

# Assistive Technology: A Quick Start Guide



# Assistive Technology: A Quick Start Guide

*ANTONINA GOUSSEVA*

CONESTOGA OPEN LEARNING



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# Preface

This guide provides an introduction to assistive technology at Conestoga College. It was created for students in their first semester, with the goal of helping them explore and make the most of AT tools to support their learning.



CONESTOGA

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# Acknowledgments

## Land Acknowledgment

At Conestoga College, we would like to acknowledge that in Kitchener, Waterloo, Cambridge, and Brantford, we are located on the Haldimand Tract, the land promised to the Haudenosaunee people of Six Nations, which includes six miles on either side of the Grand River. This is the traditional territory of the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, and Neutral peoples. Recognizing the land is an expression of gratitude and appreciation to those whose environment we reside in and a way of honouring the Indigenous people living and working on the ground for thousands of years.

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## Disclaimer

The authors have made every effort to ensure that the information in this guide is accurate and up to date; however, any remaining errors or omissions are the responsibility of the authors. This guide is intended as general information and does not replace individual accommodation planning with [Accessible Learning \[new tab\]](#).

# Author Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Luke Knight, the author of [Assistive Technology User Guides](#), for his work, which served as the foundation for this adapted resource. His comprehensive guide to assistive technology significantly streamlined the development and organization of this resource.

# Attributions

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## Adaptation Statement

This resource is an adaptation of [Assistive Technology User](#)

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Selected chapters and sections of [Assistive Technology User Guides](#) have been reused, reorganized, and updated to reflect Conestoga College's tools, policies, and services:

Chapters	Sections
<a href="#">Reading Alternate Format Material</a>	<a href="#">Natural Reader</a>
<a href="#">Text to Speech Tools</a>	<a href="#">Word</a>
<a href="#">Browsers</a>	<a href="#">Edge</a>
<a href="#">Speech to text tools</a>	<a href="#">Word Dictate</a> , <a href="#">Windows Voice Typing</a> , <a href="#">macOS</a>
<a href="#">Mind Mapping</a>	First paragraph and first image
<a href="#">Note-taking and Transcription</a>	<a href="#">Note-taking Strategies</a> , <a href="#">Live Note-taking and Transcription</a>
<a href="#">Screen Readers</a>	<a href="#">JAWS</a> , <a href="#">NVDA</a> , <a href="#">VoiceOver</a> , <a href="#">TalkBack</a>
<a href="#">Magnifiers</a>	<a href="#">Windows</a> , <a href="#">macOS</a> , <a href="#">ZoomText</a>
<a href="#">Closed Captions</a>	<a href="#">Teams</a> , <a href="#">Windows</a> , <a href="#">macOS</a> , <a href="#">Android</a> , <a href="#">iOS</a> , <a href="#">Chrome</a>
<a href="#">Voice Control</a>	<a href="#">macOS/iOS Voice Control</a> , <a href="#">Dragon</a>

## Artificial Intelligence Disclosure

Our commitment to quality at Conestoga College ensures that Open Learning holds faculty and staff to high standards. Therefore, any use of AI is vetted for transparency and disclosed, and authors are accountable for the accuracy, integrity, and originality of their content. We are committed to transparency and believe that the use of AI contributes to the quality and accessibility of this resource. For more information,

[Conestoga's Evolving AI Guidelines](#) provide a thorough description of how faculty and staff can use AI.

# Accessibility Statement

Conestoga College Open Learning is committed to producing open educational resources that are accessible to as many learners as possible. We encourage our authors to adopt a [universal design for learning approach](#) and aim to comply with the accessibility standards of the AODA and WCAG.

If you experience challenges accessing this resource or have suggestions for how we might improve accessibility in our OER, please contact us at [openlearning@conestogac.on.ca](mailto:openlearning@conestogac.on.ca).

For more information about how we strive to meet accessibility standards, please review the [Conestoga College Accessibility Statement for OER Projects](#).

## Accessibility Features of this Resource

The web version of this Pressbook is designed to meet [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 2.1](#), level AA. To create an accessible resource, authors incorporated the following:

- Minimum 12 point body text.
- Pages are built with a consistent heading structure.
- All content has appropriate colour contrast.
- Information is not conveyed by colour alone.
- Content in web and EPUB export can be zoomed to 200% with no need for horizontal scrolling.
- All images include alternative text or are marked decorative.
- Tables are properly formatted.
- All link text is descriptive.
- Links do not open in a new window or tab, except where indicated.

## Additional Formats

On the [title page of this book](#), open the **Download this book** menu and choose your preferred format. Generally, HTML will be the most accessible format. However, users can download this resource in PDF, EPUB, and others. There is a possibility formatting will not sync perfectly between all formats and full accessibility cannot be guaranteed in other formats.

## Contact Information

For help with assistive technology and alternate formats, please contact the [Assistive Technology Lab at Conestoga College](#).

For questions about your accommodations, please contact [Accessible Learning at Conestoga College](#).

For help with testing, please contact [Testing Services at Conestoga College](#).

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This statement was last updated on **February 02, 2026**.

# About the Author

Antonina Gousseva works in Library & Learning Services at Conestoga College, supporting students in using assistive technologies to support their learning. Her areas of interest include digital accessibility, accessible formats, and helping students integrate assistive technology into their everyday learning.

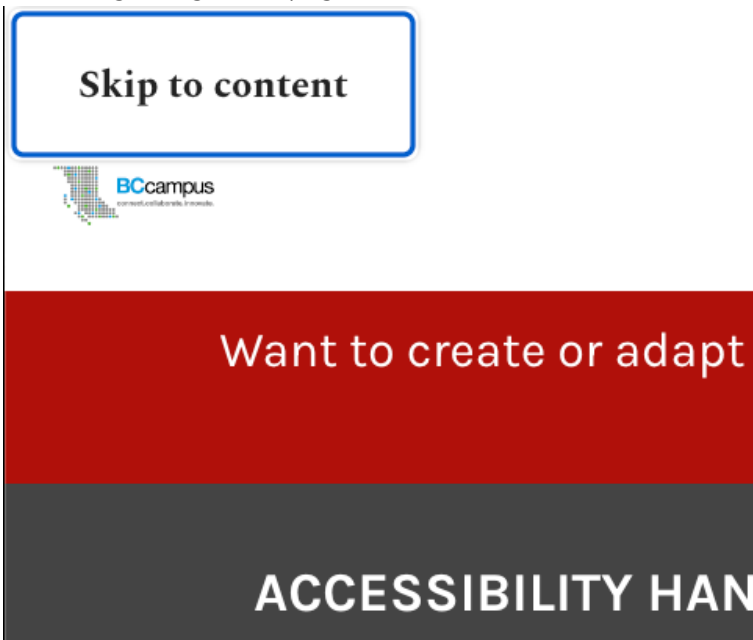
# Using This Resource

This first chapter explains how to navigate this book on the web and outlines some of the common features you will encounter in this resource.

To begin, consider the following tips for accessing this resource on the web.

## Navigation

On each page, pressing **Tab** once moves focus to the **Skip to content** link. Selecting that link moves keyboard focus directly to the beginning of the page's main content.

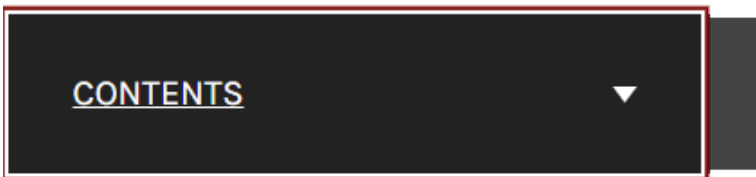


At the bottom of each page are next and previous buttons. Use these buttons to move between pages and chapters:



You can also use the left and right arrow keyboard keys to move between pages.

Near the top left of each page is a table of contents. The **Contents** button expands the table of contents menu allowing you to navigate between pages and chapters:



To quickly access the table of contents, use the skip to content link then press **Shift Tab** twice. This action will move focus to the **Contents** menu.

In the top right of each page is the **Search in book...** tool

[Home](#) [Read](#) [Admin](#) [Sign out](#) [Search in book ...](#) 

Search results are displayed on a new page.

# INTRODUCTION



# Introduction

## Welcome to Conestoga College!

This guide is here to help you explore and make the most of assistive technology in your first semester. It was created for students with disabilities, chronic illnesses, and temporary injuries, as well as anyone who wants to use technology to learn more effectively.

Inside this guide, you'll find explanations of different types of assistive technologies, examples of how they can be used, and tips for getting started. Whether you're completely new to AT or looking to build on what you already know, you're encouraged to explore at your own pace and choose the tools that feel most helpful for you.

## How to navigate the guide

On the next page, you'll find a table of contents with linked chapters that will help you explore the tools that match your learning needs. You can click on a chapter (e.g., Reading) to jump directly to the tools and strategies for that area. You'll find instructions for how to access the tools, along with tips for using specific features to support the tasks you find most challenging.

## Where to get help

If you have any questions about the tools that are covered or if you need one-on-one support, you are welcome to [book an](#)

[appointment with an Assistive Technologist](#) any time, or email us at [AT@conestogac.on.ca](mailto:AT@conestogac.on.ca).

# Table of Contents

Each category below links to a chapter that focuses on a specific area of learning. In each chapter, you'll see examples of common barriers students may face in these areas, and the assistive technology tools that can help. You'll also find instructions for how to access the tools and tips for using their features to support your learning.

- [Reading](#)
- [Writing](#)
- [Cognition](#)
- [Vision](#)
- [Hearing](#)
- [Mobility](#)



# READING

Many students encounter barriers to reading, such as difficulties with reading speed, complex passages, or unfamiliar words. This can make reading feel overwhelming and may make it harder to stay on top of coursework or fully engage with learning materials.

In this section, you'll explore several reading support tools available to you as a Conestoga student. These tools are free to use and have many helpful features to make reading easier and more accessible:

- [Read&Write](#)
- [NaturalReader](#)
- [Microsoft Word](#)
- [Microsoft Edge](#)
- [Tools for Respondus LockDown](#)



# Read&Write

**Read&Write** is a tool that can read text out loud and help you understand what you are reading. It works in your web browser and can be especially helpful if you find reading tiring, overwhelming, or time-consuming.

**On this page:**

[Getting started](#) | [Read&Write for text-to-speech](#) | [Read&Write for reading comprehension](#) | [Stay focused with Read&Write](#)

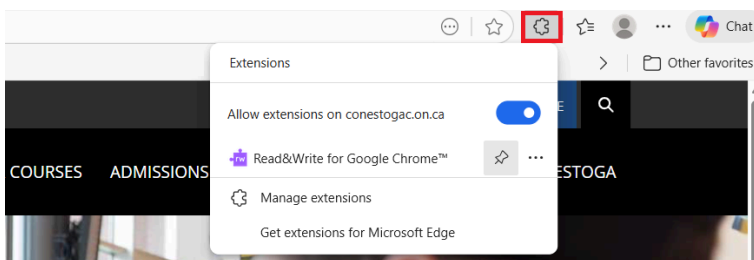
## Getting started

### Step 1: Install Read&Write


Choose the version that matches the browser you use most often:

- [Read&Write – Chrome Browser Extension](#)
- [Read&Write – Edge Browser Extension](#)

After installing, **pin the extension** to your browser so it's easy to find:



## Step 2: Sign in

1. Go to a page that you would like to have read aloud.
2. Click the **Read&Write icon**  in your browser.
3. When prompted, select **Education**.
4. Choose **Microsoft** and sign in using your **Conestoga email and password**.


To double-check that you're signed in:

- On the Read&Write toolbar, click (...) > **Settings > Accounts > Sign in with Microsoft**.



## Using Read&Write for text-to-speech

Text-to-speech allows Read&Write to read text out loud to you.

1. Go to the page you want to read.
2. Click the **Read&Write icon**  and wait for the toolbar to open.
3. Highlight (click and drag) the first line of text that you want read aloud.
4. Click the **Play** button on the toolbar:



Read&Write will start reading from the highlighted text and keep going until the end of the page.

## Reading online textbooks (VitalSource)

For VitalSource textbooks, use **Hover Speech** instead of highlighting.

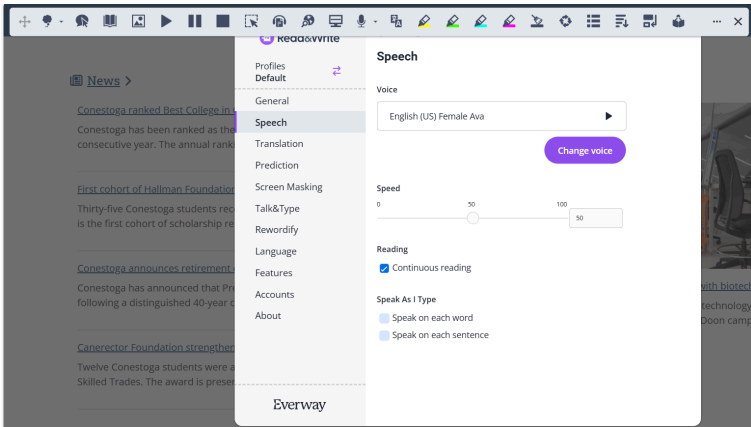


1. Click the **Hover Speech** button (second icon from the left on the toolbar).
2. Hover your mouse over the first word you want read.
3. Leave your mouse still. Read&Write will begin reading and continue through the page.

## Adjusting voice and speed

You can customize how Read&Write sounds:

1. Click (...) > **Settings**
2. Select **Speech**
3. Choose a voice and adjust the reading speed to what feels comfortable:



## Read&Write for reading comprehension

### Dictionary

For help with reading comprehension, you can try out the **Dictionary** feature, which gives you instant access to definitions. Just highlight a word, then click the book icon on the toolbar to see the definition. You can also hear the definition read aloud.



### ReWordify

**ReWordify** is another feature that can help support your reading comprehension. Click the **ReWordify** button, and it will simplify complex words or phrases while keeping the original meaning. You can click on any of the purple-highlighted words in the text to see the original word that was substituted.



January 22, 2020 3:25 PM

### Conestoga ranked Best College in Ontario

Conestoga has been ranked as the **Best College in Ontario** by CourseCompare for the second **in-a-row** year. The **once-a-year** rankings of post-secondary institutions also recognized Conestoga as the top among the **Best Trade Schools**, **Best Cybersecurity Certification Programs**, and **Best Early Childhood Education (ECE) Programs in Canada**.

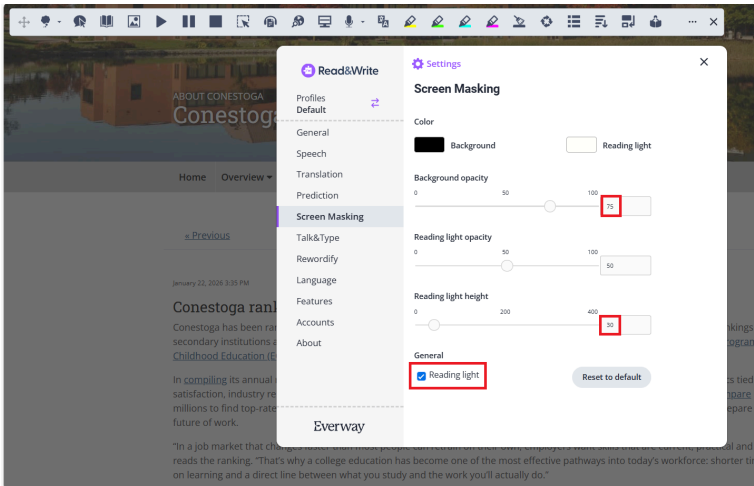
In **collecting/making** its **once-a-year** rankings, CourseCompare puts job placement at the centre of its **ways of doing things**, with **added/more numbers that measure things** tied to student **satisfaction**, industry recognition, **salary** expectations and graduation rate. As Canada's **marketplace** for education, CourseCompare is trusted by millions to find top-rated schools and in-demand programs, connecting learners with high-quality programs and **funding** to prepare them for the future of work.

## Stay focused with Read&Write

Read&Write has a feature called **Reading light** that helps you stay focused by dimming everything on the screen except the line of text that you are reading.

To enable it, go to (...) > **Settings**, then click on the **Screen Masking** section on the left-hand side.

Make sure the **Reading light** checkbox at the bottom is checked. Then set the **Background opacity** to around **75** and the **Reading light height** to around **30**:



Close the settings, then click on the **Screen Masking** button on the Read&Write toolbar to activate the Reading light feature:



The **Reading light** will now follow your cursor as you read:

The screenshot shows a web browser window with a dark theme. At the top, there is a navigation bar with a 'Previous' button on the left and a 'Next' button on the right. The main content area features a white cloud icon with a plus sign and a speech bubble icon. Below this is the article title 'Conestoga ranked Best College in Ontario' and a sub-headline: 'Conestoga has been ranked as the Best College in Ontario by CourseCompare for the second consecutive year. The annual rankings of post-secondary institutions also recognized Conestoga as the top among the Best Trade Schools, Best Cybersecurity Certification Programs, and Best Early Childhood Education (ECE) Programs in Canada.' The article text continues: 'In compiling its annual rankings, CourseCompare puts job placement at the centre of its methodologies, with additional metrics tied to student satisfaction, industry recognition, salary expectations and graduation rate. As Canada's marketplace for education, CourseCompare is trusted by millions of field-operated schools and in-demand programs, connecting learners with high-quality programs and funding to prepare them for the future of work.' A quote follows: '"In a job market that changes faster than most people can retrain on their own, employers want skills that are current, practical and ready to use.'" The text then states: 'With the Reading Light, only a single document can be read aloud, the audio stream continues into future documents, allowing students to learn on learning and a direct line between what you study and the work you'll actually do.' Further down, it says: 'In its ranking, CourseCompare reports that Conestoga emphasizes work-integrated learning, applied instruction and close alignment with regional labour needs. The college's mix of programs and capital investments reflects an institution focused on practical outcomes and evolving workforce demands, particularly in technology, health care and skilled trades.' Another paragraph reads: 'In addition to the top rankings, CourseCompare also ranked Conestoga third in Best Co-ops Programs in Canada and Best Massage Therapy Schools in Canada, sixth in Best Online Computer Science Degree Programs, eighth in Best Culinary Schools in Canada and Best Interior Design Programs and Schools, ninth in Best Coding Bootcamps in Canada, twelfth in Best Canadian Nursing Schools, and thirteenth in Best OER Certificate and Diploma Programs.' The final paragraph states: 'As the region's only provider of polytechnic education, Conestoga plays an integral role in the success of the communities it serves and the province; more than 150,000 Conestoga graduates live and work in Ontario, contributing more than \$6.2 billion annually to the provincial economy. More than 50 per cent of the local adult population has accessed the college's services.' At the bottom, a timestamp reads: 'Retrieved January 22, 2025 9:37 PM from Conestoga College | Facebook'.

