Accessibility Features on Apple Mac

Apple has a variety of features that make it easier to use devices. In this guide are some accessibility features on Mac to make your computer work for your needs.[1]

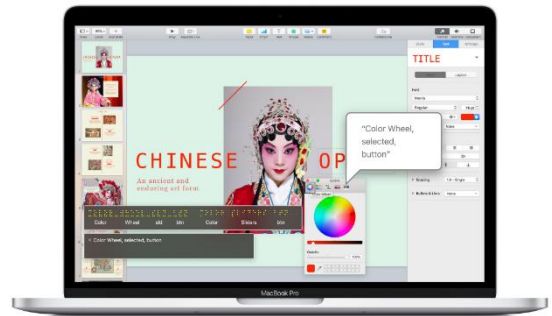[1] The guidance in this user guide is taken from Apple's accessibility web site.

Vision

VoiceOver

VoiceOver can assist you with navigating PDFs, websites, emails and even gives you detailed audio descriptions for movies. It gives you auditory descriptions of each onscreen element and provides helpful hints along the way — whether you prefer using gestures, a keyboard or a braille display. And it supports more than 35 languages, including multiple voice options.

To enable VoiceOver:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select **System Preferences > Accessibility > VoiceOver**

- Click the checkbox next to Enable VoiceOver. If you have never enabled VoiceOver before, a narrator will welcome you to VoiceOver and tell you to press the V key on your keyboard if you've used VoiceOver before or press the Spacebar if you haven't.

- VoiceOver Utility now includes an option in the Braille category to use word wrap for refreshable braille displays. The option is on by default.

You'll find a full user guide for VoiceOver online: https://help.apple.com/voiceover/mac/10.14/

Dark Mode

Dark Mode transforms the desktop and built-in apps with a new dark colour scheme that helps you focus on your work.

- Light text against darker backdrops in Mail, Safari Reader, Calendar and more makes everything easier to read in low lighting conditions.

- Accessibility preferences for increased contrast and reduced transparency still work with Dark Mode enabled.

To enable Dark Mode:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select **System Preferences > General > Appearance > Dark**

Dictation

Dictation lets you talk where you would type — and it works in over 40 languages. So you can reply to an email, search the web or write a report using just your voice.

To activate Dictation:

- Navigate to any text field, like a document or browser address bar

- Double-press the Fn key and a microphone appears on your screen

- Speak the text you want to type. You can speak various punctuation and symbols, including brackets, percent signs, and more. You can also say phrases like "caps on" to turn on capital letters.

Zoom

Zoom is a powerful built-in magnifier that lets you enlarge your screen up to 20 times, so you can better see what's on the display.
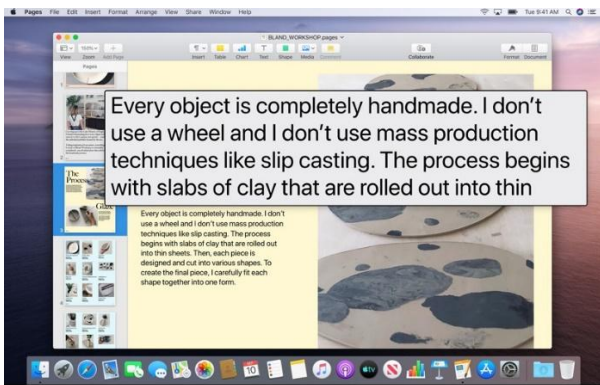
To enable screen zoom:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select **System Preferences > Accessibility > Zoom**

New to Screen Zoom in modern versions of OS X are optional keyboard shortcuts to zoom in and out:

- Command + Option+ = to zoom in
- Command + Option+ - to zoom out

Just like other versions of Mac OS X, you can still toggle anti-aliasing on and off within the Zoom feature by hitting Command + Option + /.

Remember, screen zoom is enabled by default in earlier versions of Mac OS X, just hold down the Control button and zoom with the mouse wheel or trackpad, just like it works in modern versions of Mac OS once it has been enabled.

