

Accessibility Features on Microsoft Windows

Accessibility Features

With a robust set of built-in and third-party accessibility features, Windows 10 lets you choose how to interact with your screen, express ideas, and get work done. In this guide are some easy-to-use features that make the PC more accessible to everyone.¹

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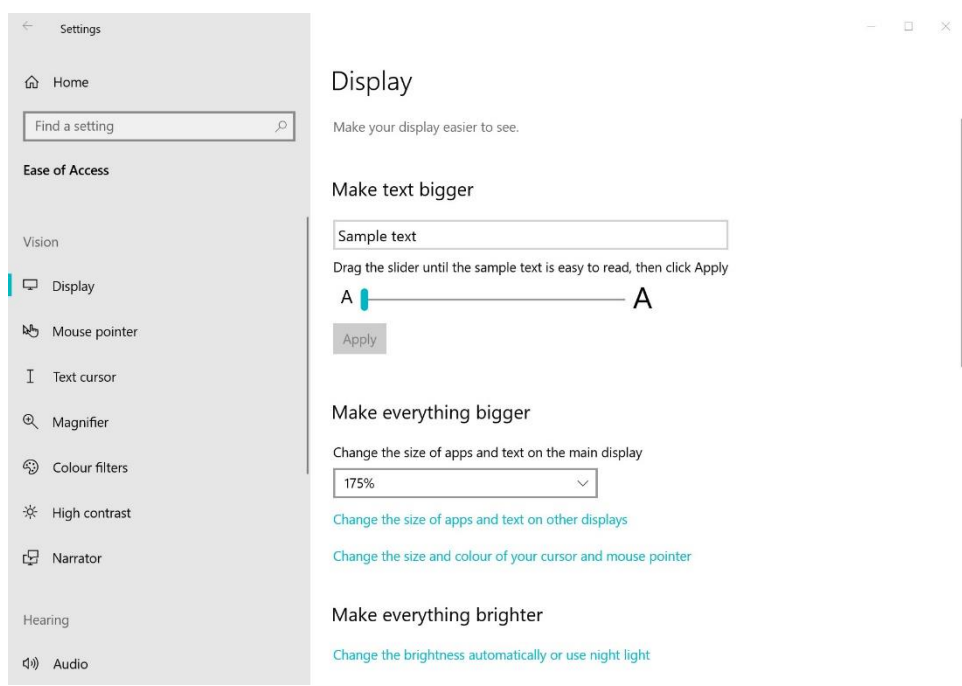
¹ The guidance in this user guide is taken from Microsoft's [Windows accessibility web site](#).

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Vision

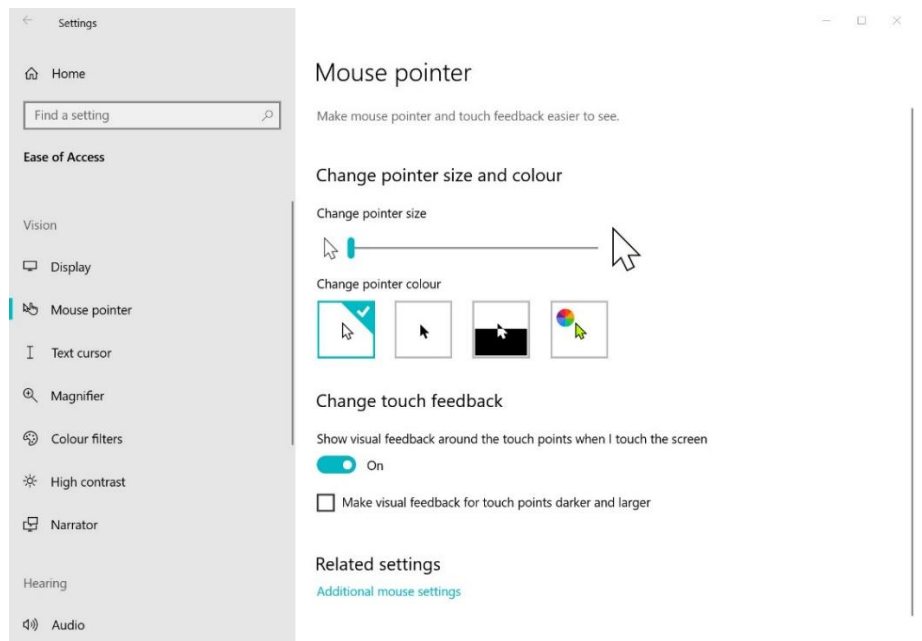
Adjust size

- To adjust the size of text, apps, and other items, select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Display** and choose the appearance that you prefer