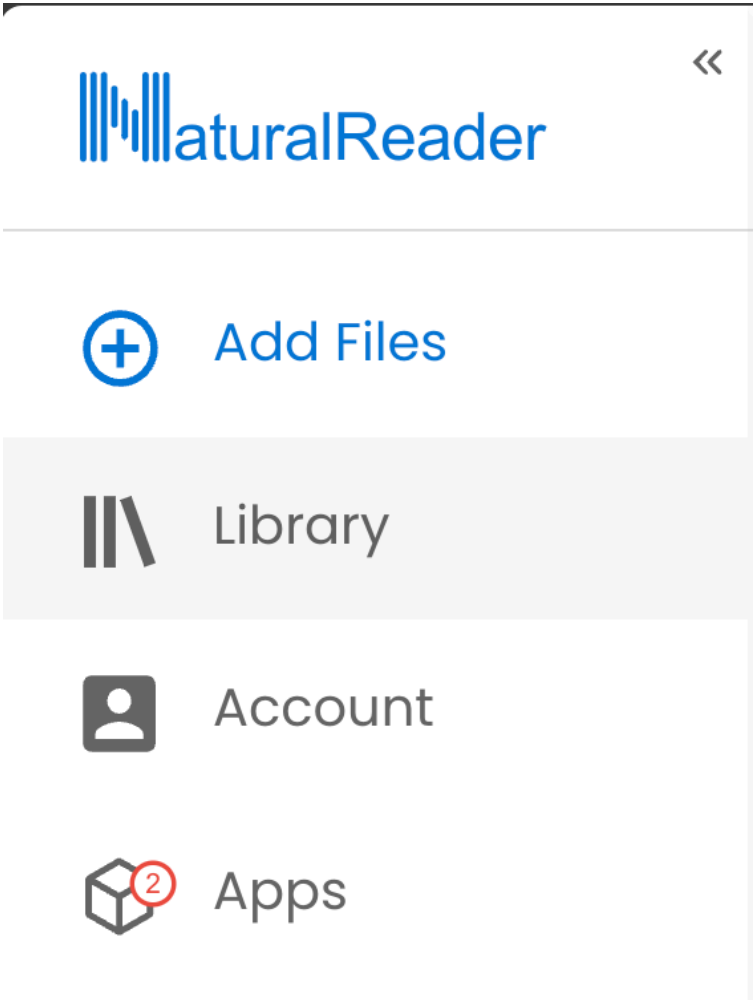
# NaturalReader

## NaturalReader

NaturalReader is a text-to-speech tool available as a [web platform](#).

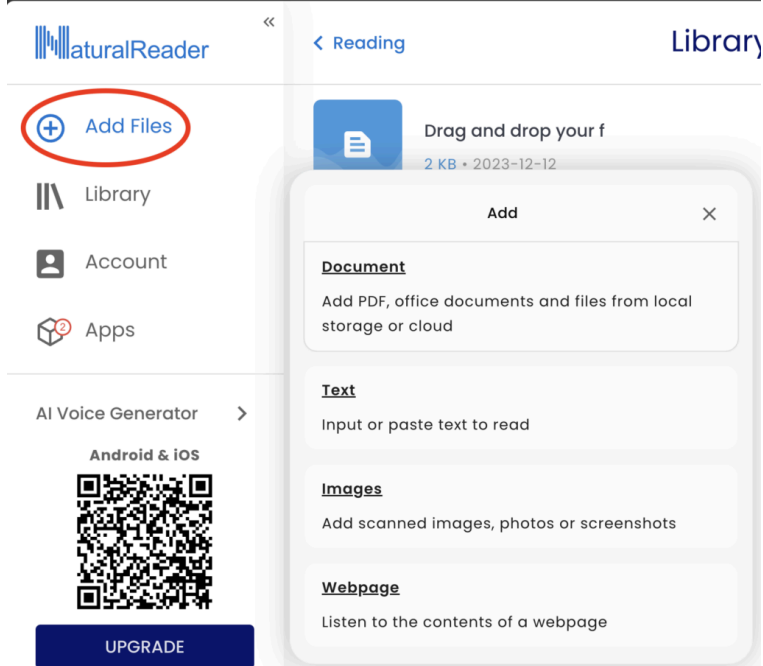
There is also a [NaturalReader app for Android and iOS](#). This makes it a great option for students who do a lot of reading on their phone.

You can use NaturalReader to build a library of files:



Add files from various sources like documents, copied text,

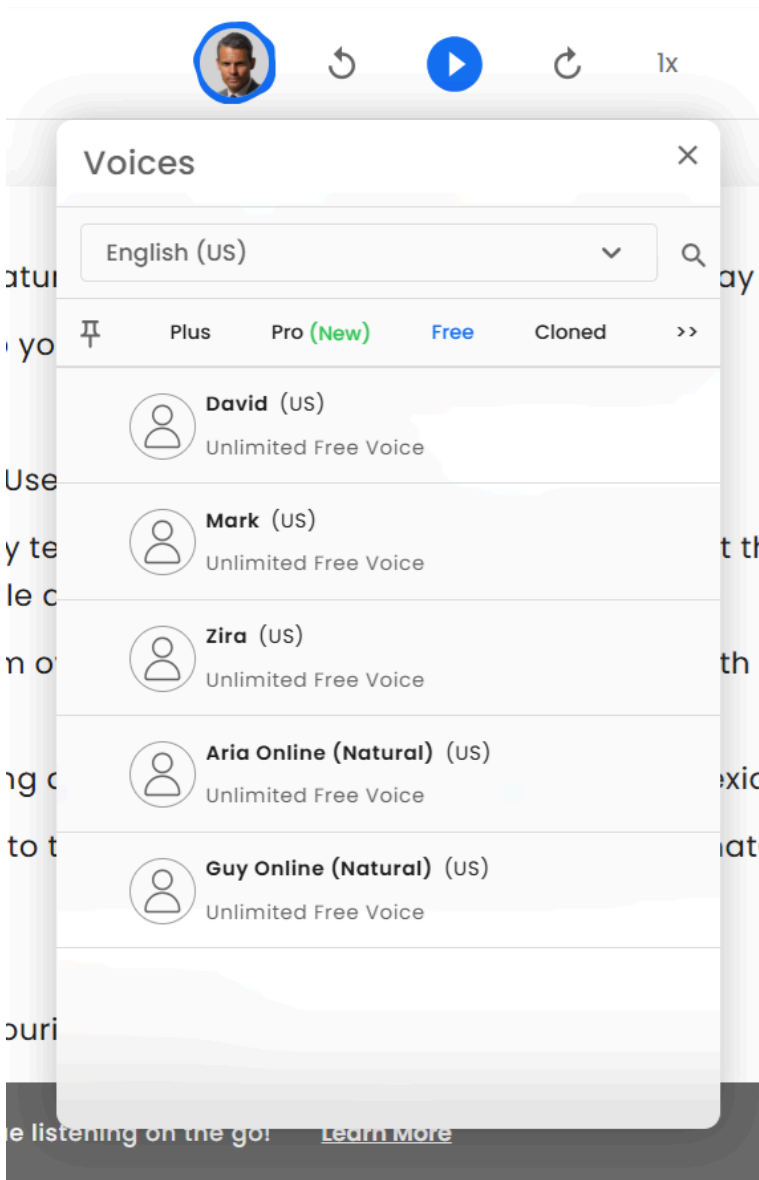
images, webpages, and even your camera.



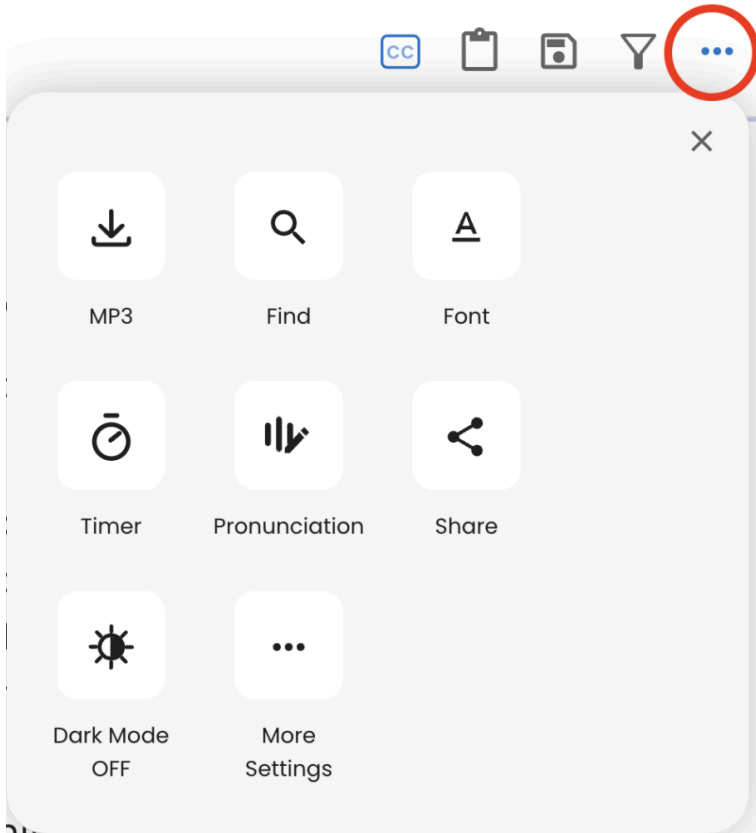
You can also change settings such as voice and playback speed with the toolbar along the top:



Try selecting the Aria Online (Natural) or Guy Online (Natural) voice in the Free section. These are natural-sounding voice options that can be used for an unlimited time.



More settings are available in the top right corner (..) icon.



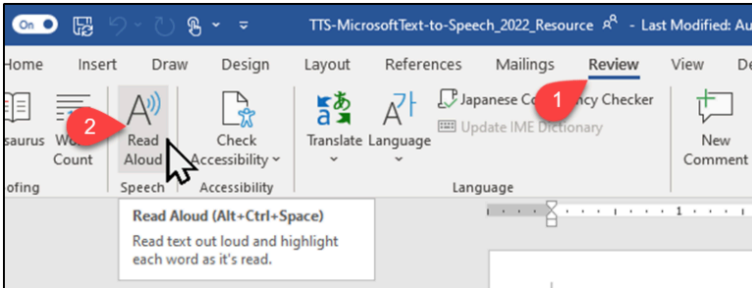
# Microsoft Word

## Microsoft Word

Microsoft Word has two text-to-speech tools: **Read Aloud** and **Immersive Reader**.

### Read Aloud

Read Aloud is available in the desktop version of Word. Move to the **Review** tab and click **Read Aloud**, or press **Alt Control Space**.



A small toolbar appears with controls and voice options.

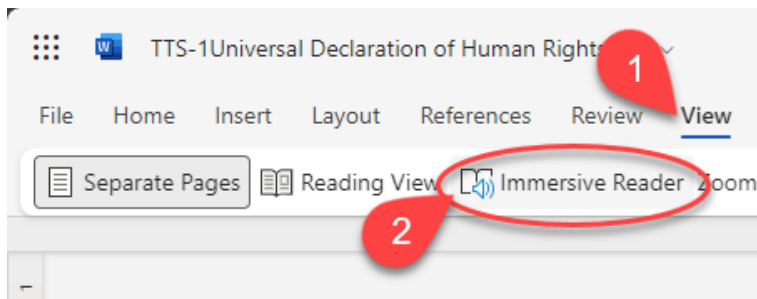


Users can have Read Aloud read from their cursor position or select text and have only the selection read.

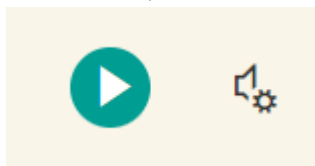
# Immersive Reader

Immersive Reader is available in both desktop and browser versions of Word. Immersive Reader is also available in the browser version of PowerPoint.

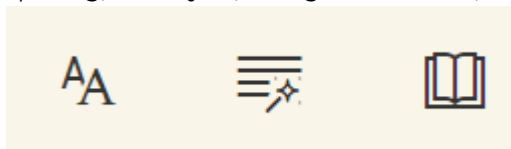
To open Immersive Reader, move to the **View** tab and select **Immersive Reader**.



The document's appearance will change. At the bottom of the window, users can access the Read Aloud tools.



In Immersive Reader, users can customize text size and spacing, font styles, background colour, and more.



For more information, read [listen to your Word documents](#).

# Microsoft Edge

## Microsoft Edge

### Read Aloud

Microsoft Edge has a built-in reader mode. **Read Aloud** allows you to have text read aloud on websites and PDFs. To start **Read Aloud**, right-click on some text, then select **More tools > Read aloud**.



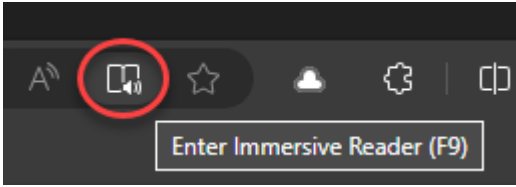
The read aloud toolbar will appear at the top of the screen, allowing users to pause, skip ahead or back, and change voice and speed options.

Read Aloud can also be opened by pressing **Control + Shift + u**.

Read [more about Edge Read aloud](#).

### Immersive Reader

**Immersive Reader** is a distraction-free reading mode that also reads text aloud. **Immersive Reader** may not be available on all webpages, but when it is, an icon of an open book with a speaker on it will appear in the address bar. To open Immersive Reader, you can click on the icon or press **F9**.



In Immersive Reader, a toolbar appears at the top of the page that contains options to change text size and spacing, font style, and page colour themes. Additionally, there are grammar, focus, and pronunciation options.

Read [more about Edge Immersive Reader](#).

# Tools for Respondus LockDown

## On this page:

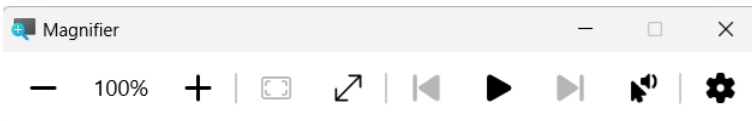
[Windows](#) | [macOS](#)

Depending on the type of device you are on, there are tools you can use to help you with reading quizzes in Respondus LockDown Browser.

## Windows

For Windows users, you can access a tool called **Magnifier** that has a built-in reader feature. You will want to make sure Magnifier is open before you launch the quiz.

- You can search for Magnifier in your Windows search bar to open it, or use the keyboard shortcut: Windows key + Plus (+)
- Once it opens, press Ctrl + Alt + F to go into Full Screen View. You can then zoom out so the screen is no longer magnified.
- To activate the reading feature, select some text and then click on the play button on the toolbar to hear it read aloud.



## macOS

For Mac users, you can enable a feature called **Speak Selection**. Find it in your Accessibility settings and then customize the shortcut:

- System Preferences > Accessibility > Spoken Content
- Check the “Speak selection” checkbox
- Choose a keyboard shortcut to activate the feature
- Select some text, then use your keyboard shortcut to hear it read aloud
- You may have to activate the shortcut twice to turn on the reading feature in Respondus quizzes



# WRITING

Some common difficulties that students experience with writing include planning and organizing ideas, generating written content, and using correct spelling and grammar. These challenges can make it hard to express your thoughts clearly and stay confident throughout the writing process.

In this section, you will learn about writing support tools that are available to you as a student. They are free to use and have many helpful features that will make writing easier:

- [Mind Mapping and Outlining](#)
- [Word Prediction](#)
- [Speak as I Type](#)
- [Dictation](#)



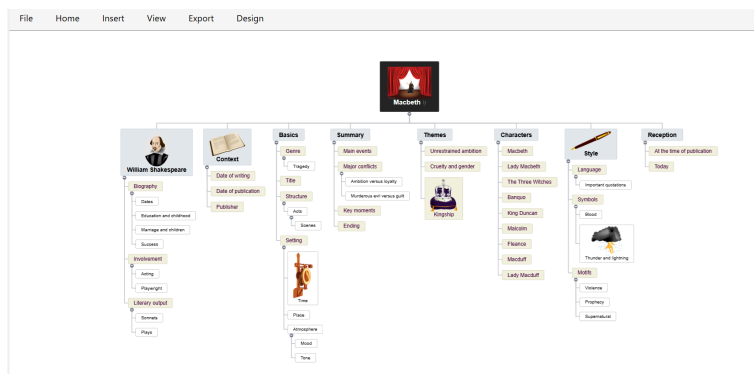
# Mind Mapping and Outlining

A mind map is a diagram used to visually organize information in a hierarchy of topics, with links between concepts. It can be helpful for brainstorming ideas for a paper, organizing notes and research, outlining tasks, and making connections between concepts.



