# Complete guide to Narrator – Microsoft Support

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Windows 11

Narrator is a screen-reading application that's built into Windows 11 , so there's nothing you need to download or install. This guide describes how to use the Narrator with Windows so that you can start using apps, browsing the web, and more.

Below the table of contents, there’s a section about what's new in Narrator.

**Note**: This guide is available as a Word doc and a PDF (in English only). To obtain additional languages or formats, contact the Disability Answer Desk.

You want to learn how to use Narrator to do things in Office apps, like Outlook and Word? Check out the articles on this page: Use a screen reader with Office apps.

Follow these links to learn how to use a screen reader to do things in Windows 11:

- Use a screen reader to explore and navigate the Start menu in Windows
- Use a screen reader to explore and navigate Settings in Windows
- Use a screen reader to explore and navigate File Explorer in Windows
- Keyboarding in Microsoft Teams 2.0 for Windows 11
- Use a screen reader with the flyout window in Microsoft Teams 2.0 for Windows 11

## Table of contents


| Chapter | What's in it |
| --- | --- |
| Chapter 1: Introducing Narrator | An overview of Narrator including how to start and stop it. |

| Chapter | What's in it |
| --- | --- |
| Chapter 2: Narrator basics | How to get around the screen, find and open apps, change what Narrator reads, and adjust speech rate and volume. |
| Chapter 3: Using Scan Mode | How to use scan mode to navigate apps, email, and the web. |
| Chapter 4: Reading text | How to read and get info about text, such as font, text color, and punctuation. |
| Chapter 5: Navigation | How to get more info on the app or page you're exploring using Narrator views. |
| Chapter 6: Using Narrator with Touch | How to use Narrator with touch, including basic gestures. |
| Chapter 7: Customizing Narrator | How to change how the Narrator starts, determine how much feedback you hear when typing, change Narrator commands, and use third-party text-to-speech (TTS) software. |
| Chapter 8: Using Narrator with Braille | How to use Narrator with a refreshable braille display. |
| Appendix A: Supported languages and voices | A list of supported languages for legacy and natural voices in Narrator. |
| Appendix B: Narrator keyboard commands and touch gestures | A list of Narrator keyboard commands and touch gestures. |
| Appendix C: Supported braille displays | A list of braille displays supported by the Narrator. |
| Appendix D: Narrator sounds | A list of the sounds the Narrator uses and what those sounds mean. |
| Appendix E: Narrator with Outlook | How to use Narrator with Outlook extension. |
| Appendix F: Narrator with Excel | How to use Narrator with Excel extension. |
| Appendix G: Troubleshooting Narrator Natural Voices setup issues | How to Troubleshoot the Narrator Natural Voices setup issues. |

| Chapter | What's in it |
| --- | --- |
| Appendix H: List of Issues and Bugs fixed | A list of issues and bugs fixed in this release. |
| Appendix I: History of Narrator Updates | A list of narrator update history. |

# What's new in Narrator

Version released in Feb 2024.

This release is about enhancing the reading experience for images with Narrator, early steps in supporting dictation with voice access and Narrator, ability to preview all natural voices and a bunch of bug fixes across Narrator. To give feedback, press **Narrator** + **Alt** + **F** while Narrator is running.

**Tip:** The Narrator key is a modifier key in the Narrator commands. Both the Caps lock key and the Insert key serve as your Narrator key by default. For more info on the Narrator key, go to Chapter 2: Narrator basics or Appendix B: Narrator keyboard commands and touch gestures.

## Enhance image consumption experience in Narrator

With Narrator, we have enhanced image consumption experience. There are two significant modifications:

- A new keyboard command has been added to allow you to switch between the graphics/images on a page or screen. Now, in Scan mode (**Narrator key+spacebar**), you can move forward or backward between graphics/images by pressing the keys "**G**" or "**Shift+G**."
- Text recognition in images is enhanced, including handwriting recognition, and overall image descriptions are better. To experience the improved experience, navigate to any image and, while the image is in focus, execute the keyboard combination "**Narrator key+CTRL+d** ". An active internet connection is necessary for this feature, and Narrator settings must have the option to obtain Image Descriptions activated. For more information, refer to image descriptions in Chapter 2: Narrator basics.

## Dictate text with voice access

Voice access in Windows 11 enables everyone, including people with mobility disabilities, to control their PC and author text using their voice. For example, you can open and switch between apps, browse the web, and read and author emails using your voice. Voice access uses modern, on-device speech recognition to accurately recognize speech and works even without the internet. For more information, refer to Use voice access to control your PC & author text with your voice.

Narrator users can start using voice access to dictate text with voice and hear what is dictated.  In addition, you can also use voice access to give Narrator commands. For example, “Turn on Narrator,” “speak faster,” “read selection,” “read next line,” etc.

To know the entire list of Narrator commands supported with voice access click help icon (?) on voice access bar, select “View all commands” and choose “Narrator commands.”

Note that, all voice access features do not work with Narrator. Please refer to the section below for more details. You can start voice access by searching in the Windows Search bar or pinning it to the task bar once it is open.

**What will work:**

- Start and setup voice access which includes downloading a speech model.
- Read a list of voice access commands and Narrator commands from voice access help menu.
- Changing voice access microphone state.
- Dictating text with voice and hearing back what was dictated.

**What will not work:**

- Using voice access guide with a screen reader.
- Core voice access features: Using different voice access commands to get different tasks done:
    - Using “Click” commands or number overlays to interact with specific items on the screen.
    - Using grid overlays to control the mouse pointer.
    - Using text editing features such as corrections and spellings in voice access.

**Tips:**

- You can press **Alt+Tab** to cycle through all open applications to move the focus to the voice access UI.
- If you don’t use headphones for listening to the screen reader, the audio output from the screen reader may get picked up by voice access microphone, leading to unwanted behavior.

## Preview natural voices in Narrator

We launched natural voices in 10 new locales as part of Windows September 2023 update. Those natural voices include Chinese, Spanish (Spain), Spanish (Mexico), Japanese, English (UK), French, Portuguese, English (India), German and Korean. With this Windows update, users will be able to preview and listen to the natural voice before downloading a voice model.

Once downloaded, Natural Narrator voices support text-to-speech on-device and do not require an internet connection. For more information, refer to natural voices section in Appendix A: Supported languages and voices.

**Notes:**

- There are more improvements and bugs fixed in this release. For more information, refer to Appendix H: List of Issues and Bugs fixed.
- To see the history of narrator updates, refer to Appendix I: History of Narrator Updates.