Cursor size

macOS lets you magnify your cursor so it's easier to see where you are and follow along as you move around your Mac. Set the cursor size once and it stays magnified even when its shape changes. And when you swipe back and forth on your trackpad or quickly shake your mouse, the pointer grows in size.

To change cursor size:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and select **System Preferences > Accessibility > Display > Cursor size**

Contrast and Colour options

If a higher contrast or a lack of colour helps you better see what's on your display, macOS lets you invert colours or enable greyscale onscreen. Once you set your preferences, they apply systemwide, so you get the same view in every app. For more information visit please visit Mac Vision
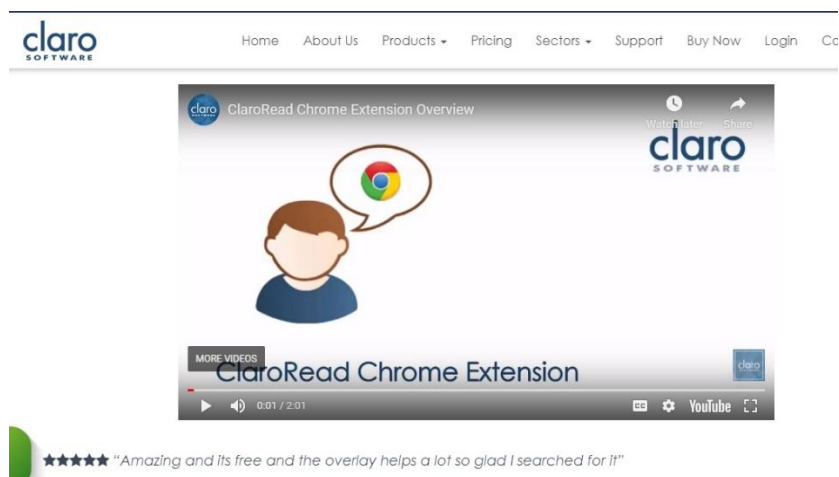
To change contrast:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select
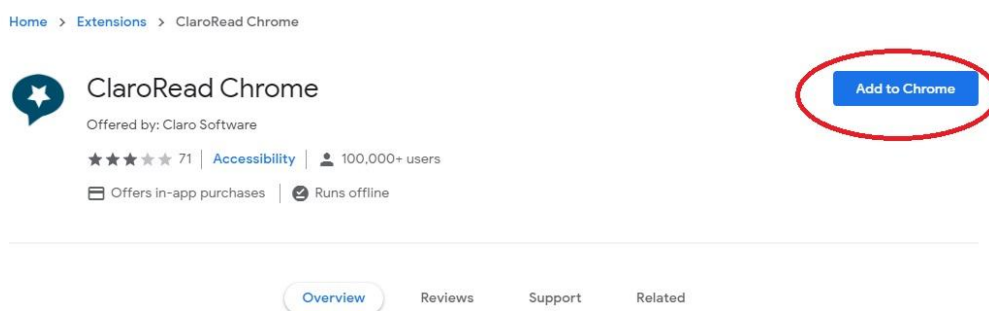 **System Preferences > Accessibility > Display > Increase contrast**

Claro Chrome Extension

There is a screen tint overlay function available for Mac users, please go to Claro software for download.

- The short video gives a good overview of this app and demonstrates the colour overlay function.

- The website lists all the features of the Chrome extension under the video (please note some of these features require a Premium which you can access with your Aberdeen university username and password – please see **Claro Extension** guide for details).

- Scroll down the page to the **Try It** link which redirects you to the Chrome web store. You may need to sign into your Google account to access.

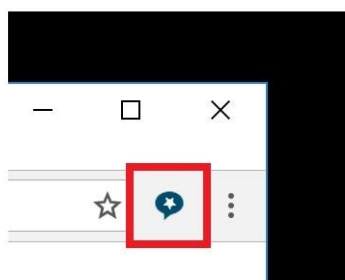- Click on **Add to Chrome** and follow the instructions.