Mind mapping tools are especially useful when they can convert mind map diagrams to text-based outlines. An outline is a great way to start an essay or assignment.

## MindView



Students at Conestoga College can request access to MindView, a mind-mapping tool that can be used for:

- Brainstorming
- Capturing ideas and concepts

- Organizing written assignments
- Converting mind map diagrams into outlines

Take a look at this video to see MindView in action: [MindView – Quick Start](#).

If you are interested in trying this software, please [book an appointment with an Assistive Technology Specialist](#).

# Word Prediction

**Word Prediction** can help students with spelling, grammar, and expressing themselves. It provides word suggestions based on the initial letters you type, and is designed to free up ideas so they flow more naturally.

**On this page:**

[Getting started](#) | [Using word prediction](#)

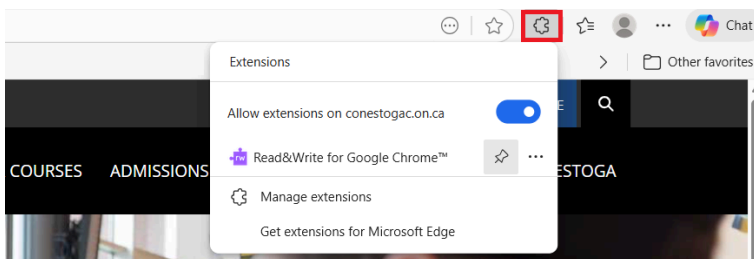
## Getting started

### Step 1: Install Read&Write


Choose the version that matches the browser you use most often:

- [Read&Write – Chrome Browser Extension](#)
- [Read&Write – Edge Browser Extension](#)

After installing, **pin the extension** to your browser so it's easy to find:



## Step 2: Sign in


1. [Open or create an online document](#) where you would like to do some writing.
2. Click the **Read&Write icon**  in your browser.
3. When prompted, select **Education**.
4. Choose **Microsoft** and sign in using your **Conestoga email and password**.

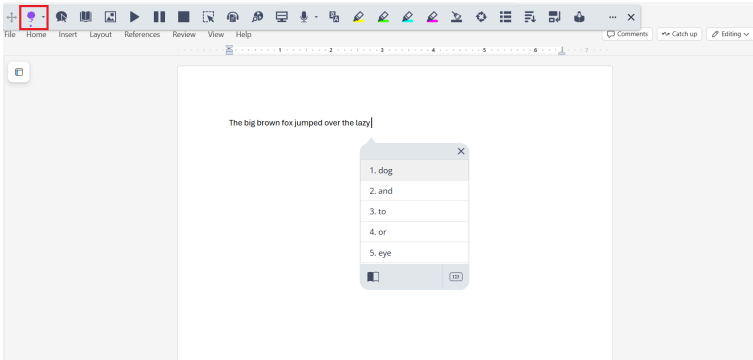
To double-check that you're signed in:

- On the Read&Write toolbar, click (...) > **Settings** > **Accounts** > **Sign in with Microsoft**.



## Using word prediction

1. Click on the **Read&Write icon**  in your extensions and wait for the toolbar to open.
2. To activate **Prediction**, click on the first button on the left on the Read&Write toolbar:

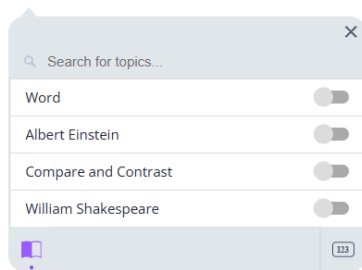


Start typing, and you will see the word suggestions appear. You can then click on a suggestion or type the number associated with it to add it to your sentence.

To hear word suggestions read aloud, you can go to the (...) on the toolbar, then **Settings**, then **Prediction**. Check the **Read prediction suggestions on hover** checkbox. You can now hover your mouse over a word suggestion to hear how it sounds.

You can also add **Topics** to make your word predictions even more effective. You can do this by clicking on the little book icon in the bottom left corner of the Prediction window. You can then search for a topic and toggle it on.

The big brown fox jumped over the lazy|





# Speak as I Type

**Speak as I Type** allows you to hear how things sound as you are writing, by reading aloud words or sentences immediately after they are typed. It improves writing accuracy, helps with proofreading for errors, and allows students to monitor their own writing.

**On this page:**

[Getting started](#) | [Using Speak as I Type](#)

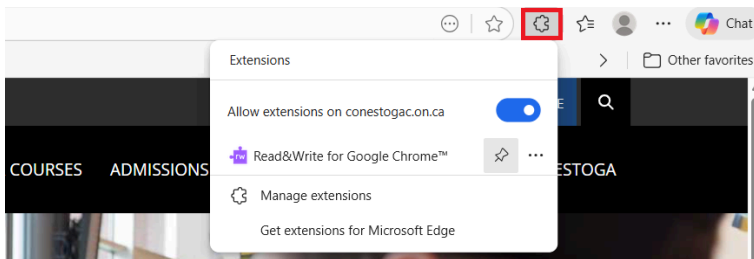
## Getting started

### Step 1: Install Read&Write


Choose the version that matches the browser you use most often:

- [Read&Write – Chrome Browser Extension](#)
- [Read&Write – Edge Browser Extension](#)

After installing, **pin the extension** to your browser so it's easy to find:



## Step 2: Sign in


1. [Open or create an online document](#) where you would like to do some writing.
2. Click the **Read&Write icon**  in your browser.
3. When prompted, select **Education**.
4. Choose **Microsoft** and sign in using your **Conestoga email and password**.

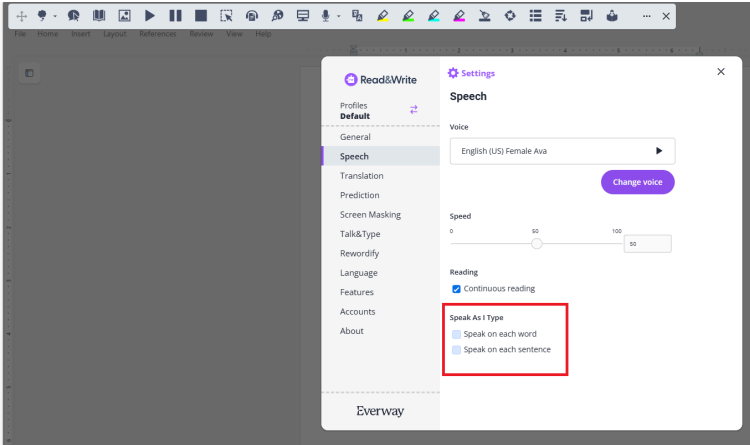
To double-check that you're signed in:

- On the Read&Write toolbar, click (...) > **Settings** > **Accounts** > **Sign in with Microsoft**.



## Using Speak as I Type

1. Click on the **Read&Write icon**  in your extensions and wait for the toolbar to open.
2. To enable **Speak as I Type**, go to the (...) on the Read&Write toolbar, then **Settings**, then **Speech**.
3. Toggle on **Speak on each word** and/or **Speak on each sentence**, depending on your preferences:



You will now hear your writing read aloud as you type.

# Dictation

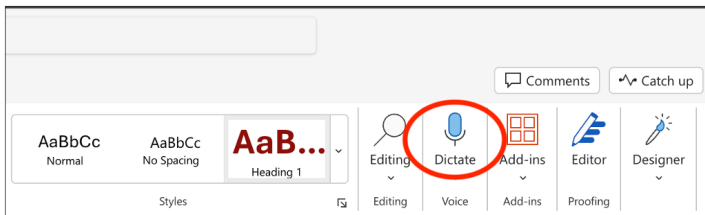
Dictation makes it easier to get your ideas onto the page. It's a quick and easy way to brainstorm, create drafts or outlines, and capture notes without worrying about spelling or typing. Below are some free dictation tools that can support you in your writing process.

**On this page:**

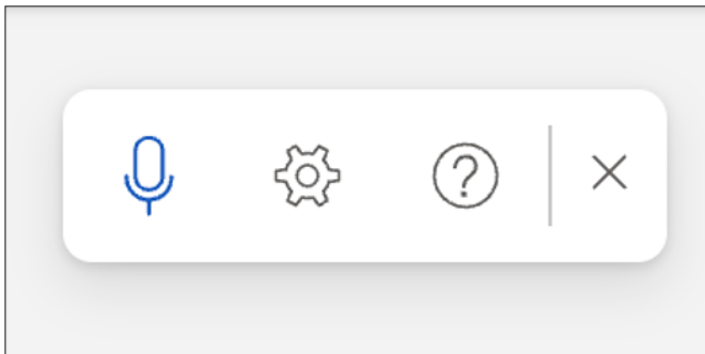
[Word Dictate](#) | [Windows Voice Typing](#) | [Mac Dictation](#)

## Word Dictate

1. To dictate in any version of Microsoft Word, in the **Home** tab, click the microphone icon labelled **Dictate**.



2. Wait for the Dictate toolbar and **Listening** message to appear.



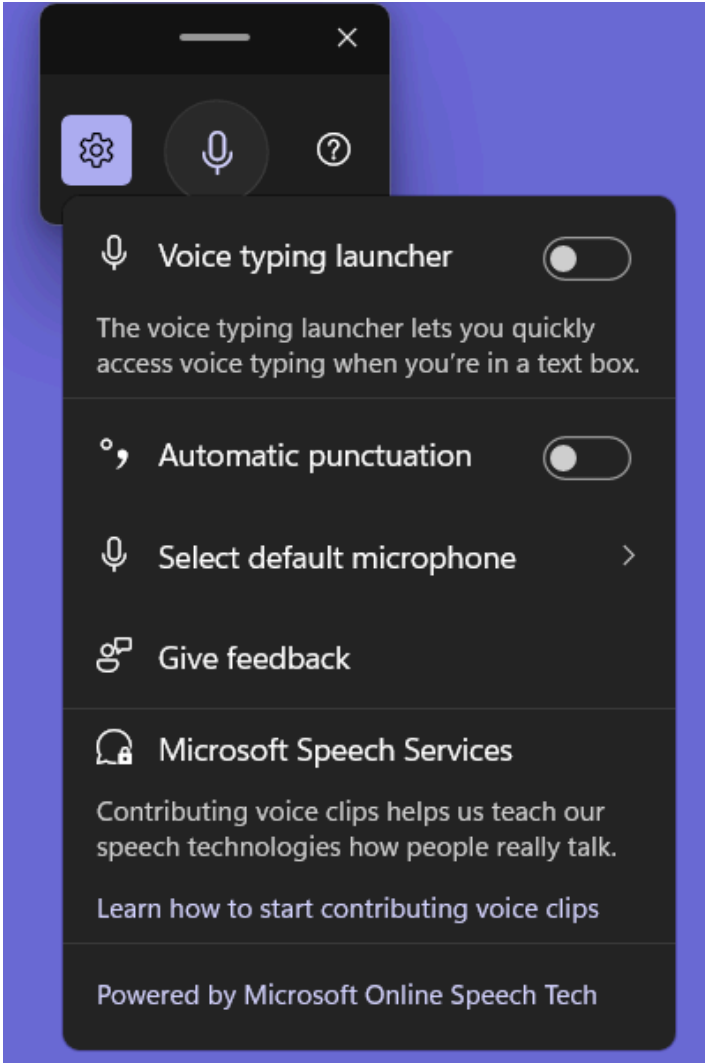
3. Speak slowly and clearly to dictate text.
4. Speak punctuation such as “period,” “comma,” and “question mark.”
5. Say “pause dictation” or “stop dictation” to stop dictation. Click the microphone to resume.

[Dictate your documents in Word.](#)

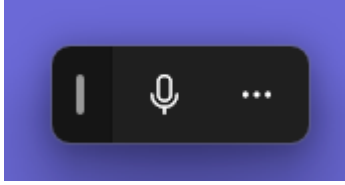
## Windows Voice Typing

Windows Voice Typing allows users to type using their voice anywhere text can be input, including programs and web pages. To use **Voice Typing**:

1. Open **Settings** and navigate to **Privacy & security**. Select **Speech** and toggle **Online speech recognition** to **On**.
2. Place your cursor in any text box and press **Windows + H** to dictate text.
3. Select the cog icon to access **Settings**.



1. Toggle **Voice typing launcher** on to quickly access voice typing whenever you place the cursor in a text box.



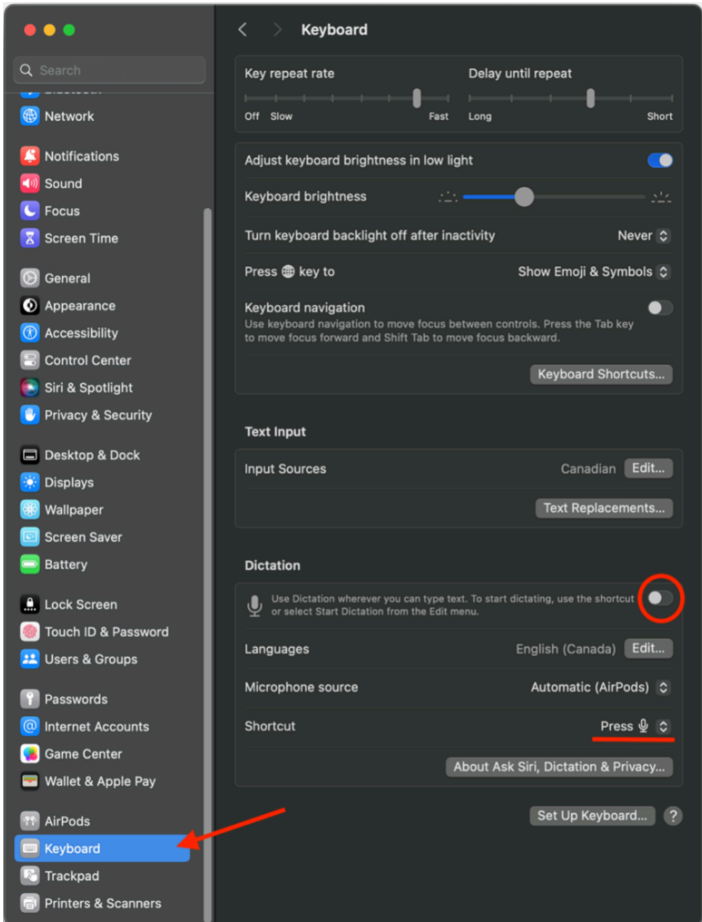
[Use voice typing to talk instead of type on your PC.](#) Take note of the voice typing and punctuation commands to learn shortcuts and useful tips.

[How to use Voice typing in Windows 11 | My Computer My Way](#)

## Mac Dictation

Mac has a built-in dictation feature to use speech input to write documents. To enable:

1. Navigate to **System Settings**.
2. Select **Keyboard**.
3. Select the **Dictation** tab.
4. Toggle button on.



To dictate text, select a text edit field (such as browser address bar or a document) and activate Dictation using the listed shortcut (microphone icon/F5 by default) or navigate to **Edit > Start Dictation**.

Speak slowly and articulate as best you can. Use natural language for commands, such as “new line” or “exclamation point”.

macOS has a [complete list of dictation commands](#).

Learn more about how to [dictate messages and documents](#) on a Mac.



# COGNITION

Many students experience cognitive barriers that can make learning more difficult. Some common examples include trouble with organization, attention, memory, and processing speed. These challenges can make it hard to keep track of due dates, take notes in class, and study effectively.

In this section, you will find tools you can use as a student to help with cognitive tasks:

- [Microsoft Planner](#) and [Outlook Calendar](#)
- [Task Breakdown](#)
- [Notetaking and Transcription](#)
- [Study Tools](#)
- [Focus Timers and App/Website Blockers](#)



# Microsoft Planner

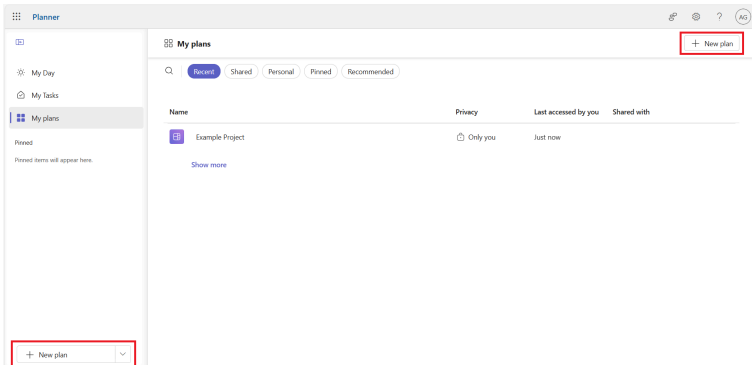
To help you stay organized, it can be useful to create a semester plan at the beginning of your first semester. A semester plan gives you a clear overview of your courses, showing all upcoming evaluations and due dates in one place.

You can use **Microsoft Planner** to build your semester plan, using the assessment details from your instructional plans.

