AUT

Adaptive Technology Guide

Purpose and Use of this Guide

You will find in this guide links to helpful resources for using technology to support your studies, whether you are drafting papers, taking notes, or reading long texts. This guide may help you if you are:

- Having trouble understanding and reading text
- Experiencing difficulties accessing course materials on your computer
- Struggling to take notes in lectures
- Getting tired looking at the screen all day

What this guide covers and who this is for

This resource is created by the Disability Support Service (DSS), however most of the links in this article point to tools that are readily available to all AUT (Auckland University of Technology) students, whether as a built-in function of your operating system, a free software, or as part of Office 365.

This list is not exhaustive and intends to point you in the right direction – you may already have other tools that you find useful to your needs!

You may find it useful to browse the accessibility guides for your devices directly to find the information you are looking for.

Microsoft Accessibility and Tools | Microsoft Accessibility
Accessibility – Apple
Android Accessibility Overview
Products and Features - Google Accessibility (Chrome)

Listening to resources on your device

Text-to-speech (TTS) tools allow you to play back text on your device as spoken words. You may choose to listen to material on your devices for several reasons, including:

- Having difficulty reading the screen, or looking at the screen for extended periods
- Multitasking and productivity
- Increasing your comprehension of heavy text

Desktop/Web

It is possible to listen to text on your computer from a Word document, a website, or a PDF file.

Office 365

Listen to your Word Documents (Built-in)
Use Immersive Reader in Office 365 (Built-in)
Use Immersive Reader in Microsoft Edge (Built-in)
Use Immersive Reader in Canvas (Built-in)

Windows

How to use Magnifier on Windows (Built-in)

Mac

Set up and use Spoken Word on Mac (Built-in)

Adobe Acrobat Reader DC

Read a PDF aloud with Adobe Acrobat Reader DC (Free download)

Natural Reader

Natural Reader Online (Subscription service with free option)
Natural Reader Desktop (Subscription service with free option)

Mobile

You can take a photo of the text you want read aloud on your phone or can ask Siri or Google Assistant to read your screen to you.

iPhone

Hear iPhone speak the screen (Built-in)

Android

Text-to-Speech Output on Android (Built-in)
Ask Google to read a webpage (Built-in)

Office 365 tools

Read aloud text from an image with Microsoft Lens (iPhone, Android, free)

Using a Screen Reader

A screen reader speaks aloud what is happening on your screen. You can use this tool to navigate your computer's interface without seeing it.

Desktop

Learn about NVDA (Windows, free)
VoiceOver User Guide for Mac (Mac, built-in)
Complete guide to Narrator (Windows, built-in)

Mobile

Turn on and practice VoiceOver on iPhone (iPhone, built-in)
Get started on Android with TalkBack (Android, built-in)

Web

ChromeVox: use the built-in screen reader on Chromebook (Chromebook, built-in)

Making your screen more readable

You may want to change the appearance of your screen for several reasons, including:

- Increasing the contrast and size of your display to see better
- Using colour filters to help with colour blindness
- Reading with different font types and spacing to help you comprehend text
- Minimising visual distractions

Desktop

Operating systems, such as Windows and Mac, provide built-in magnifying tools as well as settings that allow you to tailor your viewing experience to your specific needs.

Windows

Use Magnifier on Windows to make things easier to see (Built-in)

Make Windows easier to see (Built-in)

Use colour filters in Windows 10 (Built-in)

Mac

Make it easier to see what is on the screen of your Mac (Built-in)

Use HoverText on Mac (Built-in)

Mobile

Mobile phones include settings for magnifying and customising the appearance of your device's interface.

Android

Magnification – Android accessibility help (Built-in)

Appearance settings on Android (Built-in)

1. Font size & display

2. High contrast

3. Dark theme/colour inversion

4. Colour correction

iPhone

Zoom in on the iPhone screen (Built-in)

Adjust the display and text size on iPhone (Built-in)

iPad

Zoom in on the iPad screen (Built-in)

Adjust the display and text size on iPad (Built-in)

Web

Modern web browsers can zoom in and can be customised through extensions and themes.

Chrome

Change text, image, and video sizes on Chrome (Built-in)

Customize and Personalize Chrome on your desktop computer with Extensions, Themes and Apps (Extensions and themes)

Accessibility – A Powerful Web Assistant (Extension, free)

Firefox

Font size and zoom – increase the size of web pages on Firefox (Built-in)

Display and appearance on Firefox (Built-in)

Edge

Accessibility features in Microsoft Edge (Built-in)

Safari

Zoom in on web pages in Safari on Mac (Built-in)

Reading Modes

Apps and browsers offer reader modes that simplify the user interface so you can focus on what you are reading. For those who like to use Microsoft's Immersive Reader – Edge Browser has this built-in as its reader mode.