- When installed Claro will provide instructions for how to use the app. It will also show you the icon that will be displayed on your toolbar. The app toolbar will appear on the top right of your screen.
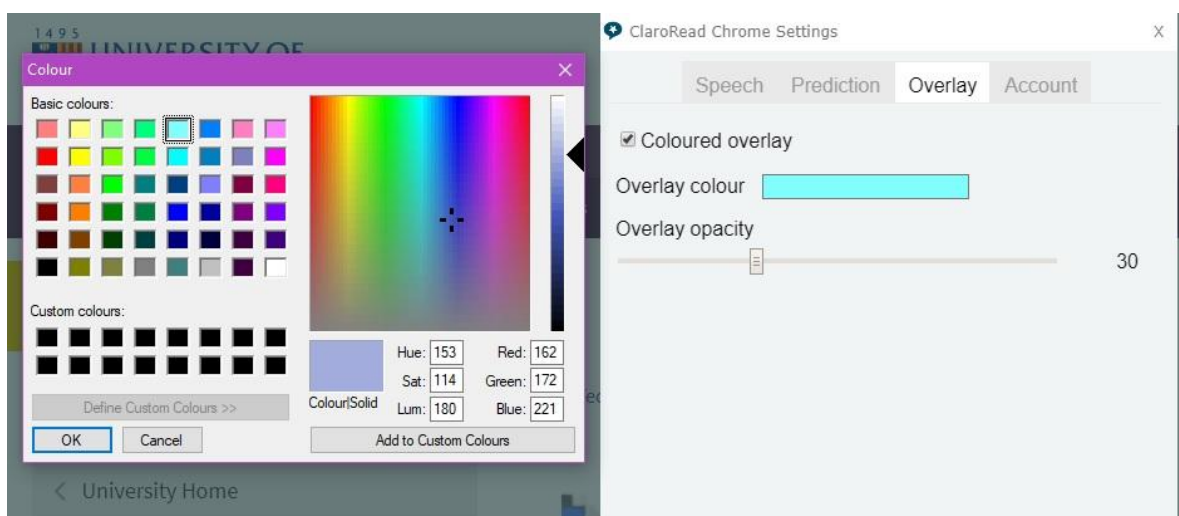

ClaroRead Chrome Extension

You now have the ClaroRead Chrome Extension in your browser. You can use it to **read back web pages, PDF files, and Google Docs files.** If you have the Premium version you can also capture text from the screen!

Here is ClaroRead Chrome's icon in Chrome:

- In the *settings* menu – the wheel icon on the toolbar there is an *overlay* tab which provides the colour options and opacity available for tinting your screen.

For full instructions for accessing the premium features please see our guide *Claro Extension* or contact atech@abdn.ac.uk for more information. This extension can be used with any operating system that has the Chrome browser installed.

Hearing

Mono Audio

This feature allows you to convert stereo sound into a single channel so you can hear everything, even if you're using just one headphone or deaf in one ear.

To enable mono audio:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and select
  System Preferences > Accessibility > Audio > Play audio as mono

FaceTime

FaceTime is a great way for people who use sign language to communicate easily. It has high-quality video and a fast frame rate, so you can catch every sign, gesture and facial expression. And because Mac, iPhone, iPad and iPod touch all come equipped with FaceTime, you can talk to iOS and macOS users across the street or across the globe.

Screen Flash

Instead of playing an alert sound, your Mac can flash its screen when an app needs your attention. Screen Flash automatically works with every app that uses the system beep. So there's nothing more for you to do once you set it up.

