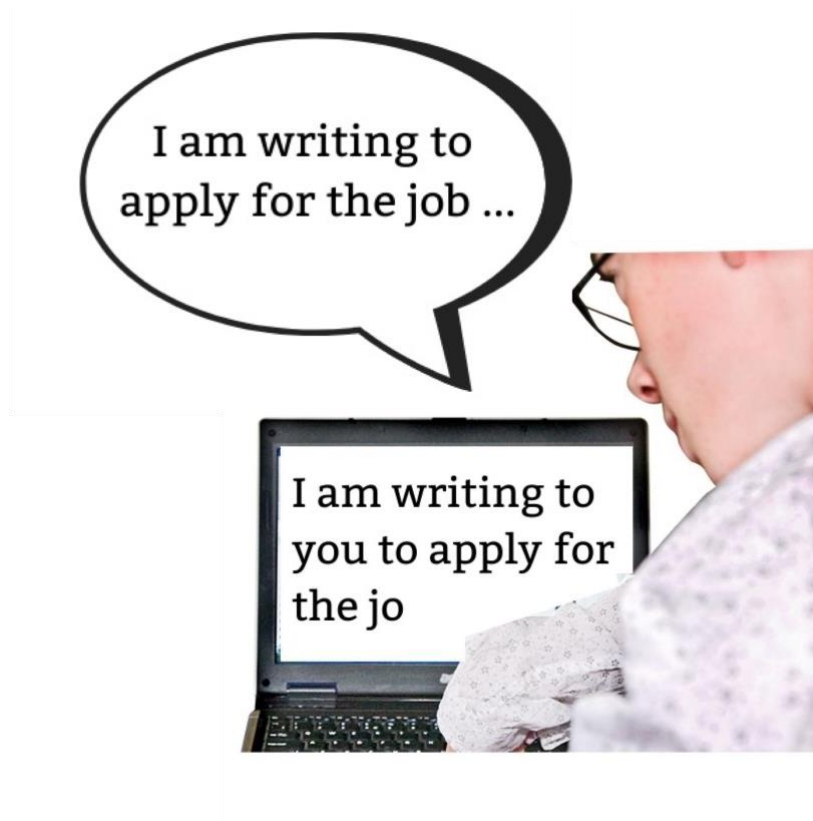




## What is voice recognition?



**This factsheet tells you how you can use your voice to control your smartphone and other devices.**

# How to use this factsheet



We are **AbilityNet**.

We help disabled people to use technology.



Like computers, tablets and smartphones.



This is an **Easy Read** factsheet.

You may still need help to read it.

You can ask someone you know for help.



For more information you can phone or email us.

Phone **0800 048 7642**



Email [enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk).

# What this factsheet is about



This factsheet tells you about a type of computer **software** called **voice recognition**.



**Software** is what makes your device do useful things.

It lets you use your voice to control devices like your



- smartphone
- tablet
- smart speaker
- smart home.



Voice recognition also lets you use your voice to type on a keyboard or screen.



This is helpful for people who might not be able to use a mouse or keyboard.

# 1. How you can control devices with your voice



Most new devices like smartphones and tablets have **voice recognition** software.



This means you can use your voice to make your smartphone or tablet do things.



Instead of typing on a keyboard you can speak into



- a microphone
- a headset
- the microphone on your device.

You can use voice recognition for lots of different things, like



- searching in Google
- writing a chat message
- writing an email or letter.



You can use voice recognition to do other things like



- turning your device on and off
- opening software and apps
- printing letters



- writing and sending emails
- play music

## 2. How voice recognition can help you



Voice recognition can help lots of different people.

For example,



- people with a physical disability



- people who find typing painful



- people with dyslexia because it can be hard for them to spell words



Voice recognition means people can type without using their hands.



This can make work faster and easier.

## Helping people at work



Repetitive strain injury (RSI) is when someone moves a part of their body again and again and it hurts.



For example, people can get RSI in their wrist from using a keyboard or a mouse.



The law says employers must make sure their staff are safe from getting RSI.



Staff must be able to use voice recognition if they need it.



For some people it is better to use voice recognition instead of a keyboard or mouse at work.

### 3. How to use voice recognition on a desktop computer



It is easy to use voice recognition at home and at work.

#### Using Speech Recognition on Windows



Microsoft Windows has a voice recognition software called **Speech Recognition**.



You can speak out loud to make the computer do things or type what you say.



You can find out more about [Windows Speech Recognition on this website.](#)



You might need help to read this.