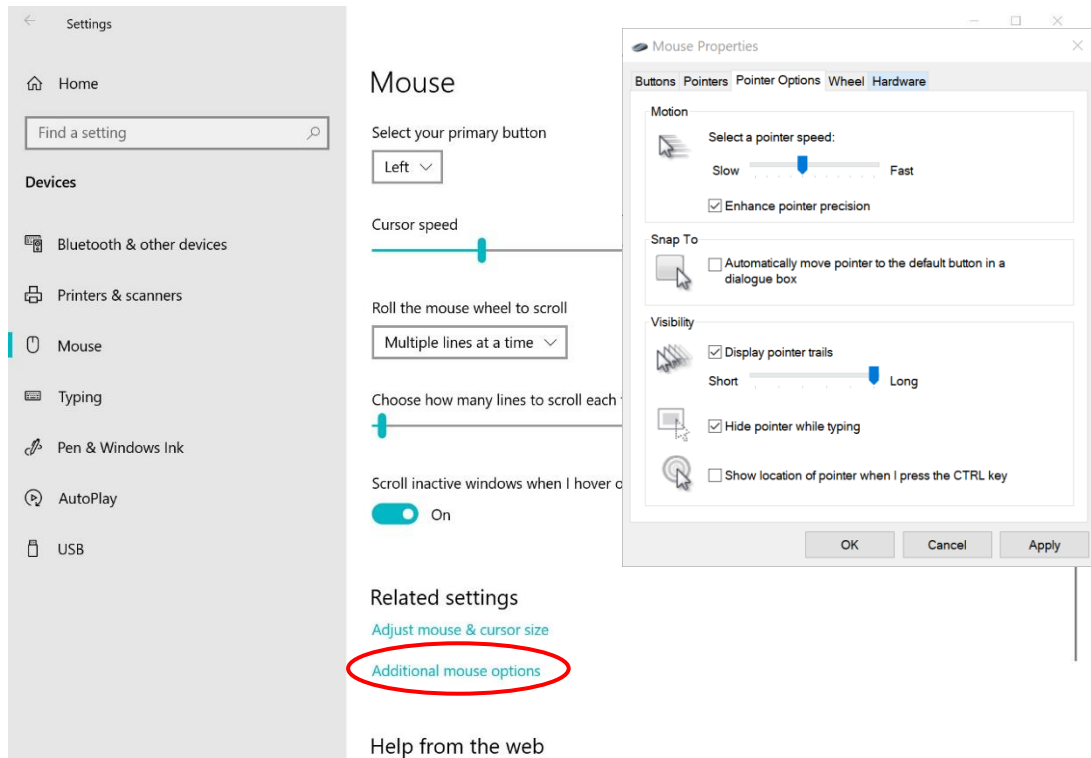


Customise mouse and cursor size

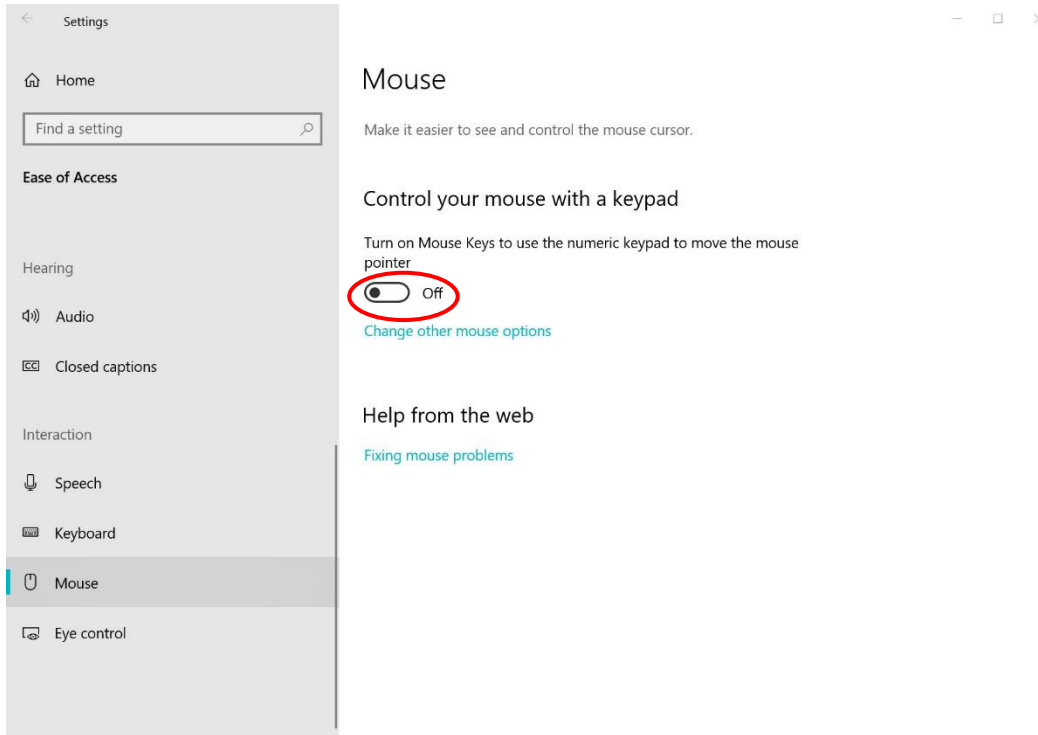
- Make your mouse more visible by changing the colour and size of the mouse pointer. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Mouse Pointer**, and choose your preference.



- By adding pointer trails you can see where the mouse is moving on the screen. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Mouse Pointer > Additional mouse settings > Additional Mouse Options**. In the Mouse Properties window, select the **Pointer Options** tab, and then **Display pointer trails**.



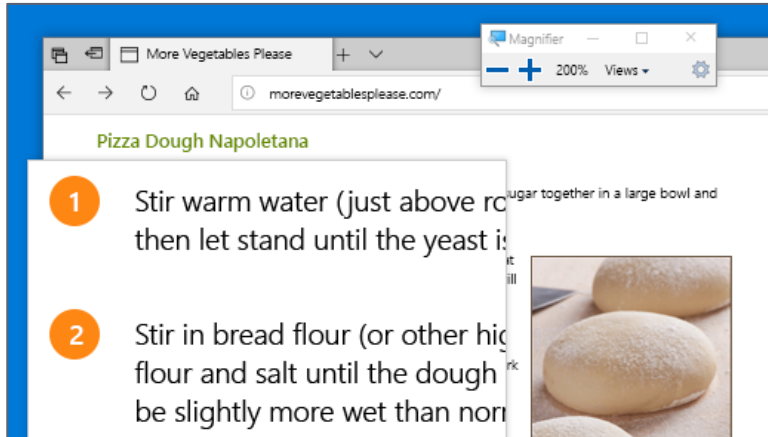