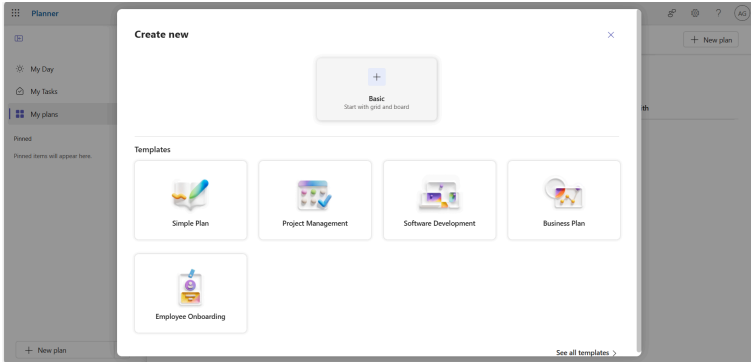
## Microsoft Planner

To create a semester plan, go to [Microsoft Planner](#) and log in with your Conestoga email and password.

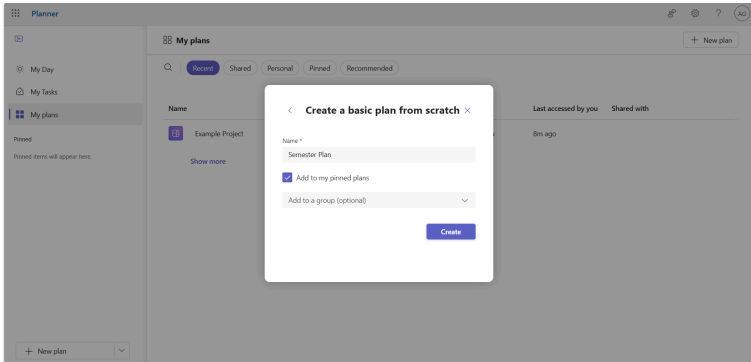
Click on the **New Plan** button in the top right or bottom left corner:



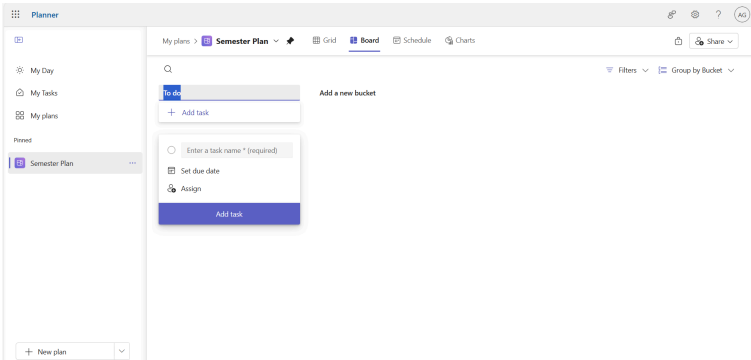
Select the **Basic** plan:



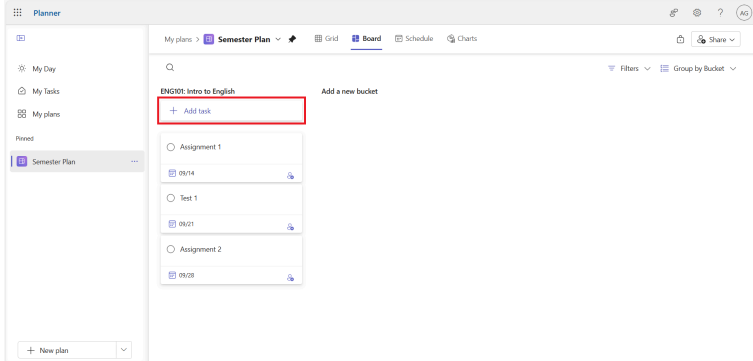
Give your plan a name and pin it:



After you create your plan, click on the **To do** bucket that is automatically created for you, and rename it to match the name of your first course:

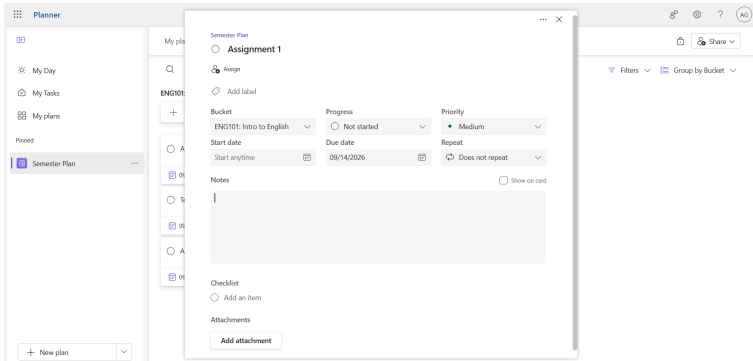


You can now start adding your evaluations and due dates for this course, using the **Add Task** button:

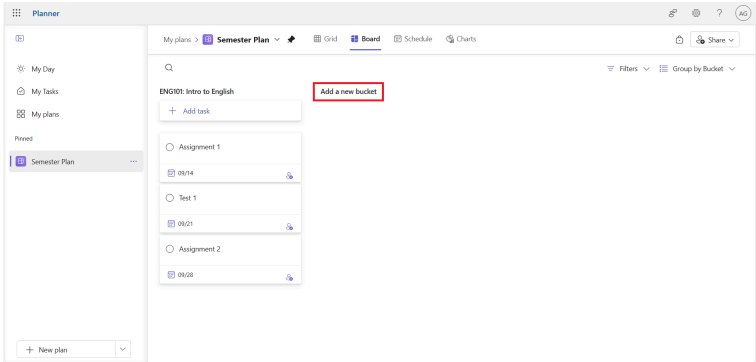


After you add your tasks, you can rearrange them by clicking on a task and dragging it up or down.

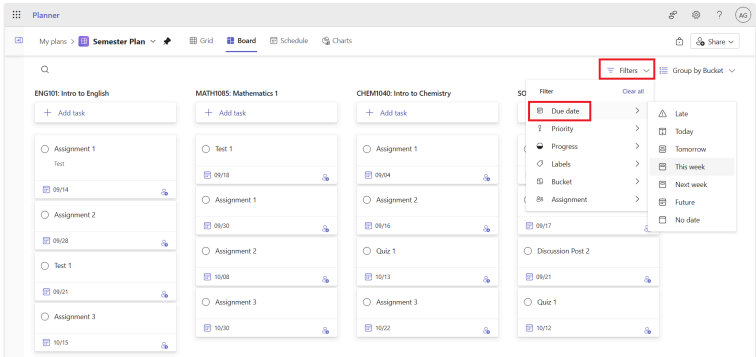
To add more information about a task, you can click on it to add notes and attachments. Here you can put the grade percentage for the evaluation and attach any rubrics or assignment documents:



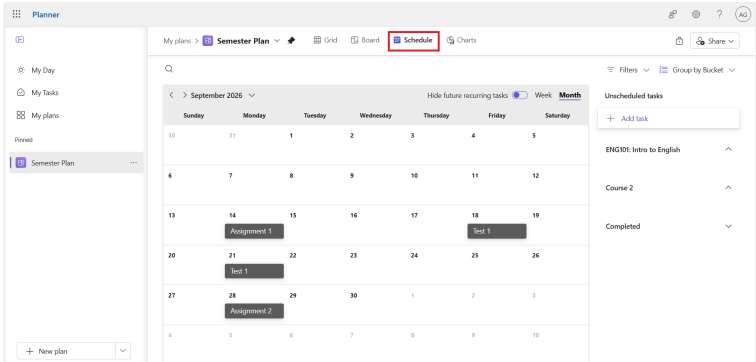
To add your next course, click on **Add a new bucket** and give it a name. Then add your evaluations for that course.



After you have created your semester plan, you can filter your evaluations by clicking on **Filters**, then selecting **Due date** and choosing an option to see what evaluations you have coming up today, this week, or next week:



You can also see a calendar view by clicking on **Schedule**:

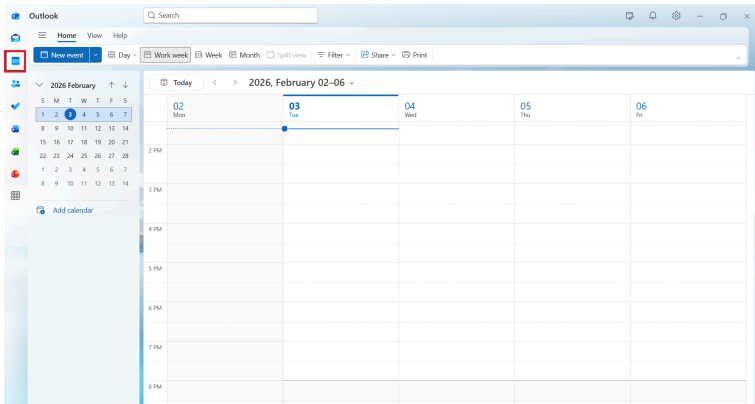


For easy access to your semester plan on the go, install the **Microsoft Planner app** on your phone and sign in with your Conestoga credentials.

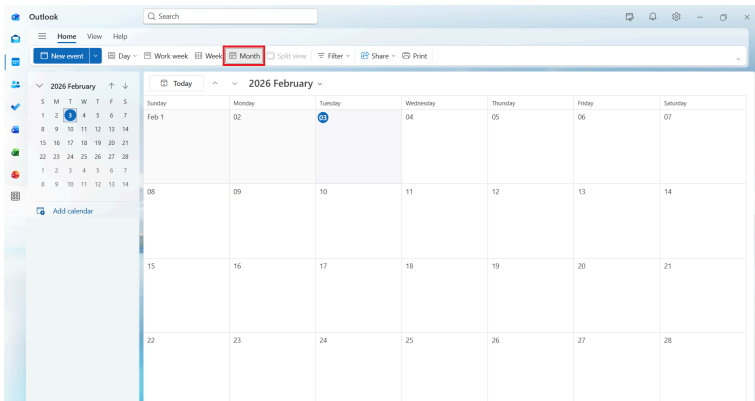
# Outlook Calendar

If you like using a digital calendar to manage your assignments, tests, and due dates, you can use **Outlook Calendar** for free as part of Microsoft 365.

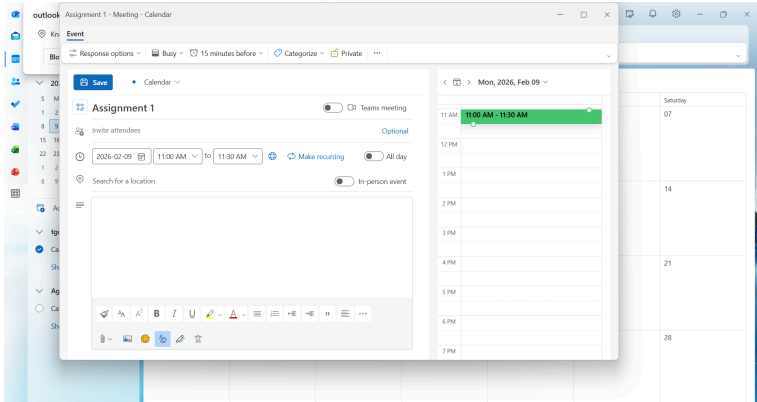
To get started, go to your [Outlook Calendar](#). You can access it any time by clicking on the **Calendar** button on the left-hand side in Outlook:



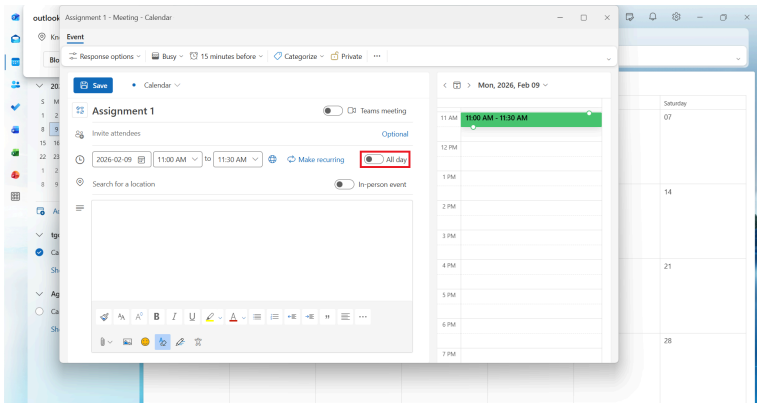
From there, click on **Month** to see a monthly view of your calendar:



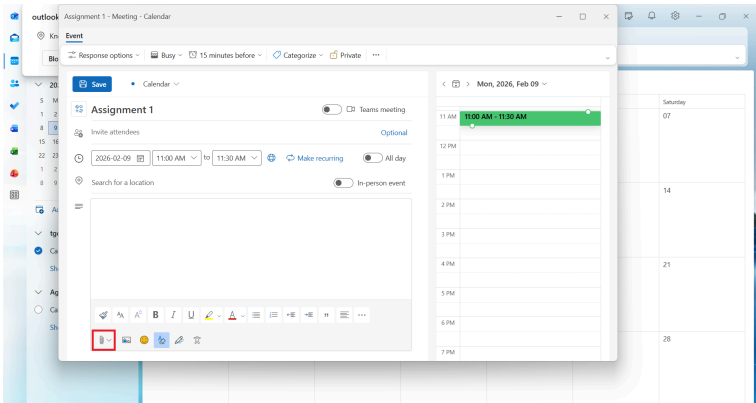
Double-click on one of the days to add an assignment or other task:



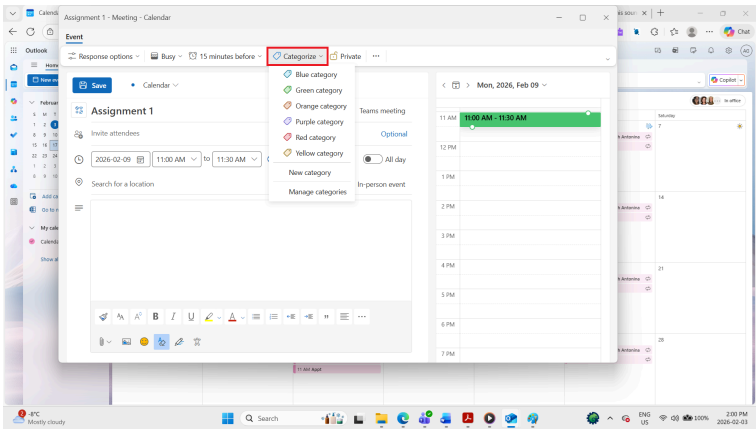
If the task is not due at a specific time, you can toggle on the **All day** toggle:



Use the big textbox to add more information and notes. You can also add attachments, such as rubrics and assignment documents, using the **paperclip icon**:



You can colour-code your task using the **Categorize** button at the top. For example, you can choose a colour for each course and use that colour to categorize the assessments belonging to it:



When you have all the information you need, click the **Save** button in the top left corner, and it will get added to your calendar.

For easy access to your calendar on the go, install the **Outlook app** on your phone and sign in with your Conestoga credentials.

# Task Breakdown

Large projects can feel overwhelming, but task breakdown tools can help you break down assignments into smaller, more manageable steps based on your due dates.

You can explore [U of T's Assignment Planner](#) or [Seneca's Assignment Planner](#). These tools let you enter your start date, due date, and assignment type to create a customized timeline with suggested steps and deadlines. Each step also offers helpful tips and “how-to” resources to guide you through the process:

The screenshot shows the 'Research Essay' section of the Seneca's Assignment Planner. At the top, it states: 'Your schedule is from 2026-2-2 to 2026-2-23' and 'You have 21 day(s) to finish'. Below this is a 'Step Percentage' indicator with a progress bar. A paragraph explains that the research essay requires extensive evidence and that the key to writing an effective paper is gathering sources and synthesizing information. The 'Steps' section is divided into two visible steps:

- Step 1:** 'Understand your assignment'. It includes a deadline of 'By Tue Feb 03 2026' and a tip: 'Read your assignment instructions carefully. Questions about your research essay? Ask your instructor or TA.' There is an 'Add to Calendar' button.
- Step 2:** 'Select and focus topic'. It includes a deadline of 'By Fri Feb 06 2026' and a tip: 'Focusing your research topic is a challenging process which takes time and work. Try brainstorming through pre-writing strategies, creating a concept map, or asking questions to generate possible topics.'

Another helpful tool you can try is [Magic ToDo](#) from Goblin Tools. You can use it to break down tasks into more manageable steps, customize the amount of breaking down, and add estimates of time for task completion:

goblin.tools Magic ToDo Formalizer Judge Professor Consultant Estimator Compiler Chef

US English

## Magic ToDo

Breaking things down so you don't

Add new item...

- study for quiz
- Review the quiz material and notes
- Identify key topics and concepts to focus on
- Create a list of important terms and definitions
- Summarize main ideas for each topic
- Watch relevant videos or listen to related recordings
- Practice answering sample questions or problems
- Check your understanding by testing yourself

# Notetaking and Transcription

On this page:

[Notetaking Strategies](#) | [OneNote](#) | [Genio Notes](#)

## Notetaking Strategies

Many students have never been formally taught how to take effective notes. [Learning and Study Skills](#) at Conestoga College has resources, workshops, and tutoring to help students strengthen their notetaking skills.

[Learn more about notetaking strategies.](#)

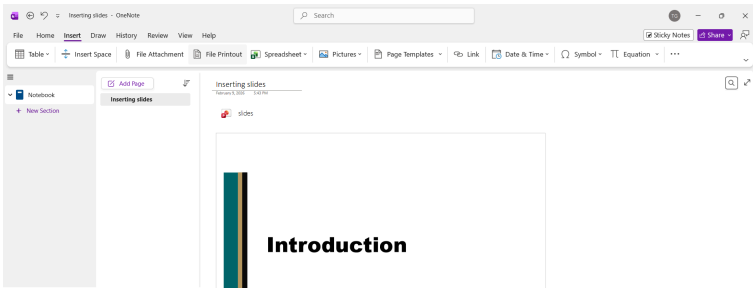
## OneNote

[OneNote](#) is a notetaking tool available for all Conestoga students through Microsoft 365. You can use it to upload slides, take notes and record audio during class, and transcribe audio to text.