To enable screen flash:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select
  System Preferences > Accessibility > Audio > Flash the screen when an alert occurs

Closed captions

Watch films, TV programmes, videos and podcasts using closed captioning, a feature supported in macOS apps like iTunes and QuickTime. Just look for the small CC icon to buy or rent captioned films from the iTunes Store or find captioned podcasts in iTunes U. You can even customise captions with different styles and fonts, including styles that are larger and outlined.
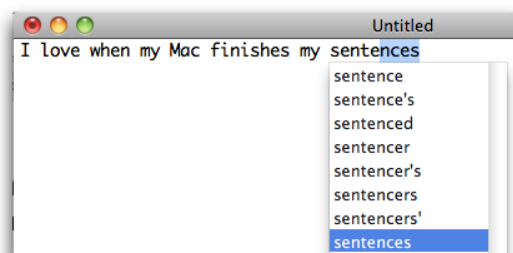
Neurodiversity

"Mac helps you find your focus so you can think big. Because it's built with neurodiversity in mind. Text to Speech adds auditory reinforcement to books, websites or homework assignments. Word Completion helps boost vocabulary and word-building skills."

Word Completion

To help with vocabulary and word-building skills, macOS provides word completion in apps like TextEdit and Pages. After typing just a few letters, press the F5 key and macOS suggests words. Select the word you want, and macOS completes it for you.

- To use the word completion feature, start typing a word and press the Escape key on your keyboard. This will open up a list of suggestions for the currently selected word in your document.

- You can then choose an option from the list and Mac OS X will complete the word for you. This feature works in TextEdit and any of the iWork programs (Keynote, Numbers and Pages).

Simplify Finder

Mac can be set up to be easier to use for people with cognitive and learning disabilities. Simple Finder reduces the Dock to just three folders.
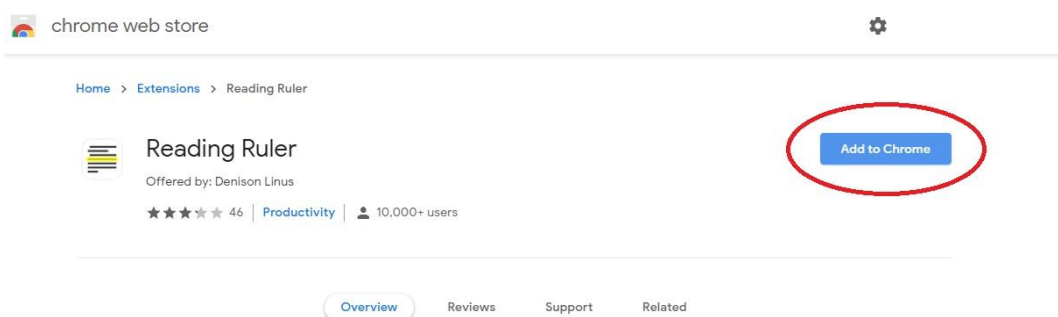
To simplify finder:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select
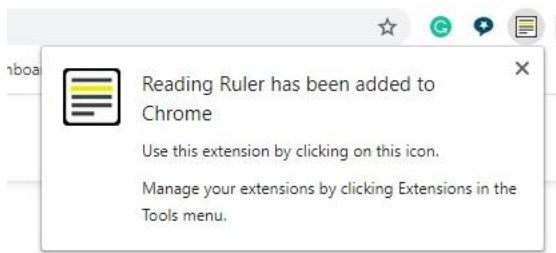 **System Preferences > Parental Controls > Select User > Other > Use Simple Finder**

Reading Ruler –Chrome Extension

Another option to help with focusing on reading work would be the **Chrome** extension for a **Reading Ruler**.

- Please go to Chrome webstore to install.

- Select **Add to Chrome.**

- Once installed the reading ruler will appear at the end of your browser toolbar.

