



Freeware to Support Individuals with Vision Impairment/Blindness

Accessibility

Microsoft Built-In Accessibility (Windows)

Ease of Access Center

Windows 8, 7, Vista, and XP include built-in accessibility settings and programs that make it easier to see, hear, and use the computer. Accessibility features in Windows include: speech recognition and text-to-speech; magnifier; on-screen keyboard; keyboard shortcuts; sticky and filter keys; and visual notifications.

Windows 8: <https://www.microsoft.com/enable/guides/vision.aspx>

Windows 7: <https://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows7/default.aspx>

Windows VISTA: <http://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windowsvista/>

Windows XP: <http://support.microsoft.com/kb/308978>

Accessibility Options comparing versions of Windows by Lifetec

<http://www.lifetec.org.au/education/fact-sheets/accessibility-options-people-visual-impairments-using-mainstream-technology>

This is a great information sheet that is designed to provide an overview of some of the display accessibility options for Microsoft Windows 7, XP, Vista and 8. It also provides brief mention of the accessibility menus on Apple and Android devices.

American Foundation for the Blind

<http://www.afb.org/info/living-with-vision-loss/using-technology/tips-for-computer-users-with-low-vision/125>

some basic tips for how to configure a PC to make it more accessible for users with low vision, including information on how to change the display colors and increase the size of the on-screen text in Windows, Internet Explorer, and Mozilla Firefox.

Built in Accessibility (MAC)

http://www.rrcc.edu/disabilityservices/pdfs/mac_os_accessibility_built-ins_quick_start_guide.pdf

The MAC Operating System X has many helpful universal access built-in options for users of varying abilities. Here are is guide to change the most common for individuals with vision impairments.

Browser Add ons/Extensions (windows/Mac)

Internet Explorer

http://www.hpcb.eu/accessibility/changing_background/pc_ie_text_background.asp

This website will explain how to change text and background of webpages within internet explorer using mouse or keyboard shortcuts.

Firefox Mozilla

<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-us/firefox/collections/kozaki/accessibility/>

A list of add-ons that can be used with Firefox Mozilla internet browser specific for visually impaired.

Chrome

[Google Chrome Apps for Accessibility](https://andreashead.wikispaces.com/Google+Chrome++Apps+for+Accessibility)

<https://andreashead.wikispaces.com/Google+Chrome++Apps+for+Accessibility>

They have as many Apps as the Apple Market and their available for both Mac and Windows platforms. Actually most of the apps are listed under the label Extensions, although some are listed as Utilities. Try searching under terms such as Magnification, Zoom, text to speech, reader, accessibility.

10+ Special Browsers For Visually Impaired Users

<http://hellboundbloggers.com/2010/07/17/special-web-browsers-for-visual-impaired-users/>

Some browsers have been developed especially for people with such disabilities. Features include optical character recognition, screen magnifier, screen readers, voice recognition, speech synthesisers, etc.

Adapted Toolbar

Visbar

http://eduapps.org/?page_id=29

MyVisBar is a floating toolbar which delivers a range of open source and freeware applications to support learners with visual difficulties. The floating toolbar is a high contrast (yellow on black) toolbar offering 6 quality applications; Magnify (DesktopZoom, a desktop magnifier), Speech (Thunder screen reader), Write (Q10, a high contrast text editor), Read (T-Bar for colour masking), Resize (change your desktop resolution) and Focus (Sonar ring to track the mouse cursor).

Large Pointers

Phillip's Large Colored Cursors (Windows)

<http://www.philip-henderson.co.uk/cursor.shtml>

Phillip's Large Coloured Cursors and Philip's Lefty Large Coloured Cursors are designed to work on all versions of Microsoft Windows since Windows 95.

Ace Center Large Pointers (Windows)

<http://acecentre.org.uk/large-pointers>

Over 80 additional pointers and cursors for those with visual or perceptual difficulties. Icon styles include animated, coloured, large, I-beams and circles.

How to change size of Pointer (Mac)

<http://www.maketecheasier.com/make-mouse-pointer-bigger-in-osx/>

Screen shots on how to find the built in accessibility area on Mac and enlarge pointer.