- Windows can also set the numeric keypad to move the mouse around the screen. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Interaction > Mouse** and then select the toggle under Mouse Buttons to switch on.



Magnify your screen

Magnifier enlarges part or all of your screen so you can see words and images better. To access specific Magnifier options select **Settings > Ease of Access > Magnifier**

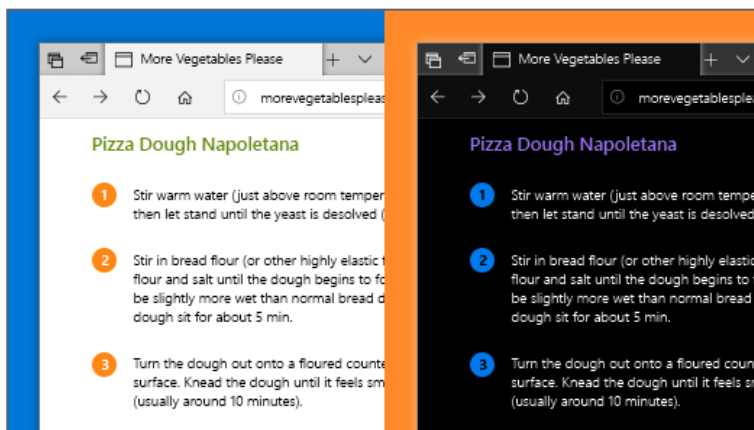
- To open Magnifier quickly, press the **Windows logo key + Plus sign (+)**.
- When Magnifier is open, use **Windows logo key + Plus sign(+)** or **Windows logo key + Minus sign(-)** to zoom in or out. To close Magnifier, press **Windows logo key + Esc**.