- This extension produces a yellow highlight over text within a webpage and can help to keep focus when reading.
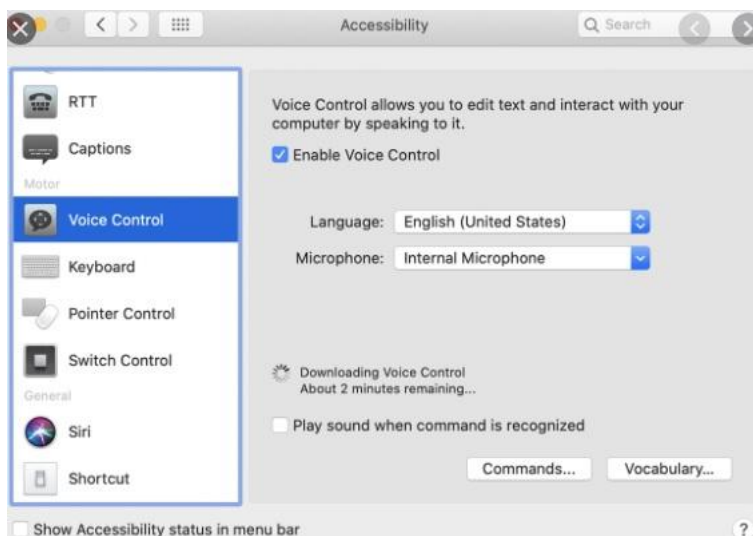

This extension can be used with *any operating system* that has the Chrome browser installed.

Dictation

If you need access to a dictation function, there are a few options.

- Macbooks have a *Voice Control* Setting in the Accessibility menu:

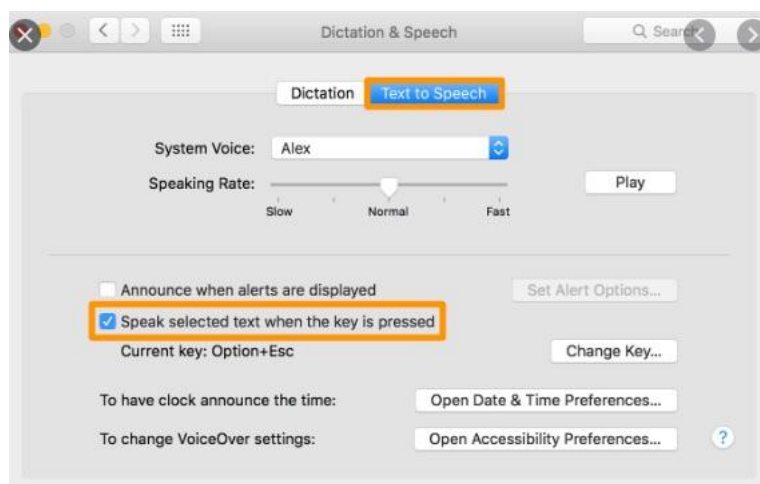- For more information please visit Apple support

- Or if you have the **Claro Chrome extension** installed in your browser you can sign into your own Claro Cloud account to access the other applications available. Please see our guide **Claro Extension** or contact atech@abdn.ac.uk for more information.

- This option will take you to **ClaroRead Anywhere** which has a **Dictation** feature

Text to speech

If you learn better when you can hear what you're reading or writing, Text to Speech can help by adding an auditory component to books, websites or homework assignments. Highlight any text and hear it read aloud in more than 70 voices across 42 languages. You can even adjust the speaking rate.
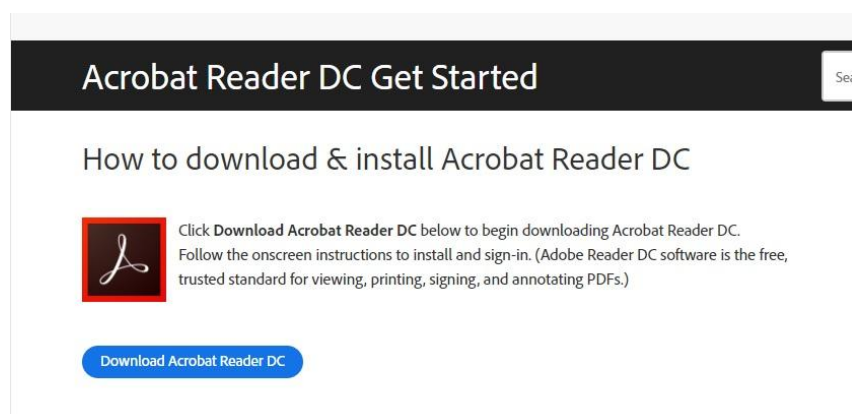
To enable text to speech:

