

A Guide to Digital Assistive Technologies

This guide has been developed in partnership with accessibility consultants [All Able](#) and introduces a range of digital assistive technologies.

Digital assistive technologies are software and platform solutions that enable people with disabilities to access information. They provide functions such as speaking aloud (text to speech), voice recognition (speech to text), colour changing and magnification. Additionally, assistive technologies may offer productivity benefits to anyone regardless of disability.

Many people who could benefit from assistive technologies do not realise that they are freely available or understand how they can improve access to information and services.

Operating Systems Accessibility

Most operating systems now have inbuilt accessibility functions:

- [Apple accessibility](#)
- [Microsoft Windows Accessibility](#)

Adapting your device

My Computer My Way

My Computer My Way is a website that provides guidance on configuring your device to meet your own requirements. It provides signposting and step-by-step guides to settings built into your computer for adaptations and adjustments. This includes accessibility features to help you see websites more clearly, text-to-speech and speech-to-text functionality, ways to make your keyboard and mouse easier to use, and adjustments that make reading, writing, and using the internet easier. My Computer My Way also provides access to a free booking system for those who need some IT support at home. Their friendly volunteers can help with the majority of technical devices including laptops and phones in the comfort of your own home.

- Get started by going to the [My Computer My Way website](#)
- Click on the different icons on the website to access recommendations for vision, sound, motor, reading and spelling

Accessible formats provision

RoboBraille

RoboBraille is a self-service, alternate media solution. You can use this software to automatically convert documents into a range of alternate media including audio books (MP3 and DAISY), e-books (EPUB, EPUB3 and Mobi) and digital Braille. The service can also be used to convert inaccessible documents such as image-only

PDF files, JPG pictures and Microsoft PowerPoint presentations into more accessible formats.

- Go to the [RoboBraille website](#)
- Upload a file or provide a URL and choose what you want to convert it to

Terms of use, copyright, and licensing

You can make an accessible copy of something if you own the copyright (e.g. it's your own work), if you have permission from the copyright holder, if the copyright has expired, or if it's for someone with a print disability. If so, you need to agree that:

- the copy won't be shared with others
- you can't find a commercially available version in an appropriate format
- you abide by the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act, 1988, Section 31A (Disabled persons: copies of works for personal use)
- you abide by the Data Protection Act when storing or sharing converted files that contain personal data.

Assistive technologies

There are many assistive technologies available; we have included an indicative list below for some of them:

- [Adobe Reader - Read Out Loud](#) - Listen to PDF documents using Adobe text-to-speech software
- [ATbar](#) - Customise your webpages to increase accessibility
- [ClaroRead \(Chrome Extension\)](#) - Use the ClaroRead Google Chrome extension to listen to web pages read aloud
- [Dolphin EasyReader](#) - Listen to and customise text to increase the readability of a text
- [EquatIQ](#) - Type mathematical equations on a computer
- [f.lux](#) - Adapt a computer's display to the current environment
- [Google High Contrast](#) - Adjust the colour contrast of web pages for ease of reading
- [Immersive Reader for Microsoft 365](#) - Improve the readability of documents
- [Microsoft Accessibility](#) - Improve accessibility of Microsoft devices and applications
- [MyStudyBar](#) - Get help with content creation including planning, writing, and reading
- [NVDA \(Non Visual Desktop Access\)](#) - Text to speech: listen to text on your computer read aloud
- [Otter.ai](#) - Generate sharable smart notes that sync audio, text, and images
- [Seeing AI](#) - Take pictures of text and translate into OCR or text-to-speech

- VoiceOver - advanced screen-reading technology integrated into the Mac OS X operating system

Further information

- UK government guide to testing with assistive technologies.
- Make things accessible. A repository for guidance material and useful resources for organisations looking to improve their digital accessibility.