If you'd like to record audio, make sure you are using the desktop version of OneNote, which does not have any limits on recording.

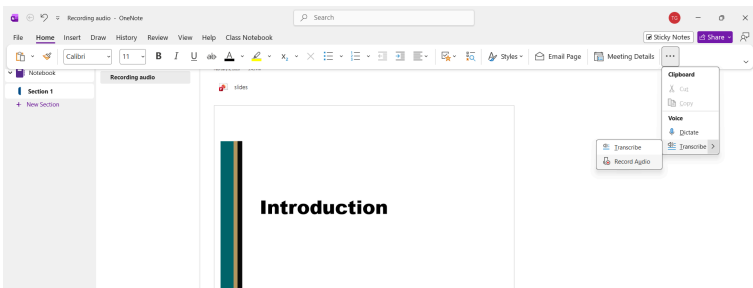
To upload slides in OneNote:

- On the **Insert** tab, click **File Printout** and select the slides you'd like to add.
- You can add your notes beside the slide, or double-click on the slide itself to write on top of it.

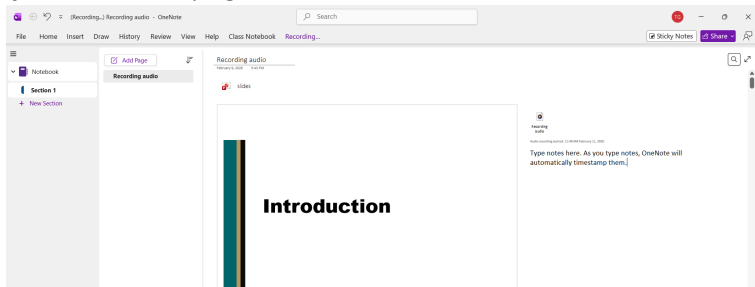


To record audio in OneNote:

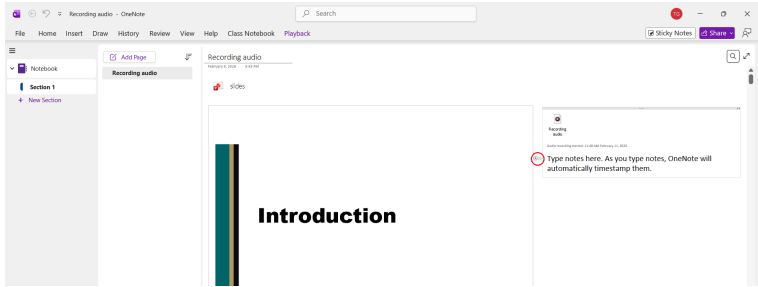
- On the **Home** tab, open the **Transcribe** menu and select **Record Audio**.
- If the **Transcribe** menu does not appear on the home tab, check the **Insert** tab.



OneNote will automatically begin recording. Type your notes anywhere on the page.

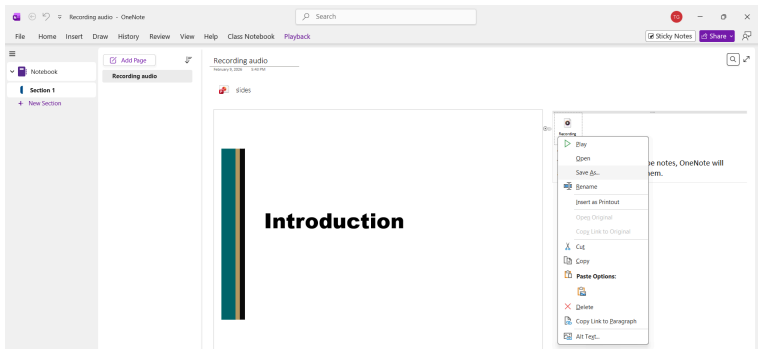


When finished, click the **Stop** button on the **Recording** tab. Place the mouse cursor on a line of text and then click the play button that appears to the left.

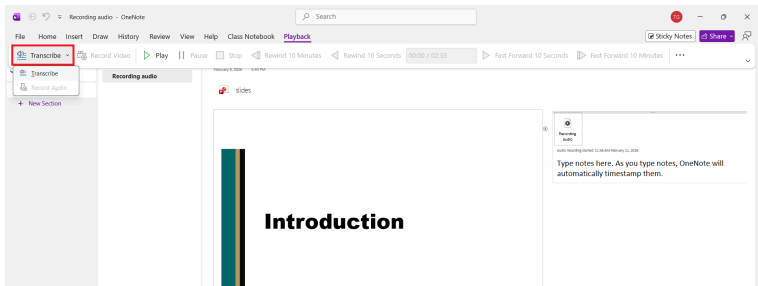


OneNote will play the audio from the time you typed the note.

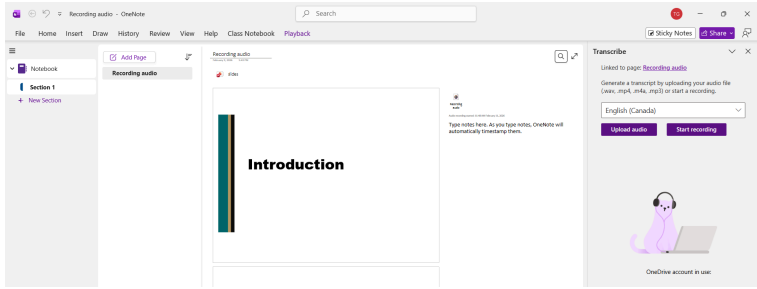
To transcribe the entire audio file, right-click on the audio file and select **Save As...**



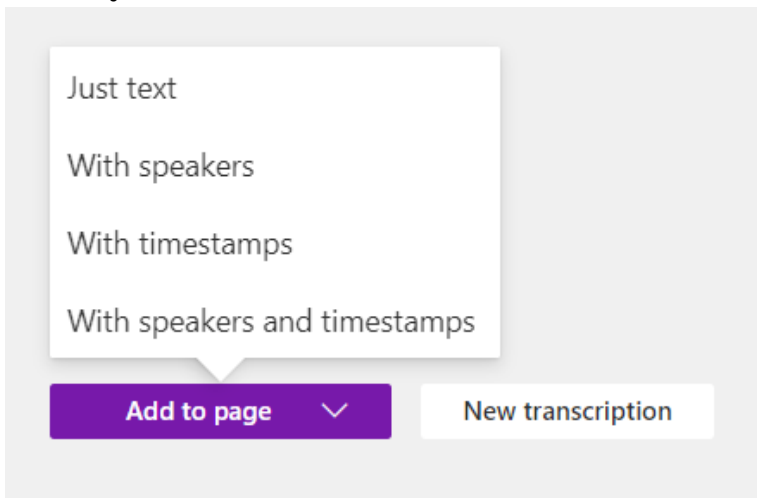
On the **Playback** tab, open the **Transcribe** menu and click **Transcribe**.



In the **Transcribe** panel that opens, click **Upload** and select the audio file that you saved.



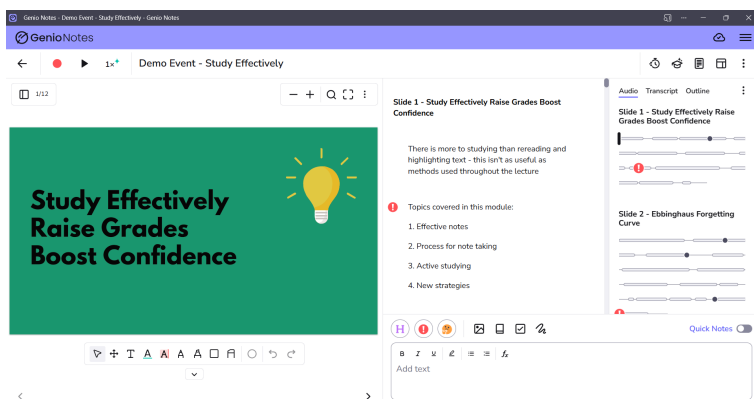
When transcription is complete, open the **Add to page** menu and select your desired format.



## Genio Notes

[Genio Notes](#) (formerly Glean) is a notetaking application that lets you import slides, take notes, record audio, and transcribe audio to text.

Access to Genio Notes is available for students registered with Accessible Learning Services. If you are interested in trying this software, please [book an appointment with an Assistive Technology Specialist](#).



To use Genio Notes to take notes and transcribe audio:

1. [Sign in to Genio Notes.](#)
2. Select New Event.
3. Click the Import Slides button to add slides.
4. Click the red dot Record button.
5. As Genio Notes is recording, you can post slides, add notes, headings, or attachments. Your interactions will be noted at the time in the recording.
6. When the presentation is over, stop the recording and go to the Transcript tab.
7. Click Transcribe Audio.

[Genio Notes Help Centre](#)

# Study Tools

## On this page:

[Quizlet](#) | [NotebookLM](#)

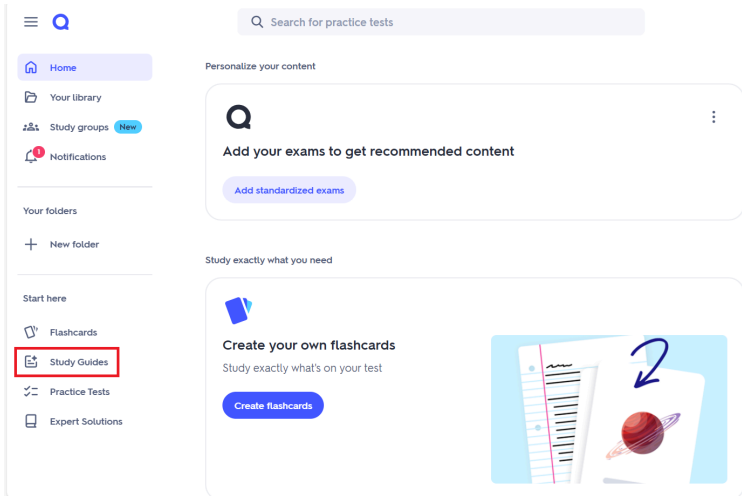
Many students find studying and memorization challenging. One of the most effective ways to deepen understanding and improve retention of information is retrieval practice, which is actively recalling information from memory.

There are tools students can use to turn their notes and readings into flashcards and practice quizzes, making it easier to build retrieval practice into their regular study routines.

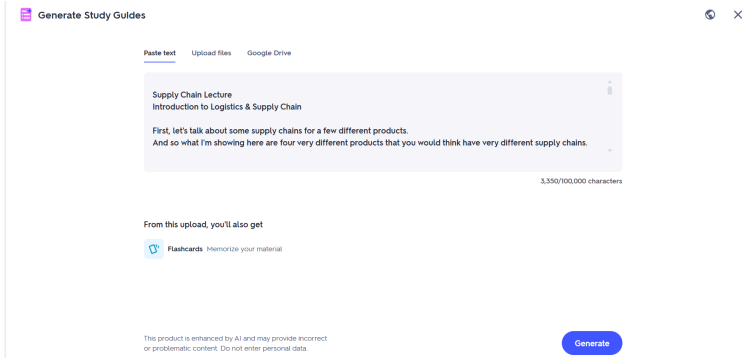
## Quizlet

Quizlet can help you create study materials using your own notes and documents. To get started, [sign up for a free Quizlet account](#).

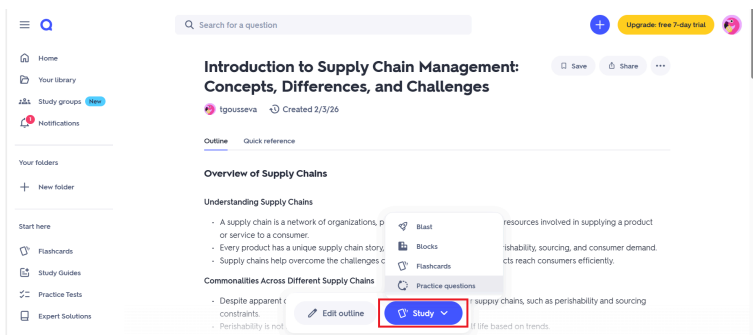
Then go to the [Study Guides](#) feature, which you can use to generate flashcards, quizzes, and other study tools:



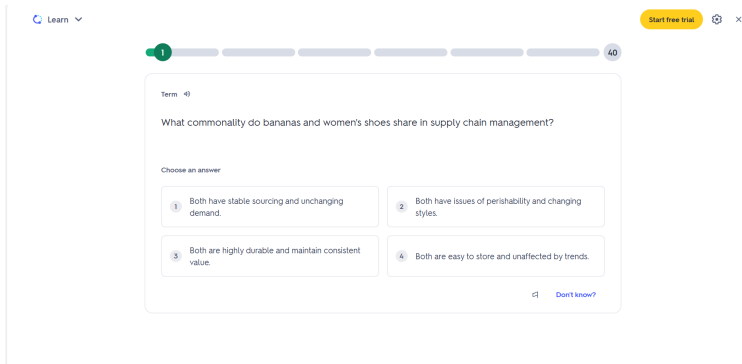
You can either click **Paste text** to add your notes or a transcript, or click on **Upload files** to add up to two files. Once you're done, click **Generate**.



You'll see a summary with a blue **Study** button at the bottom. Click on it to see the different ways you can study the material:



You can now select an option and do a study session:

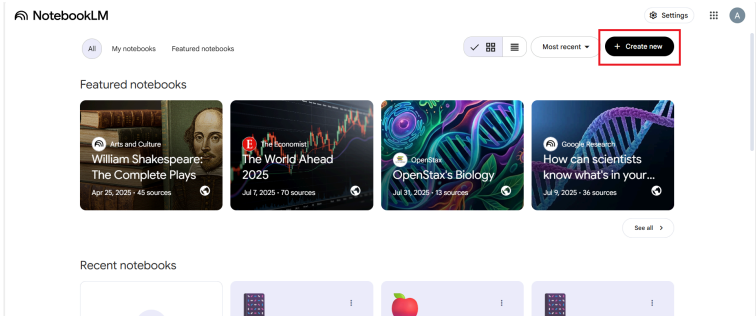


To study on the go, you can get the **Quizlet app** on your phone.

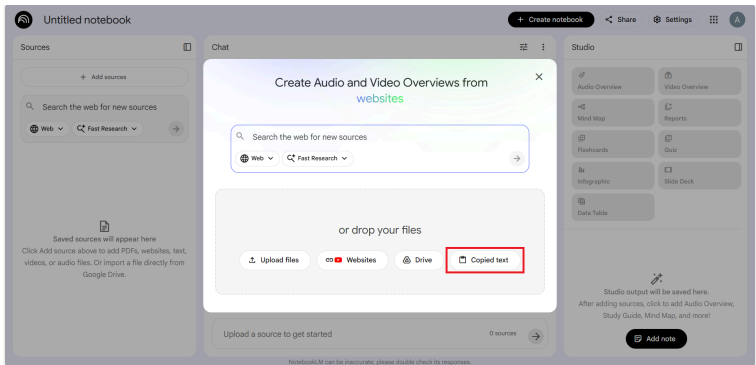
## NotebookLM

Another tool students can use for retrieval practice is [NotebookLM](#), which can create flashcards, quizzes, and study guides.

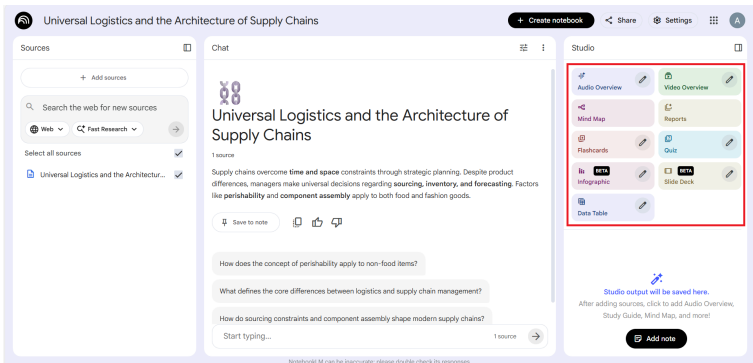
First, [create a NotebookLM account](#). Then, click on the **Create new** button in the top-right corner:



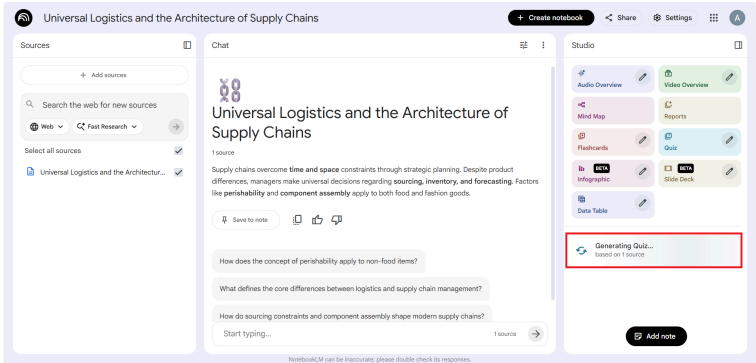
From here, you can click **Copied text** to paste your own notes or a transcript, or **Upload files** to add documents:



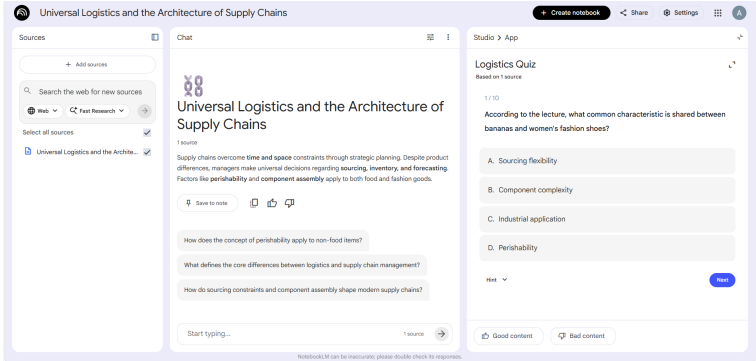
After you click **Submit**, your new notebook will be created. You'll see a list of study tools that you can generate on the right-hand side:



You can click on any of these tools, and you'll see it start to generate in the space below:



Once it's done, you can click on it to start a study session:



You can also get the **NotebookLM app** on your phone to study on the go.