Apply colour filters

Make photos, text, and colours easier to see by applying a colour filter to your screen. Colour filters change the colour palette on the screen and can help you distinguish between things that differ only by colour.

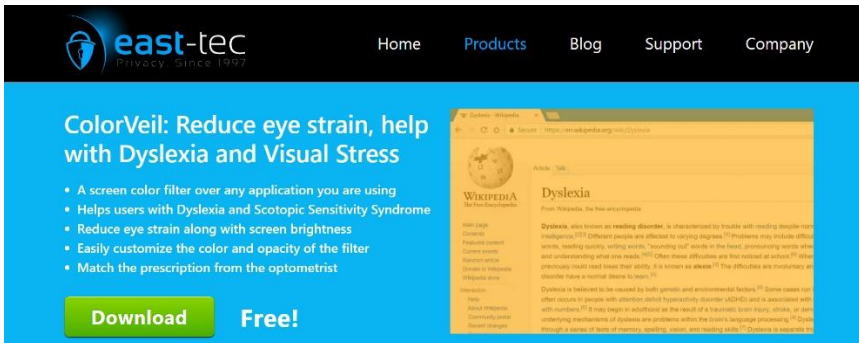
- To apply colour filters, select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Colour filters**, and choose the options that work best for you.



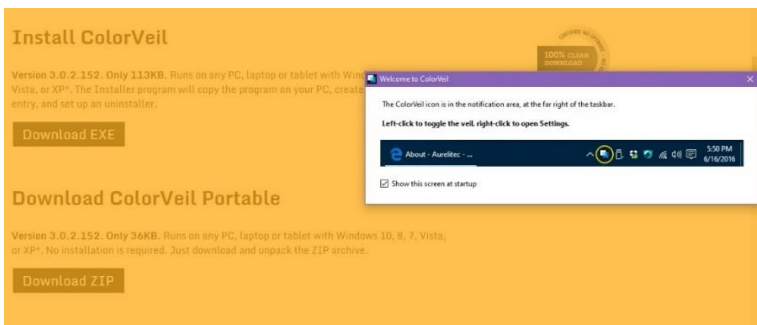
- To turn on and turn off your colour filters quickly, select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Colour filters**, and select **Allow the shortcut key to toggle filter on or off**. Then press the **Windows logo key + Ctrl + C**.

Windows Screen Tint

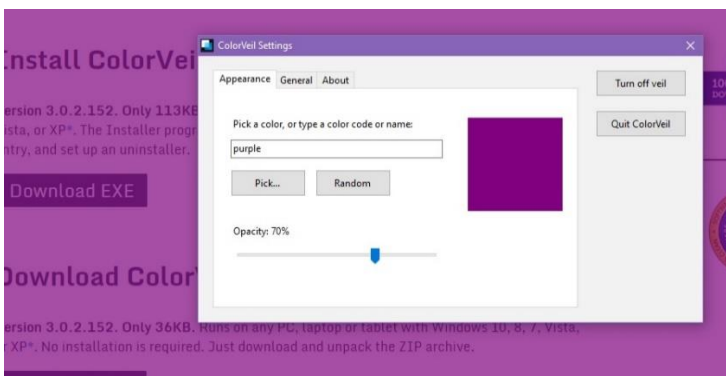
Microsoft have a free app called **ColorVeil** that will tint your screen to a colour and opacity that suits you for your **Windows PC**. To download go to [Colorveil download](#)



- Click on **Download** and follow the instructions, we recommend ColourVeil Portable as there is no installation required, just extract the zip files and double-click on ColorVeil.exe
- You will then be notified that the colorveil icon will be in the start bar of your pc. Click the left mouse button on the icon to turn your colorveil on/off.



The right mouse button will open the colorveil settings.



- To select a new colour, type a colour name into the box or use the **Pick** button and select from the colour chart. Set the **opacity** to your preference and close the box.

Use Narrator for navigation

Narrator is the built-in screen reader in Windows that reads aloud what's on your screen so you can use that information to navigate your PC.

- To start or stop Narrator, press the **Windows logo key + Ctrl + Enter**.

