you set up e.g. taking a screenshot, playing or pausing media
- Stylus – use to tap the screen rather than having to use your fingers

Alternative inputs

- Voice Access, Voice Control – control your device using your voice e.g. open apps, tap buttons, scroll
- Voice typing, dictation – replaces typing with speaking
- Switch Access / Switch Control – control your device using one or more external switch buttons e.g. with a hand, foot or “sip-and-puff” tube (requires compatible switch button)
- Eye control - control your device using eye movements and gestures (requires compatible eye-tracking hardware)
- Head pointer – use the webcam to track head movements to move the mouse cursor

Display

- Display size – change how big everything is on-screen e.g. icons, buttons
- Text size – make text bigger

Reduce screen clutter on websites and documents

- remove distracting parts of websites such as ads and navigation menus so you are less likely to tap or click on links you don't want
- change text size, style and spacing
- change background colour
- read webpage text aloud

Options vary depending on browser or programme used. Not all websites are supported.

Browser	How to access
Microsoft Edge	F9 or More  > Immersive Reader icon in the address bar
Microsoft Office Word, OneNote, Outlook, Excel, Teams	View > Immersive Reader Teams: Hover over or tap message > More icon  > More actions > Immersive Reader
Google Chrome	More icon  > More tools > Reading mode Highlight text > right click > Open in reading mode
Mozilla Firefox	Reader view icon  in address bar
Apple Safari	Reader icon in address bar  > Show Reader To return: page icon in address bar  > Hide Reader

Android settings

Feature	How to access	Shortcut
Accessibility menu	Accessibility > Interaction controls	
Word suggestions	System > Keyboard > On screen keyboard > Corrections and suggestions	
Touch and hold delay	Accessibility > Interaction controls > Timing controls	
Time to take action	Accessibility > Interaction controls > Timing controls	
One-handed mode	Accessibility > System controls	
Quick tap	System > Gestures	
Voice Access	Accessibility > Voice Access	
Voice typing	System > Keyboard > On-screen keyboard or System > Languages and input > On- screen keyboard	Tap microphone on keyboard 
Switch Access	Accessibility > Interaction controls > Switch Access	
Display size	Accessibility > Display size and text	
Text size	Accessibility > Display size and text	

Apple iOS/iPadOS settings

Feature	How to access	Shortcut
AssistiveTouch	Accessibility > Touch	Triple click side or home button (once configured)
Predictive text	General > Keyboard	
Dwell control	Accessibility > Touch	
Hold duration	Accessibility > Touch > Touch Accommodations	
Ignore repeat	Accessibility > Touch > Touch Accommodations	
Reachability	Accessibility > Touch	Swipe down on bottom edge of screen or double tap home button
Back tap	Accessibility > Touch	Double or triple tap back of phone
Voice Control	Accessibility > Voice Control	
Voice typing	General > Keyboard > Enable Dictation	Tap microphone on keyboard 
Switch Control	Accessibility > Switch Control	Triple click side button (once configured)
Display size	Accessibility > Zoom	
Text size	Accessibility > Display & Text Size	
Button shapes	Accessibility > Display & Text Size	

Microsoft Windows settings

Feature	How to access	Shortcut
Sticky keys	Accessibility > Keyboard > Sticky keys	Shift 5 times
Filter keys	Accessibility > Keyboard > Filter keys	Right Shift 8 seconds
Toggle keys	Accessibility > Keyboard > Toggle keys	Num Lock 5 seconds
On-screen keyboard	Accessibility > Keyboard > On-screen keyboard	Win  + Ctrl + O
Voice typing	Accessibility > Speech > Voice typing	Win  + H
Voice access	Accessibility > Speech > Voice access	Win  + Ctrl + S
Mouse keys	Accessibility > Mouse > Mouse keys	Left Alt + Left Shift + Num Lock
Mouse pointer size, colour, trails	Accessibility > Mouse pointer and touch	
Pointer speed	Bluetooth & devices > Mouse > Mouse pointer speed	
Eye control	Accessibility > Eye control	
Text suggestions	Time & language > Typing	
Text size	Accessibility > Text size	
Display size	System > Display > Scale	

Apple macOS settings

Feature	How to access	Shortcut
Full keyboard access	Accessibility > Keyboard	
Sticky keys	Accessibility > Keyboard	
Slow keys	Accessibility > Keyboard	
Accessibility keyboard	Accessibility > Keyboard	
Text suggestions / predictive text	System Settings > Keyboard > Text Input > Show inline predictive text	
Mouse keys	Accessibility > Pointer Control	
Pointer speed	Mouse / Trackpad > Tracking speed	
Mouse pointer size and colour	Accessibility > Display > Pointer	
Dwell control	Accessibility > Pointer Control > Alternate Control Methods > Enable Dwell Control	
Voice Control	Accessibility > Voice Control	
Voice typing	System Settings > Keyboard > Dictation	Microphone icon 
Switch control	Accessibility > Switch Control	
Display size	Displays > Larger Text / Default / More Space	
Text size	Accessibility > Display > Text	

Tools and apps

Many of these are free or offer free trials. Paid versions give you full features.

[Big Launcher](#) – turns any Android into a huge-button phone

[Assistive Access](#) – simplified and bigger screen layout on iOS

[Dragon speech recognition](#) - voice-to-text tool to dictate and edit documents hands-free

Voice typing apps – type with your voice e.g. [WhisperTyping](#), [AquaVoice](#)

[Action blocks](#) – set up specific tasks that can be done with only one tap of a big button e.g. phone someone, open up favourite radio station

Smart home assistants e.g. Google Home, Amazon Alexa, Apple HomePod – control your home and get reminders using your voice without needing to reach, press or hold buttons or navigate apps

Smart devices e.g. lightbulbs, heating control, curtain openers, smart locks – control everyday items hands-free, reducing the need to operate switches, handles or physical controls