## Using Dictate in Microsoft

Microsoft has a software called **Word** which you can use to type things like letters.

In Word you can use **Dictate**. When you turn on Dictate it will type what you say into the Word document.



You need to be connected to the Internet and have a microphone.

## Using Dictation on Apple computers



Apple computers also have voice recognition software so you can type using your voice.

Different Apple computers have different voice recognition software.



You can find out more about [Apple Mac Dictation on this website.](#)

You might need help to read it.

## Google Speech Recognition



Google has free voice recognition software which you can use on Android devices.



You can find out more about [Google Speech Recognition on this website.](#)

You might need help to read it.

## 4. Special voice recognition software

### Dragon Individual Professional



**Dragon Professional Individual** is popular voice recognition software for computers that use Microsoft Windows.



There is also voice recognition for smartphones and tablets called **Dragon Anywhere**.



You can do lots of things with Dragon software.

For example,

Write email to...



- write and change text
- write emails
- make presentations
- listen back to what you type

You can find out more about [Dragon software on this website.](#)



## 5. How to use voice recognition on a tablet or smartphone



Lots of people are now using their voices to control their smartphones and tablets.

### Android tablets and smartphones



You can type using your voice on **Android** tablets and smartphones.



You need to click on the tools menu and choose **Voice** typing.



You will need to open **Google Docs** in the Chrome web browser.



You will need to be connected to the internet.



Typing with your voice works better if you are somewhere quiet.



When the microphone box appears, you can start to speak.  
It will type what you say.



You can find out more about typing with your voice on the [Google Docs website](#).



You might need help to read this.



You can use voice dictation to control many Android apps.



**Google's Voice Access** app for Android lets you control your tablets or smartphone by using your voice.



For example, you can open apps and edit text without using your hands.



You can also use **Google Assistant**.



Just say "Hey Google, open Assistant settings". Then select **Voice**.

## Apple iPads and iPhones



You can also use your voice on most Apple iPads and iPhones.

## Intelligent personal assistants



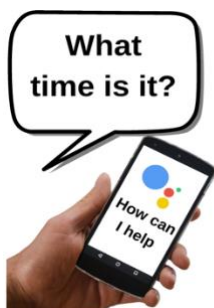
Most tablets and smartphones now have **intelligent personal assistants**.



Intelligent personal assistants are technology that can hear your voice and follow your instructions.

For example, they can

- send messages and emails
- make phone calls
- tell you something, like the time





- remind you to do things
- take notes
- play music

Some personal assistants are



- Siri for iPads and iPhones
- Cortana for Windows computers
- Alexa on the Amazon Echo
- and Google Assistant.



## 6. Tips on using voice recognition software



Speak clearly so it can recognise what you are saying.



Plan what you are going to say before you say it.



You should check what you have typed using your voice. Sometimes it might not understand and write something else.



You can use your voice or a keyboard to change any mistakes.



Take your time.  
It will work better.

# 7. Training



Training helps you understand all the different things voice recognition can do.



It works best you have time to practice what you learn.

You can get help from



- the [Apple website](#) on how to use voice control.



- the [Microsoft website](#) on using voice recognition.



- the [Nuance website](#) on using Dragon voice recognition.



There are also lots of free training online videos, like on [YouTube](#).



Our [Technical help and training resources](#) factsheet tells you training on computers for disabled people.

## 8. Where you can get more help

### Screen readers



A screen reader can read aloud what you have typed using your voice.



These screen readers are not expensive. They work well with Windows and Apple.



#### ClaroRead

You can get this from [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com).



#### NaturalReader

You can get this from [www.naturalreaders.com](http://www.naturalreaders.com).



#### Read&Write

You can get this from [www.texthelp.com](http://www.texthelp.com).



You can get NaturalReader for free.

## 9. How we can help you

### My Computer My Way



The **My Computer My Way** website tells you how you can make your computer, tablet or smartphone accessible.

Website [mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk](http://mcmw.abilitynet.org.uk).

### Advice and information



If you have any questions, you can contact us at **AbilityNet**.

We are here to help you.



**Phone** 0800 048 7642



**Email**

[enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@abilitynet.org.uk).

## Support with technology at home



AbilityNet volunteers can help you with your computer, tablet or smartphone.



If you need support at home, you can book an AbilityNet volunteer to visit you.



You do **not** have to pay AbilityNet for support at home.

For more information, visit [www.abilitynet.org.uk/at-home](http://www.abilitynet.org.uk/at-home).