# Focus Timers and App/Website Blockers

On this page:

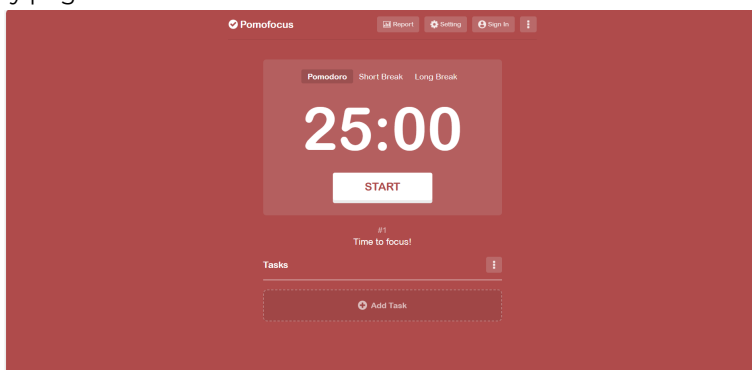
[Pomodoro Timers](#) | [Website and App Blockers](#)

For students who find it difficult to stay focused during study or work sessions, there are tools that can help. These include focus timers and break reminder apps, as well as website and app blockers that minimize or remove potential distractions.

## Pomodoro Timers

Pomodoro timers are tools that help you study or work in short, focused bursts with regular breaks so you don't burn out. They usually have you focus for 25 minutes, then take a 5-minute break, with a longer break after a few rounds.

You can try [Pomofocus](#), which stays in one browser tab, or [Marinara New](#), which is a browser extension you can activate on any page.

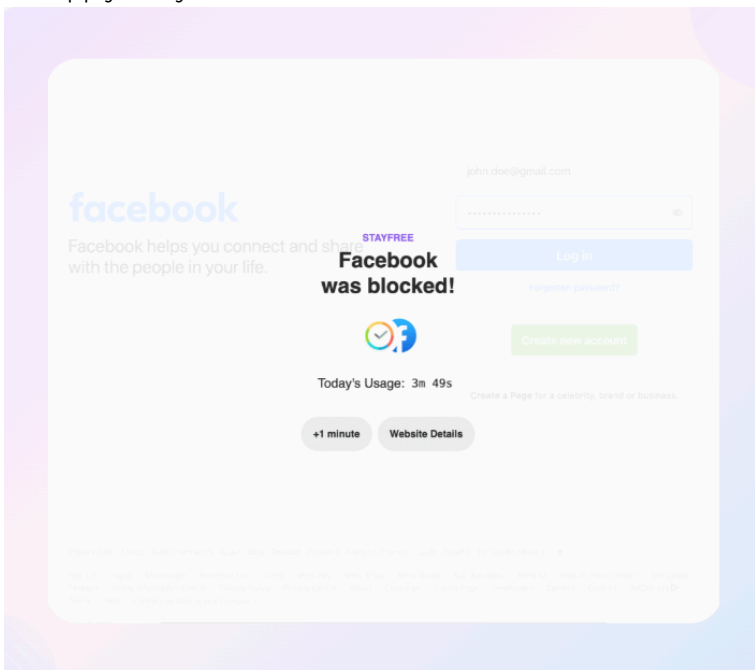


## Website and App Blockers

To block distracting websites and apps on your device, you can try a tool called [StayFree](#), which is available for Windows, Mac, Android, and iPhone, and also as a browser extension. You can choose how to limit access to specific apps and websites:

- Block Now: instantly stop distractions
- Schedule Blocks: restrict access at set times
- Daily Limits: cap daily usage for apps, sites, or categories
- Session Limits: set time limits per session

You can also use it to sync all your devices so that the same limits apply everywhere.



# VISION

Students at Conestoga have access to tools like screen readers and magnifiers in the Test Centre and the AT Lab, as well as through built-in settings on their own devices. Many students use these tools to navigate documents and webpages, enlarge or zoom in on content, and adjust colour and contrast settings to make their screens more comfortable and easy to use.

Learn more about these tools:

- [Screen Readers](#)
- [Magnifiers](#)
- [Colour and Contrast Filters](#)



# Screen Readers

On this page:

[JAWS](#) | [NVDA](#) | [VoiceOver](#) | [TalkBack](#)

## JAWS

JAWS (Job Access With Speech) is the most popular screen reader software. JAWS is available only for Windows, but allows almost every function of Windows to be performed with the use of a keyboard and audio feedback.

JAWS is available in the Test Centre and AT Lab at Conestoga. It can also be downloaded on a personal device and used for up to 40 minutes at a time in the free demo mode: [Download JAWS from Freedom Scientific](#).

This guide uses **JAWS** to indicate the modifier key, which could be either **Caps Lock** or **Insert**, depending on the user's computer and keyboard layout.

Action	Key command
Contextual Help (overview of website or document, such as headings, links, etc.)	JAWS F1
View contextual JAWS hotkeys	Insert b (this control is Insert regardless of keyboard setup)
Show a list of all buttons, frames, graphics, lists, links, etc.	JAWS F3
Buttons list	Control JAWS B
Form elements (fields, radio buttons, checkboxes, etc.) list	JAWS F5
Headings list	JAWS F6
Links list	JAWS F7
Frames list	JAWS F9
Start reading continuously from current point	JAWS Down arrow
Stop reading	Control
Read next item	Down arrow
Move to next/previous paragraph	P Shift P
Move to next/previous focusable item (link, button, text field, etc.)	TAB or Shift TAB
Activate link or button	Enter
Move to next/previous heading	H or Shift + H
Move to main content region	Q
Move to next/previous region	R or Shift + R
Next/previous radio button	A or Shift + A
Next/Previous frame	M or Shift + M
Toggle on/off Virtual Cursor	JAWS Z
Refresh screen without reloading page	JAWS Escape
Speech history (last 100 items read by JAWS)	JAWS Space, then H

This is not an extensive list of JAWS keystrokes.

## Virtual Viewer

Press **JAWS Alt W** to open the virtual viewer of the current window. This provides all the text on screen in a line-by-line format that may be easier to navigate or review for messages or codes.

Press **JAWS Shift V** to open the virtual viewer of the current control, such as a pop-up or notification. This provides all the text in the current control in a line-by-line format that is easier to navigate or review for messages or codes.

## Forms Mode

When navigating into a properly coded form (on the web or in a PDF), JAWS switches to Forms mode, and a sound will play indicating the change. This mode disables many JAWS keystrokes so users can enter text into the form. If users need to enter forms mode, press **Enter** when focused on a form field and press **Number pad plus** (which may be **function ?** on laptop keyboards) to exit forms mode.

## PDFs

A properly tagged PDF can be navigated by a JAWS user just like they navigate a webpage using headings (press **h**), tables (press **t**), and links (press JAWS F7). PDFs can be awkward to read with JAWS. Try pressing **Alt Tab** until the PDF is focused, and press **JAWS b** to begin reading the current window.

## Convenient OCR

If JAWS indicates a PDF is empty, it likely means it is an inaccessible PDF (image of text). JAWS has a built-in optical character recognition tool to extract text from an image and display it in a format readable by JAWS users. To use Convenient OCR:

1. Open a PDF
2. JAWS should indicate if the PDF is inaccessible and prompt users to use **Convenient OCR. Tab** to Yes and press **Enter**.
3. If JAWS does not prompt the user, or the dialogue is accidentally closed, press **JAWS Spacebar**, then **o** followed by **d**. This will start the Convenient OCR tool.
4. When the document is displayed in JAWS Virtual Viewer, press **Tab** to **Open in Word** and press **Enter** to view the document in Word.

## PlaceMarkers

For frequently visited websites, users may consider using PlaceMarkers for efficient navigation. Move to the place on the page users want to return to, and press **Control Shift k** and then **Enter** on the Add button. When returning to the page, press **k** to cycle through PlaceMarkers or press **Control Shift k** to see a list of PlaceMarkers.

## Ignore next key press

When encountering something that should be keyboard navigable (for example, instructions read “press left or right

arrow to move through content”), press **JAWS 3** then left or right arrow. **JAWS 3** tells JAWS to ignore the next key press and allows navigation of web content as if JAWS weren’t running.

## General Windows Keyboard Commands

In addition to JAWS commands, there are some Windows keyboard shortcuts that may help users.

- **Control f** to search in a webpage/document.
- **Alt Tab** to move between open windows.
- **Windows d** moves to the desktop. From the desktop, Windows D moves focus back to the previous window.
- **Windows t** moves to the taskbar. Windows + number opens that taskbar item.
- Press the **Windows** key and type to search the computer.

## Links

- [Freedom Scientific JAWS guide to web browsing](#)
- [Web Accessibility in Mind Keyboard Shortcuts for JAWS](#)
- Deque University [JAWS Keyboard Shortcuts](#)
- JAWS has a [webpage for JAWS users to learn](#) about and practice surfing the web.
- Portland Community College has a helpful guide to [navigating D2L with JAWS](#).
- Cracking the Code, [Reading PDFs with JAWS](#)
- General [screen reader shortcuts](#)

# NVDA

NVDA is a free and open-source screen reader. NVDA is available for Windows only. NVDA is second to JAWS in usage, but has many similar features. [Download NVDA.](#)

The first time NVDA is started, it will prompt users to set various settings (auto start, user settings, etc.), and the most important one is the NVDA key. This guide will list NVDA as the modifier key, which will refer to whichever key the user chooses (Caps Lock, Insert, or Numberpad Insert are available options).

Action	Keystroke
Open NVDA	Control Alt N
Close NVDA	NVDA Q and Enter to confirm
Change speech mode (off, beeps, talk)	NVDA S
Open NVDA menu	NVDA N
Preferences	(With NVDA menu open) P
Tools	(With NVDA menu open) T
Help	NVDA 1
Read from current position	NVDA down arrow
Read current line	NVDA up arrow
Read previous/next word	Control left/right arrow
Read previous/next paragraph	Control up/down arrow
Read next item	Down arrow
Stop reading	Control
Pause/resume reading	Shift
Change rate of speech	NVDA Shift Control up/down arrow
Input help (announced button but takes no action)	NVDA 1
Elements (links, headings, buttons, etc.) window	NVDA F7
Move between elements lists	Tab
Move between focusable elements (links, buttons, forms, menus)	Tab/Shift Tab
Next heading	H
Heading level 1-6	1-6
Next link	K
Next unvisited link	U
Next visited link	V

Action	Keystroke
Next landmark/region	D
Next form field	F
Next text field	E
Next checkbox	X
Next radio button	R
Open combo box	Alt down arrow
Next table	T
Navigate table cells	Control Alt up, down, left, right arrow
Next button	B
Next list	L
Next list item	I
Next image	G
Move to previous instance	Shift and above single keystrokes
Search	NVDA Control F
Move to next/previous search result	NVDA F3/NVDA Shift F3
Focus mode (NVDA keystrokes ignored)	NVDA Space
Browse mode (regular NVDA behaviour)	NVDA Space
Ignore next key press	NVDA F2

## Links

- Web Access in Mind [introduction to NVDA](#)
- Web Access in Mind list of [NVDA keyboard shortcuts](#)
- Allly Project [getting started with NVDA](#)
- [NVDA official user guide](#)

# VoiceOver

VoiceOver is a screen reader built into macOS and iOS.

1. Navigate to **System Settings > Accessibility**
2. Choose **VoiceOver**
3. Toggle **VoiceOver** on
  1. Alternatively, VoiceOver can be toggled using **CMD F5**.

Click **Open VoiceOver Training...** for help and training.

Click **Open VoiceOver Utility...** or **CTRL OPT F8** when VoiceOver is running to open the options and settings screen for VoiceOver, where you can change speech, sound, and keyboard shortcuts.

The default VoiceOver modifier keys are **CTRL OPT**. In the following, **VO** means pressing **CTRL OPT**.

VoiceOver requires multiple modifier keys as it works within the existing macOS system.

Action	Keystroke
Open Rotor to display headings, links, regions, lists, etc.	VO u
Start reading	VO a
Stop reading	Control
Next	VO Right arrow
Previous	VO Left arrow
Next paragraph	VO p
Next Link	VO Command L
Next Heading	VO Command h
Move to table	VO Command t
Activate focused element	VO Space
Next link, form field, button, etc.	Tab
Previous link, form field, etc.	Shift Tab

\*VoiceOver works best with Safari when browsing the internet.

Users may consider using [VoiceOver Quick Nav](#), which allows users to skip pressing the VO key combination. To enable this setting:

1. Navigate to **System Settings**
2. Choose **Accessibility**
3. Select **VoiceOver**
4. Select **Open VoiceOver Utility...**
5. Move to **Commanders** in the sidebar
6. Move to the **Quick Nav** tab
7. Check **Enable arrow-key Quick Nav** and **Enable single-key Quick Nav**

## Links

- [Complete list of VoiceOver commands](#)
- [VoiceOver User Guide](#)
- [Getting started with macOS VoiceOver](#)
- [WebAIM VoiceOver guide](#)

## VoiceOver on iPhone

To turn on VoiceOver:

1. Navigate to **Settings**
2. Choose **Accessibility**
3. Tap **VoiceOver**
4. Toggle **VoiceOver** on
  1. Various settings are available. Select **Speech** and then **Voice** to set voice options.

Using VoiceOver:

VoiceOver has a practice area where you can try out different gestures, and VoiceOver will announce the gesture and what action that gesture does.

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. With VoiceOver on select **VoiceOver Practice**.
  - Tap anywhere on the screen to have an item read aloud.
  - Drag finger to move between items
  - Swipe right to read next, swipe left to read previous
  - Twist two fingers on the screen to open the rotor
    - Rotor allows users to navigate by headings, links, words, or other controls
    - Swipe up or down to navigate by the chosen

navigation type

- Tap on an element to select, double-tap to activate
- Tapping with two fingers pauses VoiceOver
- Swipe up from the bottom to return to Home; keep dragging up to go to the App Switcher
  - Flick left or right with three fingers to move between apps
  - Flick three fingers up to close an app

## Links

- [Use Voice Control to interact with iPhone](#)
- [AppleVis](#) is a resource for blind and low vision users of Apple products.

## TalkBack

TalkBack is the default screen reader for Android. To enable TalkBack:

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Turn **TalkBack** on and toggle **TalkBack shortcut** to on.
  1. With the shortcut on, hold the up and down volume buttons to turn TalkBack on.
3. The first time TalkBack is turned on, a tutorial opens.

Using TalkBack:

- Swipe right to read next, swipe left to read previous.
- Tap on the screen to read a specific item.
  - Tap and drag to move reading focus around the page.
- Double-tap to select a link, use a button, or open a menu.

- Swipe down and up in one motion to cycle navigation options such as headings, controls, or links.
  - Swipe up or down to move between selected elements.

TalkBack has a practice area where you can try out different gestures, and TalkBack will announce the gesture and what action that gesture does. To use the practice tool:

1. Navigate to **TalkBack**.
2. Choose **TalkBack Settings > Tutorial and help > Practice gestures**.

[TalkBack getting started guide.](#)

# Magnifiers

On this page:

[Windows](#) | [macOS](#) | [ZoomText](#)

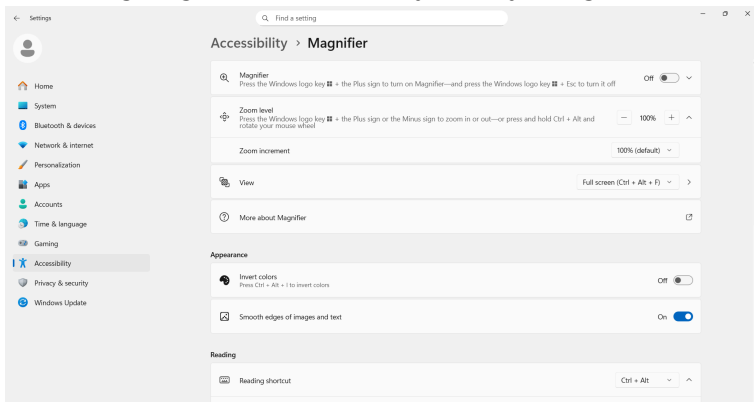
## Windows

### Magnifier

Windows has a built-in magnifier and reader tool. To enable it:

1. Open **Settings** and select **Accessibility**.
2. Select **Magnifier** under the **Vision** section.
  1. Alternatively, press **Windows Control m** to quickly open the magnifier menu.

This menu allows users to turn Magnifier on or off, change default zoom levels, zoom increments, and other settings, such as launching Magnifier automatically when you log in.



To open **Magnifier**, press **Windows +**



Press Windows + to zoom in and Windows – to zoom out.

Windows Esc turns off Magnifier.

Magnifier offers three views: Full Screen, Docked, and Lens.

Change views in the magnifier menu or, when Magnifier is running, press **Control Alt m** to cycle through views.

View additional [information about Windows Magnifier](#).

Read [how to magnify the screen with the Magnifier tool in Windows 11](#).