Firefox

Firefox Reader View for clutter-free web pages (Built in)

Safari

Safari Reader for viewing a webpage article formatted for easy reading (Built-in)

Chrome

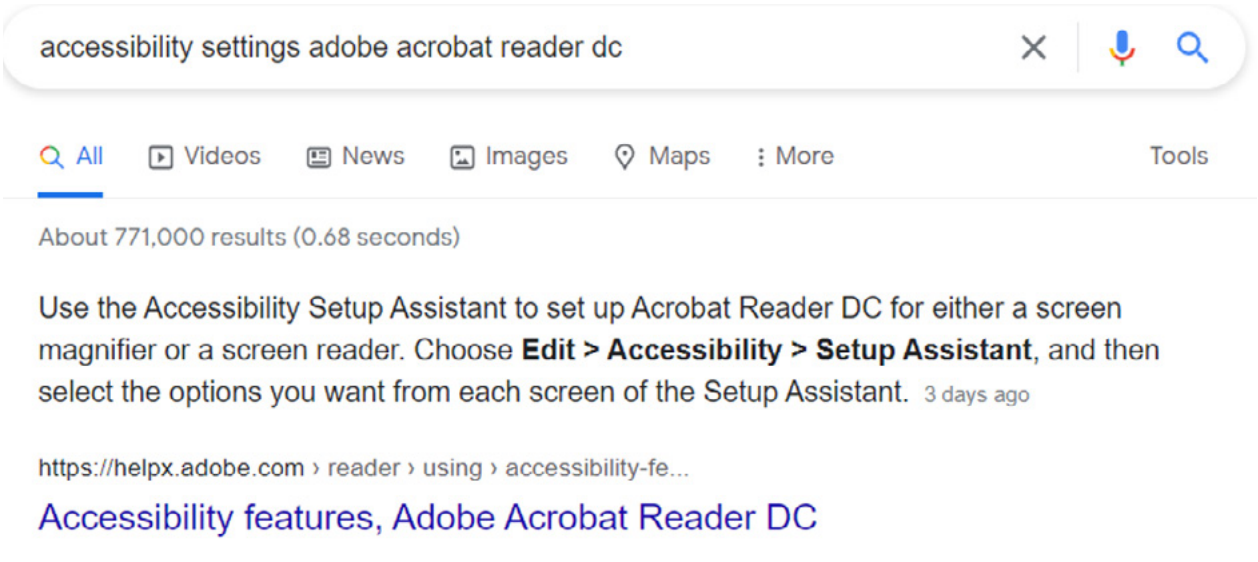
Reader Mode Extension for Chrome (Extension)

Edge

Use Immersive Reader in Microsoft Edge (Built-in)

Accessibility Features

Despite changing the display in your operating system's settings, you may discover that a specific application or website you are using is not displaying in a way that is suitable for you. You may be able to modify settings on the website or app to accommodate this. An online search using the keywords "accessibility settings" is the easiest approach to find out if the programme can change the display for accessibility. The screenshot below shows a search for accessibility settings in Adobe Acrobat Reader DC.



Reading captions from pre-recorded videos or audio

Subtitles let you read the words spoken on a video. Some reasons for using subtitles are:

- Help with understanding speech when you are unable to hear it
- Comprehension of speech, for those who process text better than speech
- Ensuring that you do not miss anything when you are in a noisy setting

Video resources on Canvas and Panopto

The video resources on AUT (Auckland University of Technology) services including Canvas and Panopto should already have an automatically generated transcription, so you should not have to generate subtitles for these. If they do not, contact the Disability Support team: disability.office@aut.ac.nz

Accessing content in videos without subtitles

You may come across videos without subtitles that you want to watch. There are several tools available on desktop, web, and mobile to help you access the content of these videos.

Chrome

Use Live Caption in Chrome (Web, Windows, built-in)

Android

Use Live Caption on Android (Mobile, built-in)

Office 365

Use live captions in a Teams meeting (Built-in)

Transcribing or dictating speech to text

Speech-to-text (STT) is the process of converting spoken words into text. It can be performed in real-time or using prerecorded audio files. You can dictate your own voice or create a transcription of what another person has said.

There are several reasons you may want to use STT, including:
- You find it easier to speak your sentences than to write them
- Using the computer's interface to type text is challenging for you
- In case you miss something in a meeting or class, you would like to convert audio recordings or live lectures to text

Desktop/Web

Office 365

Dictate in Office 365: Word, Outlook, Powerpoint, OneNote (Built-in)

Transcribe in Word for Web (Built in)

Mac

Dictation on Mac (Built-in)

Web

Otter.ai (Subscription service with free membership option)

Mobile

Android

Live Transcribe Android (Built-in)

Type with your Voice on Android (Built-in)

iPhone/iPad

Use dictation on iPhone and iPad (Built-in)

Transcribing handwritten notes

The optical character recognition (OCR) process converts images and scans of typed, handwritten or printed text into text that can be edited by you on your device. Several applications include this functionality.

You may need to use OCR if you:

- Prefer writing notes by hand but would like them as editable text on your computer
- Would like to transcribe a lecturer's handwritten notes into editable text – for example, from a whiteboard

Microsoft 365

Copy text from pictures and file printouts using OCR (Optical Character Recognition) in OneNote (Built-in)

Microsoft Lens for Android (Free app)

Google

Get info about your photos & surroundings (Android, iPhone and iPad, free app)

What next?

Explore the links in this guide and put them to use when you have some downtime.
If you require additional advice or help, or a demonstration of one of the tools in this guide, please contact your Disability support Student Advisor (disability.office@aut.ac.nz).