- Click the **Apple menu button** and then select **System Preferences > Accessibility > Speech**
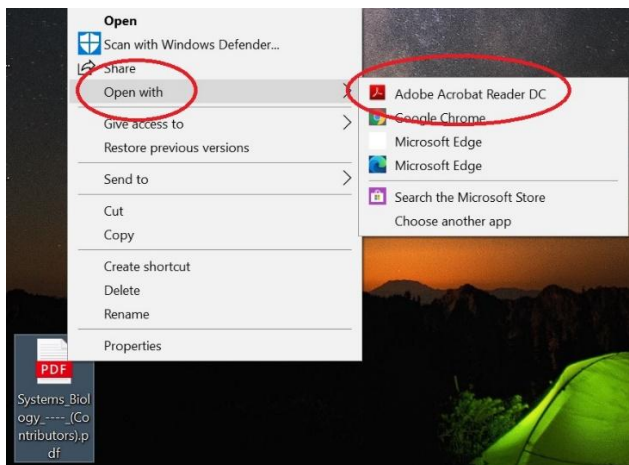

- The user guide with more information can be found here at Mac User Guide online
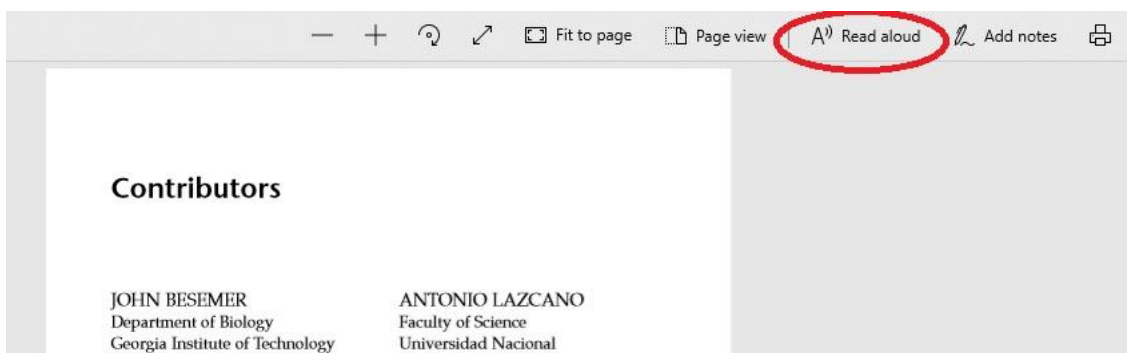
Adobe Reader

- Another option for text to speech is Adobe **Acrobat Reader DC.** It is a free piece of software that has a **Read Aloud** function. It is compatible with **all operating systems**. To download go to Adobe

- When downloading pdf documents such as a journal article you should have the option on your computer to open with Acrobat Reader. If you have saved the document to your desktop right click on it, select open with and select Acrobat Reader DC.

- When the document has opened you will see the **Read Aloud** option on the top toolbar. To activate select the text you would like to read and click on the Read Aloud button.

Apple accessibility support

If you use an accessibility feature or assistive technology, you can get direct access to Apple representatives who are trained in providing support using accessibility services.

Apple Support is available over the phone or chat. You can request a call right away or schedule a time for us to call you when you're ready. Just answer a few questions and we'll select the best options for you. Contact Apple Support to schedule a time to talk.

Call for accessibility support

To contact Apple Accessibility Support over the phone in English, use this number: 0800 107 6285

Accessibility support at the University of Aberdeen

For more information or support using any of the software mentioned in this guide, please contact atech@abdn.ac.uk