## macOS

macOS has a built-in magnifier tool. To enable:

1. Navigate to **System Settings > Accessibility > Zoom**
2. Toggle **Use keyboard shortcuts to zoom** on.
  1. Keyboard shortcuts:
    1. **Command Option 8** toggles zoom on/off
    2. **Command Option =** zooms in
    3. **Command Option –** zooms out
  3. Or, toggle **Use trackpad gesture to zoom** on and use the listed instructions to zoom.

In the same menu, users can change the zoom style from **Picture-in-picture**, which displays a small zoomed box that follows the cursor, **Full screen**, which zooms the entire screen, and **Split screen**, which anchors a window at the top of the screen that zooms where the cursor is.

The **Advanced...** menu has more options and tweaks available.

Users can select the **Use scroll gesture with modifier keys**

**to zoom** checkbox to use the trackpad or scroll wheel to zoom. The default modifier key is **Control**.

Finally, toggle **Hover Text** on and hold **Command**, and macOS will zoom text under the cursor. **Options...** allows users to change the modifier key and zoom level/text size.

[How to zoom in or out on Mac.](#)

Some users may wish to increase the zoom of the entire macOS display. To do so:

1. Navigate to **System Settings**.
2. Select **Displays**.
3. Choose the level of zoom desired between **Larger Text** and **More Space**.

[Make text and other items on the screen bigger on Mac.](#)

## ZoomText

ZoomText Magnifier/Reader is a magnification and reading program tailored for low-vision users. ZoomText enlarges and enhances your computer screen, echoes your typing and essential program activity, and automatically reads content. ZoomText can be controlled by mouse, keyboard, or voice commands.

ZoomText is available in the Test Centre and AT Lab at Conestoga. It can also be downloaded on a personal device and used for up to 40 minutes at a time in the free demo mode:

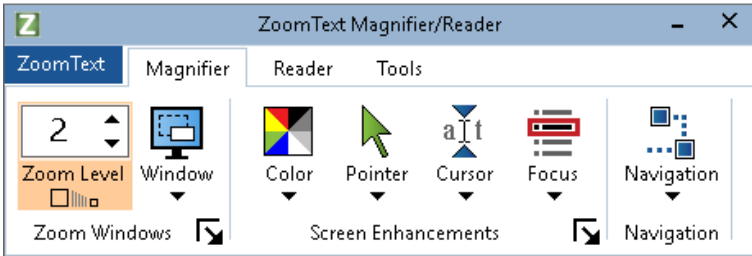
[Download ZoomText from Freedom Scientific.](#)

## Setup

[ZoomText quick start guide.](#)

Open ZoomText before any other programs, such as web browsers or document software.

When ZoomText opens, the ZoomText toolbar appears.



Navigate menus using the mouse or keyboard:

**Alt z** opens the menu:

- Arrow down for help, configurations, and settings.
- Go to **Preferences**.
  - Check the **Start ZoomText automatically when Windows starts** checkbox if desired.
  - Users can also enable ZoomText to run on the login screen.
- When making changes to settings, navigate to **ZoomText > Configurations > Save As Default**, or press **Alt z > c > s** and **Enter**.
- Go to **Command Keys** for a searchable list of keyboard shortcuts.
- At any point, press **Esc** to close the menus.

Press **Tab** to move focus between menus, tabs, and controls:

- Use the **Arrow keys (left, right)** to move between tabs and controls.
- Press **Enter** on any control to toggle on/off and/or open the associated menu.

**Caps Lock Control u** brings the ZoomText toolbar to the front.

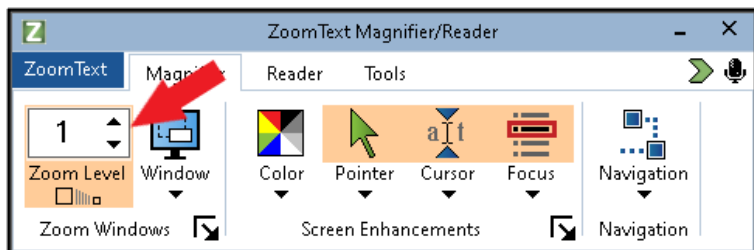
**Caps Lock Control Enter** disables/enables ZoomText without closing ZoomText.

Or select the **ZoomText** menu on the toolbar and select **Enable ZoomText** or **Disable ZoomText**.

To set zoom level 1 as the default on startup:

1. Set zoom level to 1
2. Click **ZoomText**
3. Select **Configurations**
4. Click **Save As Default**

## Magnifier Tab



The Magnifier tab has a number of tools and options, including:  
Zoom Level

**Mouse:** Click the up or down arrow to zoom in or out

**Caps Lock Shift + Mouse scroll wheel** to zoom in or out

**Keyboard:**

**Caps Lock Up arrow** zoom in

**Caps Lock Down arrow** zoom out

**Caps Lock Enter** toggles between 1x zoom and the current zoom level

Window

**Window**

**Window > One Monitor** select zoom mode (full, overlay, docked, lens, line)

**Caps Z** to cycle through zoom modes

**Freeze View** to capture a screen so you can zoom without any changes occurring

Colour

**Caps lock c** to toggle on and off

Colour enhancements (**Colour > Settings** for options)

Select **Scheme** to change mode (invert, yellow on black, black and white, etc.)

Pointer

**Caps lock p** to toggle pointer enhancements on or off.

Pointer enhancements (size, colour, customize by selecting

**Pointer** and moving to **Settings**)

Cursor

**Caps lock r**

Additional modes available under **Cursor > Scheme**

Cursor enhancements (**Cursor > Settings** for options)

Focus

**Caps lock f**

Highlight focused object, change via **Focus > Scheme**

Navigation

Settings for where ZoomText zooms and reads from, and how ZoomText follows mouse or keyboard focus

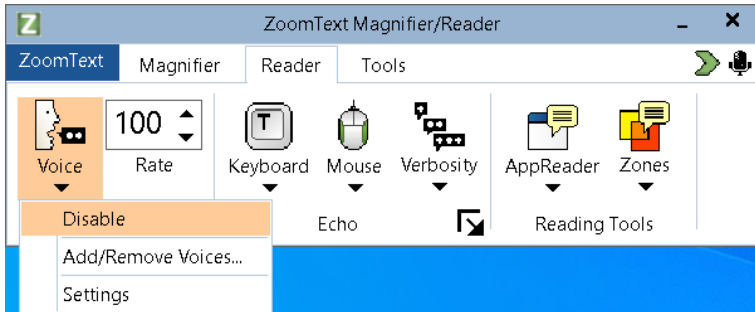
## Reader Tab

ZoomText also includes a powerful screen reader. While not as interactive as JAWS or NVDA, ZoomText can read the entire

context of the screen and has numerous options for reading text and documents aloud.

Press **Alt r** to move to the Reader tab of the ZoomText toolbar to view various settings, such as keyboard and mouse echo (audio feedback of words read or highlighted content), as well as different reader modes.

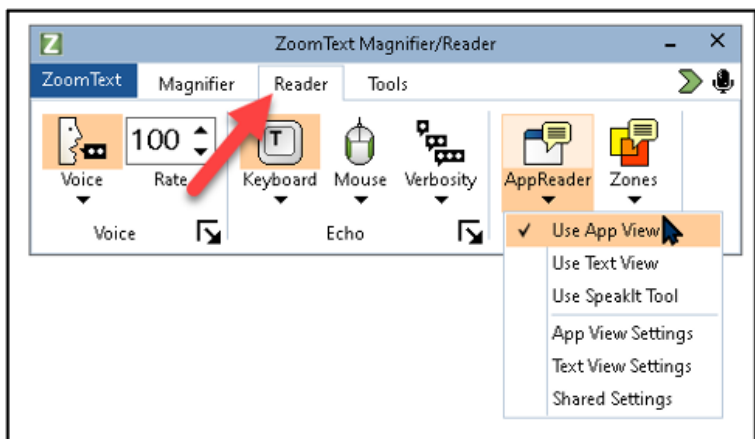
Deactivate, change, and add new voices in the **Voice** menu.



Adjust voice speed by changing the number above **Rate**.

## AppReader

**Caps Alt r** launches AppReader in the mode selected on the toolbar.



**Caps Alt a** launches App view. App view reads text in the document or webpage that is open, with a ringed highlight of what is being read.

Press **Caps Alt Left click** to begin reading from the mouse pointer.

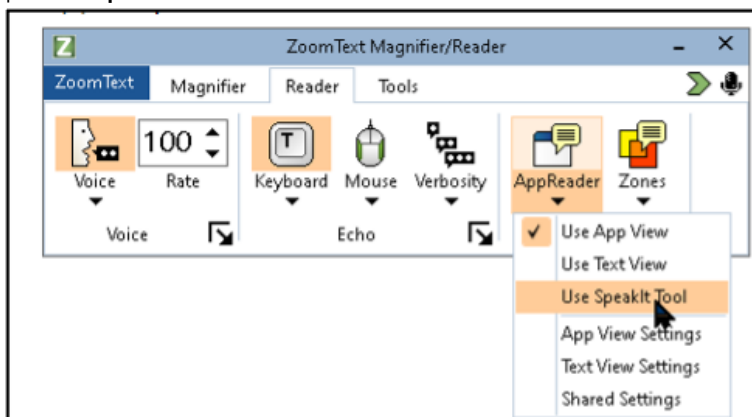
Press **Control** to pause reading and **Enter** to resume.

**Left** arrow moves to the previous sentence, and **Right** arrow moves to the end of the current sentence.

Press **Escape** to stop AppReader.

When reading, press **Tab** to switch to Text View. Text View opens the content being read in a new window with customized contrast. Press **Control Alt t** to open Text View.

SpeakIt allows users to click on a word, image, icon, or other element and have ZoomText read the content. On the Reader tab, click **AppReader**, and select **Use SpeakIt Tool** or press **Caps Lock Alt s**.



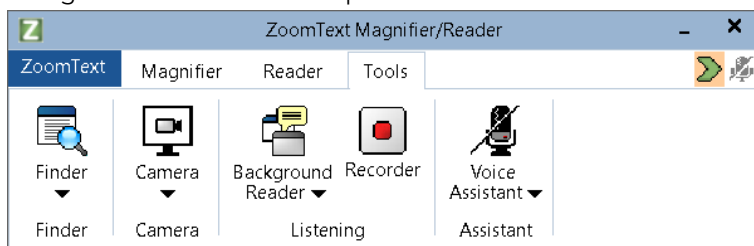
SpeakIt also allows users to highlight text to be read. When SpeakIt is active, click and drag over text to have it read aloud. Press **Escape** before selecting new text to be read. Note: SpeakIt does not visually indicate what is being read word by word, as App View and Text View do.

Background Reader allows users to highlight text and hear it read aloud in the background while completing other tasks. To use Background Reader:

1. Highlight text
2. Press **Caps Lock Control b** or navigate to the **Tools** tab and select **Background Reader**.

## Tools

Navigate to the **Tools** tab or press **Alt t**.



**Finder** allows the user to find, search, and list results. Activate with **Caps Control f**.

**Camera** allows users to hold up a document to their webcam to have it zoomed on screen. Activate by pressing **Caps control c**. The accompanying toolbar has zoom and colour options.

**Background Reader** allows users to highlight text and hear it read aloud in the background while completing other tasks. To use Background Reader:

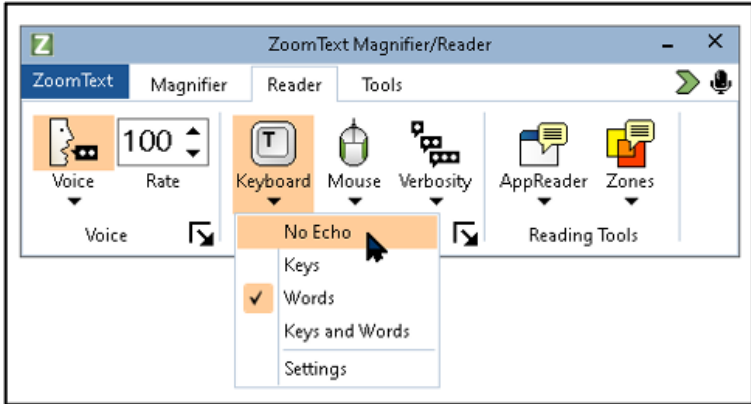
1. Highlight text
2. Press **Caps Lock Control b** or navigate to the **Tools** tab and select **Background Reader**.

**Recorder** can create audio files of text you have copied to the Windows clipboard. You can listen to the audio later or on a different device.

**Voice Assistant** allows users to give ZoomText commands using their voice. Press **Caps Alt Spacebar** or click the microphone icon in the top right of the ZoomText toolbar. On

the **Tools** tab, select **Voice Assistant > Getting Started** to set up Voice Assistant.

By default, ZoomText will read back what is typed. Select **Reader > Keyboard > No Echo** to turn this off.



## Links

- [ZoomText introductory video](#)
- Complete [ZoomText user guide](#)
- Complete list of [ZoomText keyboard shortcuts](#)

# Colour and Contrast Filters

On this page:

[Windows](#) | [macOS](#)

## Windows

**Contrast:**

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Under **Vision**, choose **Contrast themes**.
3. Choose a theme, and click **Apply**.

**Colour filters:**

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Under **Vision**, choose **Colour filters**.
3. Toggle on **Colour filters** and select a filter to use.
  1. Toggle on **Keyboard shortcut for colour filters**
  2. **Windows Control c** to toggle the default colour filter on/off.

**Mouse Pointer** and **Text Cursor** in the **Accessibility** menu have options to make cursors easier to see.

[Make Windows easier to see](#)

## macOS

1. To change settings, choose **Apple menu > System Settings**, click **Accessibility** in the sidebar, then click **Display**.
2. Go to **Display Contrast**: Drag the slider to increase or decrease the screen contrast.
3. Go to **Colour Filters**, then turn on “Colour filters.” (You may need to scroll down.) The pencils reflect how the filter affects a range of colours.
4. Click the **“Filter type”** pop-up menu, then choose a filter. You can adjust the intensity by dragging the Intensity slider. If you choose Colour Tint, click the colour well to choose the colour of the tint.

Under the **Pointer** section, you will find options to adjust the pointer size, outline colour, and fill colour.

[Change Display settings for accessibility on Mac](#)



# HEARING

Students with hearing loss may find certain tasks more difficult, such as understanding speech in noisy environments, following conversations from a distance, and keeping up during lectures and group discussions. This can make it hard to access information and participate fully in class.

In this section, you'll learn about hearing support tools and features available to you as a student:

- [Closed Captions](#)
- [Personal FM Systems](#)



# Closed Captions

## On this page:

[Teams](#) | [Windows](#) | [macOS](#) | [Android](#) | [iOS](#) | [Chrome](#)

This page covers several ways students can enable closed captions on their devices.

## Teams

To view live captions in a Teams meeting:

1. Select **(...) Settings and more**.
2. **Settings > Accessibility**.
3. **Captions and transcripts**.
4. Toggle **Always show captions in my calls and meetings** on.
5. When joining a meeting, Teams will prompt for the spoken language. Select **English (Canada)** or another listed language and click **Confirm**.
6. At the bottom of the meeting window is the captions window. Select **Settings** to change the language, style, font, and position of the captions.

[Use live captions in Microsoft Teams meetings – Microsoft Support](#)

## Windows

Windows 11 can automatically transcribe audio to text. To enable:

1. Open **Settings** and select **Accessibility**.
2. Choose **Captions**.
3. Toggle **Live captions** on.
  1. Alternatively, press **Windows + CTRL + L**
4. Use the **Settings cog** icon on the captions window to move the window around, change language, include or exclude microphone audio, and change caption appearance.
5. **Including the microphone audio** will caption the speech during an in-person lecture.

For more details, read [use live captions to better understand audio](#).

## macOS

### Subtitles and Closed Captions

1. Open **System Settings**.
2. Select **Accessibility**.
3. Click **Captions** (under Hearing).
4. Adjust caption style and appearance options.

macOS caption settings are still dependent on the source captions. If a video is not captioned, macOS cannot create its own captions.

Additional information on [subtitles and closed caption settings](#).

# Live Captions

Live Captions on Mac can transcribe audio from apps, videos, and live conversations.

1. Open **System Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Under **Hearing**, select **Live Captions**.
3. Toggle **Live Captions** on.
  1. Use the settings to change font style and background colour.
4. Click and drag the Live Captions widget anywhere on the screen.
  1. Click and drag from any corner to resize the widget.
5. Click anywhere on the widget to reveal controls.
  1. Use **Pause** to pause captions.
  2. Click the microphone to toggle between Live Captions (computer audio) and Active Captions (real-world audio picked up by your microphone).

[Use Live Captions on Mac – Apple Support](#)

## Android

### Live Transcribe

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Select **Installed apps** (requires the [Android Accessibility Suite](#)).
3. Choose **Live Transcribe** and toggle the **Live Transcribe shortcut** to **On**.
4. Tap on **Accessibility shortcut**.

5. Select **Live Transcribe**.
  1. Follow prompts to set permissions.
6. Dictate your text or use Live Transcribe to see the text of conversations.
  1. Many default apps (Chrome, Play Store) will include a microphone icon in the search box. Use that to search using your voice.

[Live Transcribe for Android](#)

## Captions

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Select **Hearing enhancements**.
3. Tap **Caption preference**.
4. Toggle **Show captions** to on.
  1. Tap **Caption size and style** to change appearance.

## iOS

### Subtitles & Captioning

When available, captions can be displayed:

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Select **Subtitles & Captioning**.
3. Toggle **Closed Captions + SDH** on.
4. Select **Style** to change the appearance of captions.

