Accessibility Features on Android

Android phones have a selection of accessibility features to make it easier to use your device. We’ve highlighted some of the main features in this guide.1

Accessibility Suite

The Android Accessibility Suite includes four tools: Accessibility Menu, Switch Access, Select to Speak, and Talkback. To find the suite, navigate to Settings > Accessibility.

Turning on the Accessibility Menu gives you a sizeable on-screen menu that you use to control your phone, including gestures, navigation, and hardware buttons.

You can use one or more switches or a keyboard to control your phone rather than using the touch screen with Switch Access.

Talkback screen reader and Select to Speak

The Talkback screen reader helps you as you navigate your smartphone. On a given screen, it will tell you what kind of screen it is, and what’s on it.

For example, if you’re on a settings page, Talkback will read out the section name (such as notifications). When you tap an icon or item, your selection gets a green outline, and the assistant identifies it. Double tapping the same icon opens it. Talkback reminds you to double tap when you tap on an item.

If there’s text on the screen, Talkback will read it to you; for messages, it will also tell you the day and time they were sent. It will even tell you when your phone’s screen turns off. When you reactivate the screen, it will read out the time. The first time you turn on Talkback, a tutorial appears that walks you through the features.

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1 The information in this guide is reproduced by kind permission of LifeWire.
Talkback also has several gestures you can use to navigate your smartphone and adjust volume and other settings. Tap on the Wi-Fi icon to verify that you’re connected and the battery icon to find out how much juice you have left.

If you don’t need everything to be read out to you all the time, you can enable Select to Speak, which reads to you on request. Select to Speak has an icon; tap it first, and then tap or drag your finger to another item to get spoken feedback.

Font Size and High Contrast

Sample text
The Wonderful Wizard of Oz
Chapter 11: The Wonderful Emerald City of Oz

Even with eyes protected by the green spectacles Dorothy and her friends were at first dazzled by the brilliancy of the wonderful City. The streets were lined with beautiful houses all built of green marble and studded everywhere with sparkling emeralds. They walked over a pavement of the same green marbles, and where the blocks were joined together were rows of emeralds, set closely, and glittering in the brightness of the sun. The window panes were of green glass, even the sky above the City had a green tint, and the rays of the sun were green.

There were many people, men, women and children, walking about, and these were all dressed in green clothes and had greenish skins. They looked at Dorothy and her strongly assorted company with wondering eyes, and the children all ran away and hid behind their mothers when they saw the Lion, but no one spoke to them. Many shops stood in the street, and Dorothy saw that everything in them was green. Green candy and green pop corn were offered for sale, as well as green apples, green hams and green clothes of all sorts, at one place a man was selling green lemonade, and when the children bought it Dorothy could see that they paid for it with green pennies.

There seemed to be no horses nor animals of any kind, the men

Preview

Largest

Make the text on screen smaller or larger.

A

Default

Make the text on screen smaller or larger.

A
This setting lets you change the font size on your device from the default. You can make the text smaller than the default, or various levels larger. As you make adjustments, you can see how the text will look.

In addition to size, you can also increase the contrast between the text and the background. This setting can’t be adjusted; it’s either on or off.

**Magnification**

Separately from adjusting the font size, you can use a gesture to zoom in on certain parts of your screen. Once you enable the feature in settings, you can zoom in by tapping the screen three times with your finger (triple-tap) or via an Accessibility button. Tap the button, then tap anywhere on the screen. Drag two or more fingers to scroll, and pinch two or more fingers to adjust zoom.

You can also zoom temporarily by tapping the screen three times and holding your finger down on the third tap. Once you lift your finger, your screen will zoom back out. Note that you can’t zoom in on the stock keyboard or navigation bar.

**BrailleBack**

You can connect a refreshable braille display to your device via Bluetooth. BrailleBack works with TalkBack for a combined speech and braille experience, allowing you to edit text and interact with your device.

**Interaction Controls**

**Voice Access**: Voice Access lets you control your device with spoken commands. Use your voice to open apps, navigate and edit text, hands-free.

**Switch Access**: Switch Access lets you interact with your Android device using one or more switches instead of the touch screen. You can use a switch or keyboard to control your device.