Hearing

Hear all sounds in one channel

Windows lets you convert stereo sound into a single channel so you can hear everything, even if you're using just one headphone.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Audio**, and then switch on the toggle under **Turn on mono audio**.

Display audio alerts visually

If you have trouble hearing audio alerts, you can have your PC display them visually.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Audio**.
- Under **Show audio alerts visually**, choose how you want audio alerts displayed. You can choose to have the title bar of the active window, the active window, or the entire screen flash when a notification arrives, instead of relying on sound alone.

Make notifications stick around longer

By default, Windows notifications disappear five seconds after they appear. If you want more time to read them, you can increase how long they're displayed.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Display**. Then, under **Show notifications for**, choose the amount of time you want.

Closed captions

Windows lets you customize things like the colour, size, and background of closed captions.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Closed captions**, and then choose how you want captions to be displayed.

Neurodiversity

Windows offers lots of ways to minimize distractions so it's easier to focus on tasks, and other helpful tools to support neurodiversity.

Don't be so animated

Minimize visual distractions by turning off animations, background images, and more.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Ease of Access > Display**. Then choose from the different options under **Simplify and personalize Windows**.

Clean up taskbar clutter

Choose which icons appear on the taskbar and reduce the number of items in view.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Personalization > Taskbar**, and then, under **Notification area**, choose **Select which icons appear on the taskbar**.

System icons, like the clock and battery indicator, can also be turned on or off.

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Personalization**, and then, under **Notification area**, choose **Turn system icons on or off**.

Simplify the Start menu

Many apps use Live Tiles to show updates on what's happening in your world, like new email, your next appointment, or the weekend weather. If these animations are distracting, turn them off.

- Press and hold (or right-click) a tile, and then select **More > Turn Live Tile off**.

Quiet down those notifications

Focus assist lets you to set rules that help you avoid distractions.

- To use Focus assist, select the **Start** button and type **Focus assist settings** in the search box, then choose if you want to get all notifications, priority ones only, or just alarms.

If notifications are distracting when they appear on your screen, adjust which apps display notifications and fine-tune how they appear.

- To change notification settings, select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > System > Notifications & actions**.

Read with fewer distractions

For a clean and simple layout, use **Reading view** in the Microsoft Edge browser address bar to bring whatever you're reading front and centre. After you open an article, the book icon will appear on the right hand side of your browser. When you select it, you'll be in reading view.

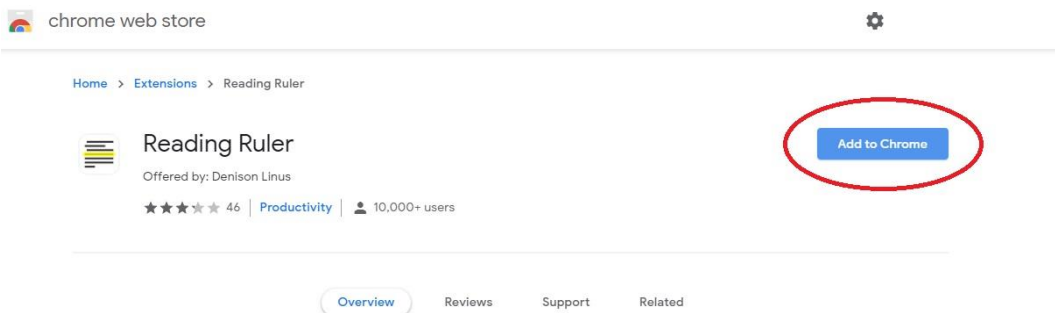
Read with friendlier fonts

Fluent Sitka Small and Fluent Calibri are fonts that reduce visual crowding and make reading easier for people with dyslexia. To download these for your PC, visit [Microsoft Downloads](#)

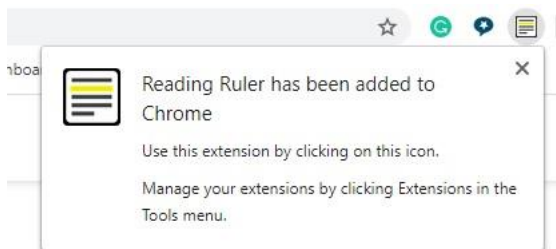
Reading Ruler –Chrome Extension

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, Chrome extensions can now be added to the Microsoft Edge browser too.
- 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.