# Live Captions

Live Captions can transcribe audio in videos, apps, phone calls, and live conversations.

To enable:

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Select **Live Captions** and toggle **Live Captions** on.
3. Select **Appearance** to customize caption text, colour, and opacity.
4. Tap the **Live Captions** window for options including full screen, pause, and close.
5. Tap **Live Captions > Microphone** to caption an in-person conversation.
6. Tap **Live Captions > iPhone Audio** to caption audio from your phone.

[Get live captions in real time on iPhone – Apple Support](#)

# Chrome

Chrome includes an automatic captioning tool for videos. The captions are not a substitute for proper captioning of videos, but may be a useful tool for users when encountering an uncaptioned video. To enable:

1. Select **More > Settings**.
2. Select **Advanced > Accessibility > Captions**.
3. Turn on **Live Captions**.

Live Captions uses the operating system's default captioning styling:

- [Windows caption settings](#).

- [MacOS subtitles and captions settings.](#)

# Personal FM Systems

**Personal FM Systems** are assistive listening devices made to help individuals with hearing loss or auditory processing difficulties hear more clearly in noisy environments or when the speaker is at a distance. They work by transmitting the speaker's voice directly to the listener's receiver, making it easier to focus on speech, understand conversations, and participate more fully in classroom or group settings.

Students who are [registered with Accessible Learning](#) and have an accommodation can borrow a [Personal FM System](#) from the AT Lab.



# MOBILITY

Students with mobility challenges may find certain tasks more difficult, such as writing by hand, typing on a keyboard, or using a mouse for long periods of time. This can affect how you take notes in class, complete assignments and tests, and participate in online learning.

In this section, you'll learn about mobility support tools and accessibility features available to you as a student:

- [Voice Control](#)
- [Alternative Mice & Keyboards](#)
- [Notetaking and Transcription](#)



# Voice Control

On this page:

[Windows Voice Access](#) | [macOS/iOS Voice Control](#) | [Dragon](#)

## Windows Voice Access

Voice Access allows you to control your Windows device and type with your voice, and is especially beneficial for individuals with mobility challenges and temporary injuries.



To use Voice Access in Windows 11, follow these steps:

1. Enable Voice Access: Go to **Settings > Accessibility > Interaction > Speech**, and turn on the **Voice Access** toggle.
2. Open Windows search and type Voice Access. Select **Open**.
3. When you open Voice Access for the first time, you'll see a welcome screen where you can select your preferred language.
4. When you click **Agree** and continue, Voice Access will begin downloading the language files for the selected language.
5. After the language files finish downloading, the next screen will allow you to set up your microphone.
6. To activate Voice Access, click the microphone button on the toolbar or say "voice access wake up".
7. Use [voice commands](#) to open apps, switch between apps, browse the web, and more.

[Use voice access to control your PC & author text with your voice](#)

## macOS/iOS Voice Control

Voice Control allows users to navigate and interact with macOS using only their voice. To enable:

1. Navigate to **System Settings**
2. Select **Accessibility**
3. Choose **Voice Control**
4. Toggle **Voice Control** on

Select **Commands...** and **Vocabulary...** for further information on available functions and improving the computer's understanding of the user's pronunciation.

Click **Open Guide...** to learn how to use Voice Control.

Voice Control is also available on iOS for iPhones.

1. Navigate to **Settings > Accessibility**.
2. Choose **Voice Control**.
3. Tap **Set Up Voice Control**.
4. Select **Open Voice Control Guide** for help.
5. The **Voice Control** menu has many options to customize the user experience.

Say "go to sleep" to pause listening, "wake up" to resume. Say "show names", "show grid", or "show numbers".

[Use Voice Control to interact with iPhone](#)

Learn more about using [Voice Control on your Mac](#)

# Dragon

Dragon is a paid software that allows you to dictate text and operate a computer using voice commands. It is available in the Test Centre.

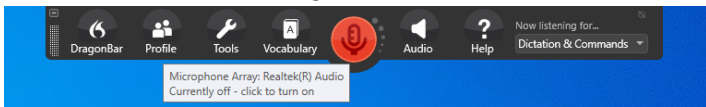
## Setup

When first using Dragon, set up a user profile. Dragon will walk users through setting up a profile, adjusting the microphone, and tuning the software to their voice. After creating a profile, Dragon will automatically open an interactive tutorial. This tutorial is recommended for new users and introduces basic Dragon features, dictation, correction, and editing.

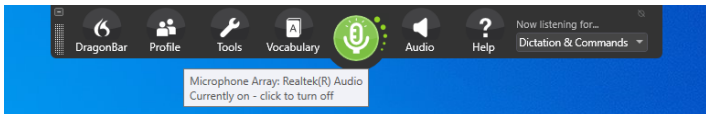
## Basic Functions

To turn Dragon on or off:

1. When the microphone icon is red, Dragon is not listening. Click the icon to start Dragon.

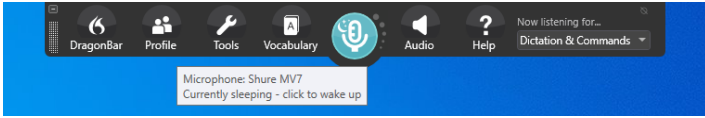


2. When the microphone icon is green, Dragon is listening and will transcribe what is said.



3. Click the green icon to stop Dragon.
4. When dictating, say “go to sleep”, and the icon will turn blue. Dragon is in sleep mode and won’t transcribe what is

said. Say “wake up” or click the icon to continue using Dragon to transcribe speech.



5. On a desktop computer, press the + key beside the number pad to toggle the microphone on and off.

In addition to using the **Help** menu, users can say “Dragon learning center” or “What can I say?”

## Dictation

To dictate text using Dragon:

1. Ensure the blinking text cursor is in the area you want to dictate text.
2. Activate Dragon.
3. Begin speaking.
4. Text will be transcribed directly into the text field selected.

Speak naturally, as Dragon transcribes more accurately when there are as few pauses as possible.

To add punctuation, say:

- “Period” or “full stop”
- “Comma,” “exclamation mark,” or “question mark.”
- “open paren,” “close paren,” “open quote,” “close quote”
- “at sign,” “plus sign,” “underscore,” “semi colon,” etc.
- After transcribing text, say “bullet that,” “bold that,” or “underline that.”
- Say “new line” and “new paragraph” to move to a new line.

To delete transcribed text, say:

- “delete that” or “undo that” to delete the last transcribed text.
- “delete last (number) words” to delete the last (number) of words.
- “delete last line”.

If Dragon makes a spelling error, say “correct that.” If the correct word appears in the menu, select it to automatically replace the incorrect word with the correct one. If the correct word does not appear in the menu, say “spell that” and spell the word letter by letter.

## Vocabulary Editor

**Vocabulary Editor** allows users to search for terms and refine Dragon’s speech recognition. Select **Vocabulary** on DragonBar to access vocabulary tools such as Learn from, Add new word or phrase, and Vocabulary editor. Users can personalize Dragon’s dictation by navigating to **Help > Improve my accuracy**.

## Voice Commands

Commons commands for controlling a device:

- “Open (application)”, “Start (application)”
- “Switch to (open application)”
- “Show desktop”
- “Click Start”
- “Close window”

- “Cancel”, “Press Escape”
- In the browser, “search Google for...”
- Select text:
  - “Select all”, “Unselect that”
  - “Select (speak words to be selected)”
  - “Select next (number) words”
  - “Select previous paragraph”
  - Note: Caret browsing must be enabled to select text on the web. Press F7 to turn on Caret browsing.
  - “Copy that”, “Cut that”, “Paste that”

[Dragon Command Cheat Sheet](#)

## Navigating the Internet

To use Dragon to navigate the internet:

Install the Dragon [extension for Chrome](#).

Useful voice commands include:

- “Go to address bar”
- “Click (link name)”
- “Go to next tab”, “Go to third tab”, etc.
- “Click type text” to see all the places where text can be entered.

If having difficulty navigating on the web, try saying “Show links” or “Show choices” and then say “Choose (number)” of the link or field you would like to select. This is helpful for most interactive elements, such as text fields, radio buttons, and checkboxes.

[Dragon guide to web navigation basics](#).

# Mousegrid

MouseGrid allows Dragon users to move the mouse with speech recognition.

1. Say "MouseGrid"
2. Say "click (1 to 9)" to select grid
3. Repeat until cursor is on item to be clicked
4. Say "click that"

## Links and Further Reading

- Visit Dragon [Watch and Learn](#) for videos of common Dragon features in action.
- [Dragon user documentation](#)
- [Dragon support knowledge base](#)
- [Dragon resource library](#)

# Alternative Mice & Keyboards

Alternative mice and keyboards can make a big difference for students with mobility challenges, repetitive strain injuries, or other barriers that affect computer use. These ergonomic devices can reduce discomfort and make it easier to navigate and type on your computer.

Students who are [registered with Accessible Learning](#) and have an accommodation for ergonomic technology can borrow [alternative mice and keyboards](#) from the AT Lab to try them out. Our team can help you find a device that best fits your needs and comfort level.

# Notetaking and Transcription

On this page:

[OneNote](#) | [Genio Notes](#)

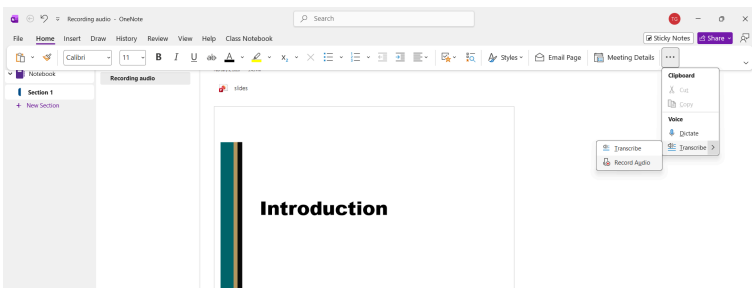
## OneNote

[OneNote](#) is available for all Conestoga students through Microsoft 365. You can use it to record audio and transcribe audio to text, which is helpful if you are unable to type or write notes by hand.

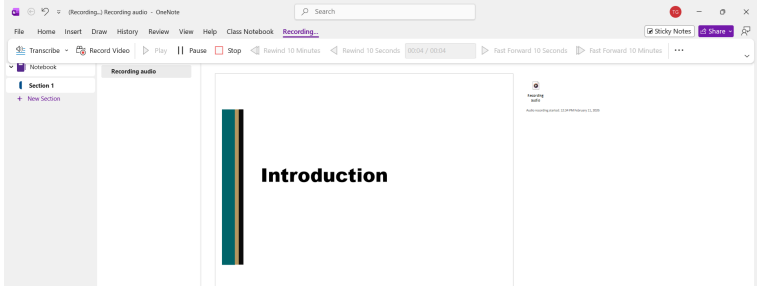
If you'd like to record audio, make sure you are using the desktop version of OneNote, which does not have any limits on recording.

To record audio in OneNote:

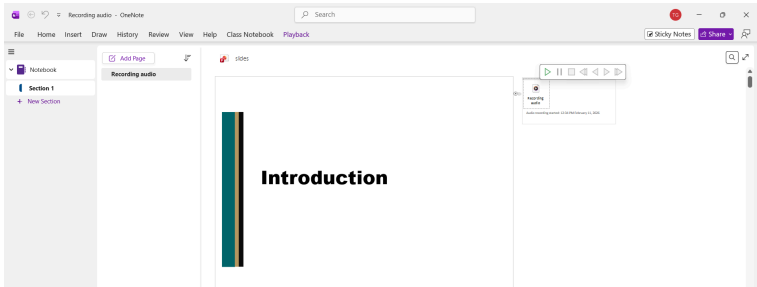
- On the **Home** tab, open the **Transcribe** menu and select **Record Audio**.
- If the **Transcribe** menu does not appear on the home tab, check the **Insert** tab.



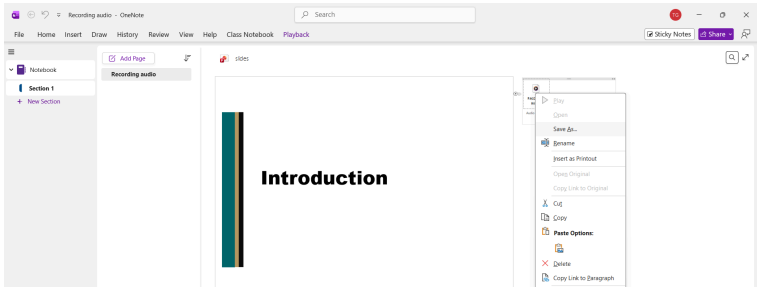
OneNote will automatically begin recording. When finished, click the **Stop** button on the **Recording** tab.



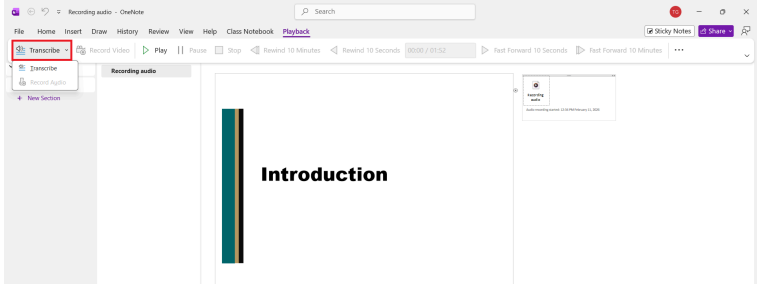
To hear the recording, click on the audio file and then click on the play button above it. OneNote will play the audio.



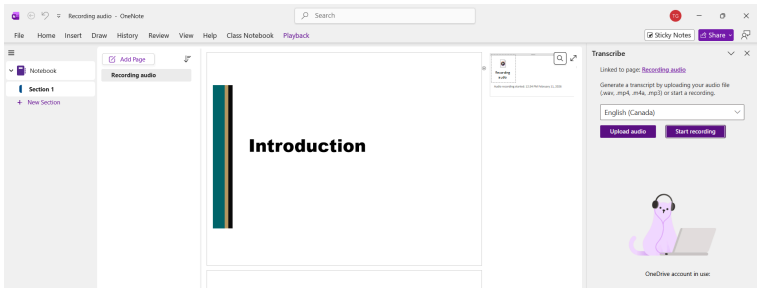
To transcribe the entire audio file, right-click on the audio file and select **Save As...**



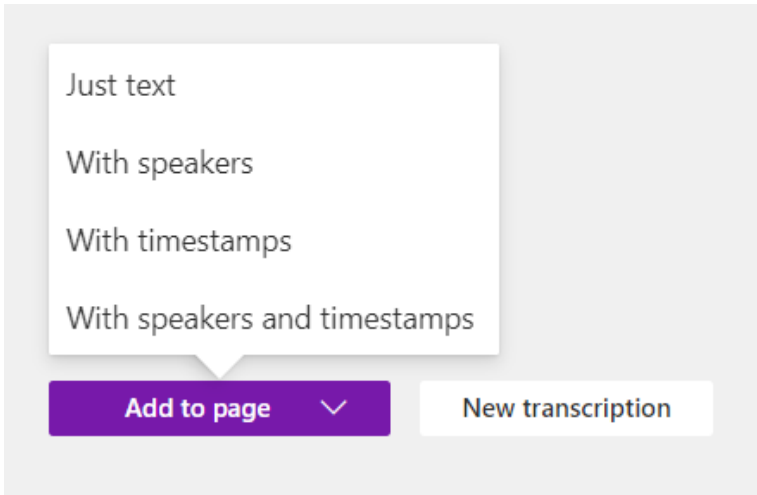
On the **Playback** tab, open the **Transcribe** menu and click **Transcribe**.



In the **Transcribe** panel that opens, click **Upload** and select the audio file that you saved.



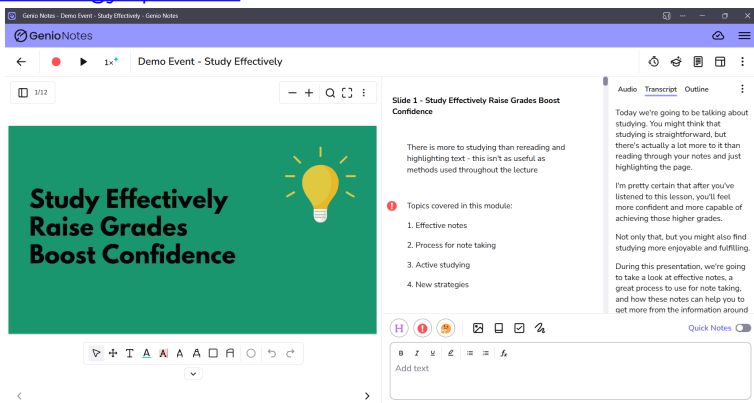
When transcription is complete, open the **Add to page** menu and select your desired format.



# Genio Notes

[Genio Notes](#) (formerly Glean) is another notetaking application that lets you record audio and transcribe audio to text.

Access to Genio Notes is available for students registered with Accessible Learning Services. If you are interested in trying this software, please [book an appointment with an Assistive Technology Specialist](#).



To use Genio Notes to record and transcribe audio:

1. [Sign in to Genio Notes](#).
2. Select New Event.
3. Click the Import Slides button to add slides.
4. Click the red dot Record button.
5. When the presentation is over, stop the recording and go to the Transcript tab.
6. Click Transcribe Audio.

[Genio Notes Help Centre](#)

# Appendix: Additional Resources

## Campus contacts

- [Accessible Learning at Conestoga College \[new tab\]](#)
- [Assistive Technology Lab at Conestoga College \[new tab\]](#)
- [Testing Services at Conestoga College \[new tab\]](#)