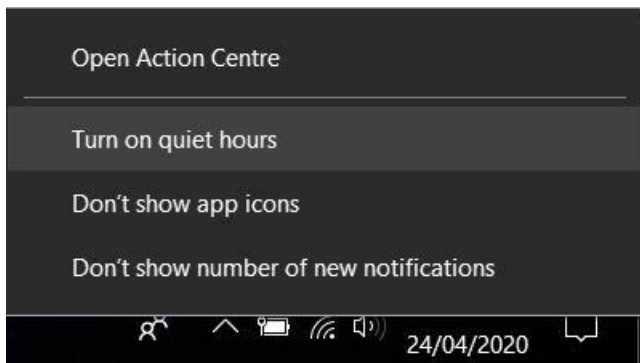
This extension can be used with **any operating system** that has the Chrome browser installed.

Save time while you type

To see text suggestions while you type, select **Start > Settings > Devices > Typing > Hardware keyboard > Show text suggestions as I type**.

Quiet hours

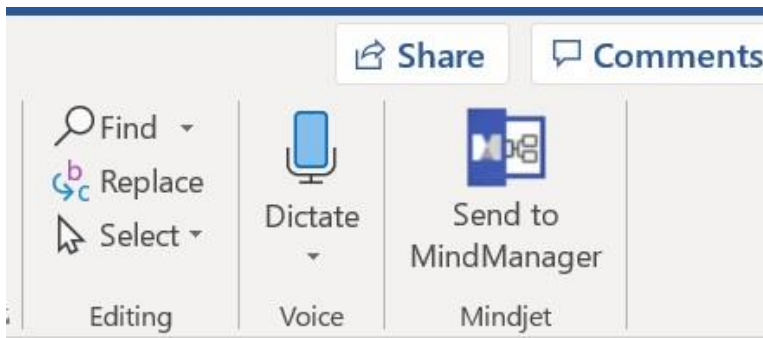
Quiet hours is a feature that disables all notifications so that they don't annoy or distract you while you try to work. Turn this feature on by right-clicking on the action centre icon 



Dictation

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

- The Home tab in Word has a Dictate function at the end of the toolbar.



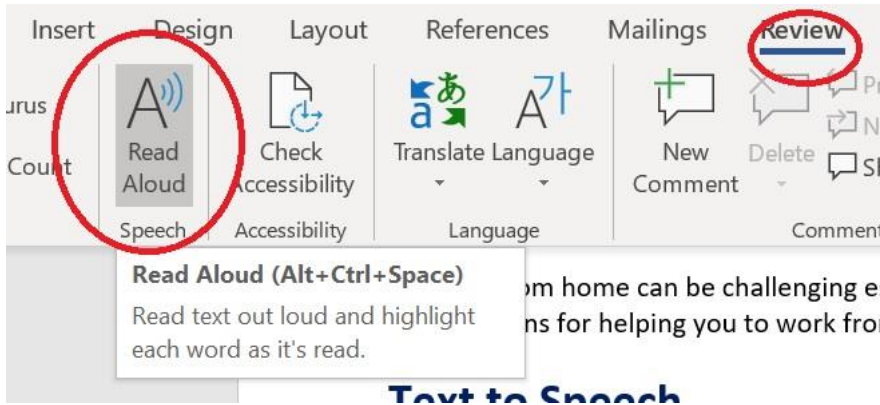
- For more information and some useful commands please go to [Microsoft's page on using voice typing to talk instead of type on your PC](#). This function is available for all users who have Microsoft Word installed on their device.
- Or if you have the **Claro Chrome/Edge extension** installed in your 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

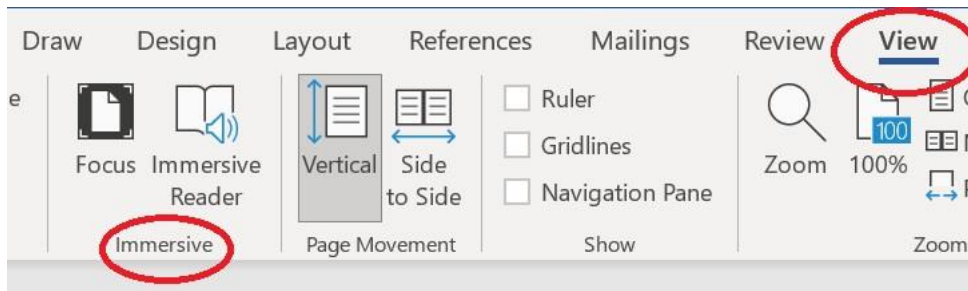
If you need access to text to speech software don't worry, there are options available. Here are some free applications:

Windows Read Aloud and Immersive Reader

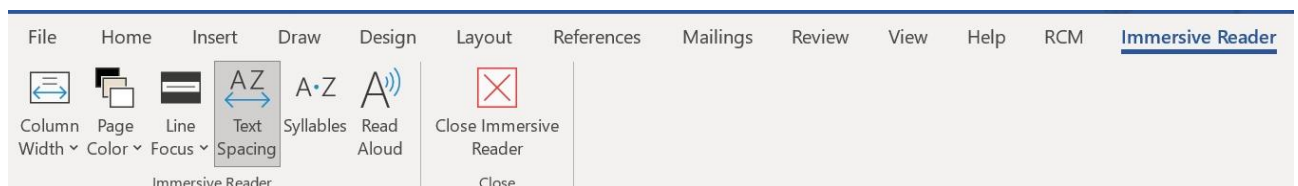
- If you have a **Windows PC** Microsoft Word has a text to speech function called **Read Aloud** found under the review tab.



- Word also has an **Immersive Reader** found under **Immersive** in the view tab. The immersive reader can help to improve your reading and editing skills.



- The Immersive Reader once selected produces its own function toolbar in Word.



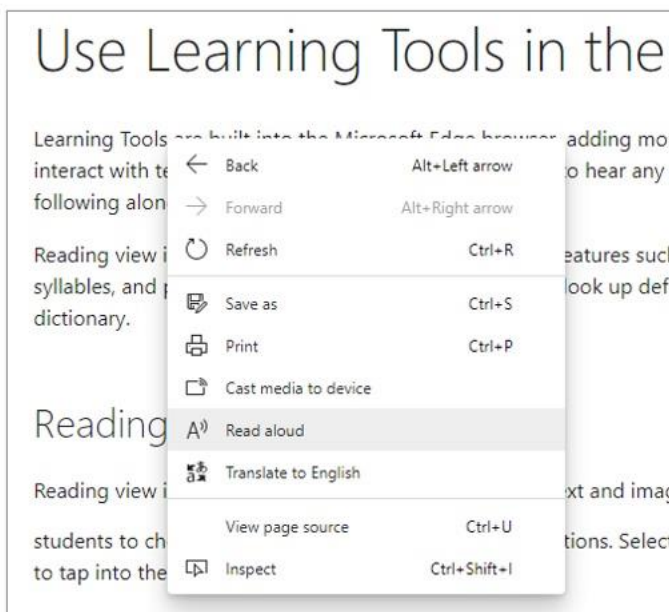
- These options can provide features such as the text spacing or changing the page colour.

Word has an Immersive Reader panel, which allows you to change the background colour and adjust the text spacing.

- The line focus can be set for a single line or more to cover a paragraph. This can be controlled using the mouse or the keyboard arrow keys.

Word has an Immersive Reader panel, which allows you to change the background colour and adjust the text spacing.

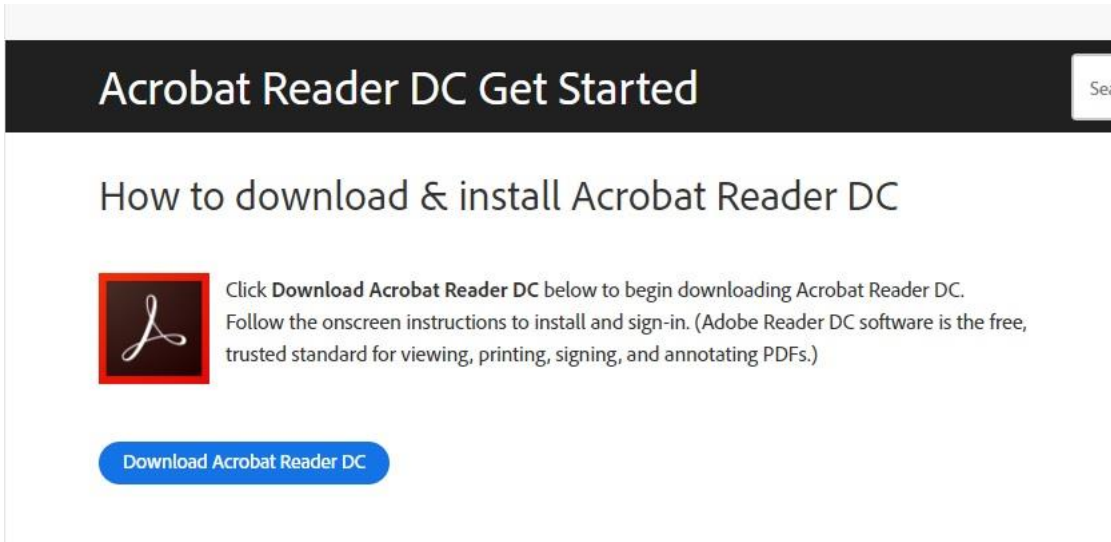
- There may be more functions available depending on your version of Word and if it is up to date.
- For using online, the new **Edge browser** has a **Read Aloud** function, the Edge browser should be present on all **Windows PC's** and devices or for download please go to [Microsoft Edge download](#)
- To hear the text being read aloud just right-click (or press and hold) anywhere on the page and select **Read aloud**. Read aloud will begin automatically reading at the word you selected.



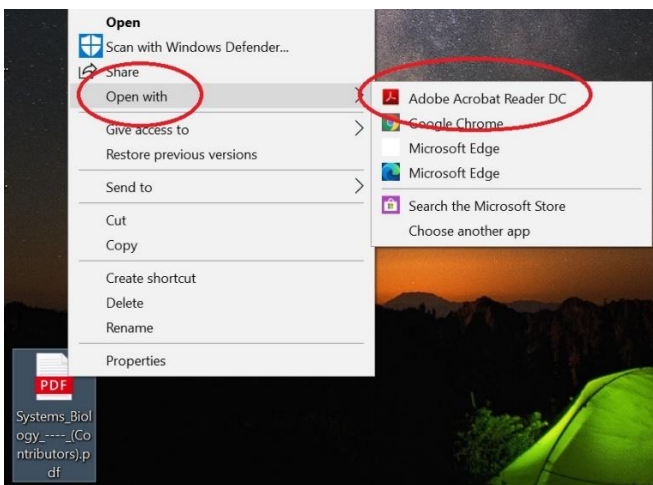
- More information can be found here at [Microsoft Learning Tools](#)

Adobe Reader

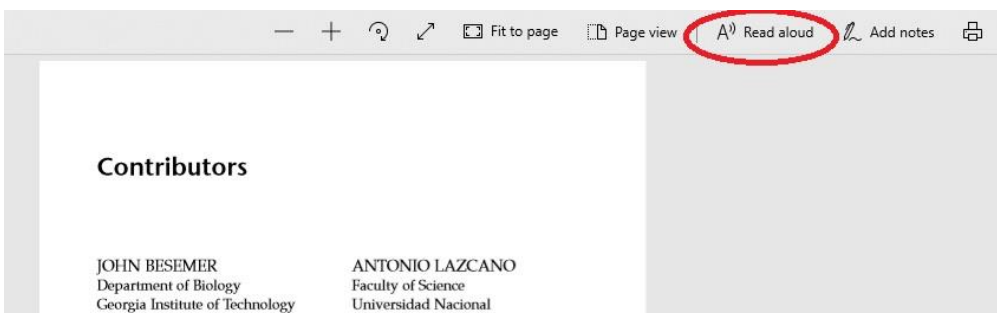
- Adobe **Acrobat Reader DC** is a free piece of software that has a **Read Aloud** function. It is compatible with **all operating systems**. To download go to [Adobe](#)



- 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.



Windows and Office accessibility support

Questions about a feature? Contact our Disability Answer Desk. We have people trained to help you troubleshoot and find the right settings for you. If you're hard of hearing, please use our ASL video line.

Chat with us

Chat with an expert 24/7. Receive answers to your questions about disability support day or night.

Call us

Available Monday to Friday from 6am to 10pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 7am to 6pm (PST).

Be My Eyes

A free app that connects blind and low vision people with volunteers for visual assistance through a live video call.

Microsoft's Disability Answer Desk

[Click here to access Microsoft's Disability Answer Desk.](#)

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