Magnification

Virtual Magnifier (windows, Linux)

<http://magnifier.sourceforge.net/>

Virtual Magnifying Glass is a free, open source, cross-platform screen magnification tool. It is simple, customizable, and easy-to-use.

Visual Perceptual supports

ssOverlay

<http://www.fx-software.co.uk/assistive.htm>

sOverlay (the ss stands for Scotopic Sensitivity), places a colored overlay onto the screen. The color and transparency levels can be adjusted to suit the user.

Typoscope

<http://www.fx-software.co.uk/assistive.htm>

A Typoscope is a reading guide which has a cut-out section, to reduce glare and the amount of text visible for reading, making it easier to focus on a line of text.

Dark Screen

<http://www.fx-software.co.uk/assistive.htm>

Some computer users experience problems with glare from the screen. Dark Screen sits over all windows and provides a means of dimming the output between 20 and 90%.

Screen Readers

WebbIE

<http://www.webbie.org.uk/webbrowser/index.htm>

lets you browse web pages, search the web, fill in forms, do ecommerce, and use online email, all in a highly-usable text-only display that works with any screenreader. WebbIE is free.

NVDA (Non Visual Desktop Access)

NVDA <http://www.oatsoft.org/Software/nvda>

NonVisual Desktop Access (NVDA) is a free and open-source screen reader for the Windows Operating System, enabling blind and vision impaired people to use their computers.

Window-Eyes

<http://www.windoweyesforoffice.com/>

Microsoft is excited to provide people who are blind, visually impaired, or print disabled with a completely functional* and free license of GW Micro's Window-Eyes screen reader. Microsoft is offering customers who have a licensed** version of Office 2010 or later the ability to download Window-Eyes, a screen reader for Windows PCs, free of charge.

Additional free screen readers:

<http://usabilitygeek.com/10-free-screen-reader-blind-visually-impaired-users/>

E-Books

Bookshare

Bookshare <http://www.bookshare.org/web/Welcome.html>

Bookshare.org is an online community that enables people with visual and other print disabilities to legally share scanned books. As a student you are granted a free membership.

Project Gutenberg

Project Gutenberg <http://www.gutenberg.net>

Project Gutenberg offers free electronic books (eBooks or eTexts).

Text to Speech Readers for E-books

NaturalReader

Natural Reader <http://www.naturalreaders.com>

NaturalReader will read aloud text from a variety of applications. For a nominal fee, users can upgrade to more sophisticated versions which offers text conversion to audio files and inclusion of natural sounding voices.

ReadPlease

Read Please <http://www.readplease.com>

ReadPlease offers cut and paste reading from any electronic text. There is both a free version – ReadPlease 2003 and a more sophisticated \$50 version ReadPlease Plus 2003.

Text to Speech on Word Documents

WordTalk

<http://www.wordtalk.org.uk/Home/>

For people with **reading and writing difficulties**, having text reinforced by hearing it read aloud can be very useful. WordTalk is a **free text-to-speech plugin** developed for use with all versions

of **Microsoft Word** (from **Word 97** up to **Word 2013**). Siting neatly in your Microsoft Word toolbar it is highly configurable. It will speak the text of the document and will highlight it as it goes.

General Resources

AppleVis

<http://applevis.com/>

A community-powered website for blind and low-vision users of Apple's range of Mac computers, the iPhone, iPad and iPod Touch.

Andreas Head

<https://andreashead.wikispaces.com/YourTSVI>

A wiki FULL of helpful resources for technology specific to helping individuals with vision impairments/blindness

Ipad/Iphone

iPad Accessibility for the Blind and Visually Impaired (Free)

<http://dclibrary.org/node/30203>

General accessibility within ipad for individuals with vision impairments/blindness

iOS Apps Developed Specifically for the Blind or People with Low Vision (some are free)

<http://www.applevis.com/apps/ios-apps-for-blind-and-vision-impaired>

iOS apps that have been developed specifically for the blind or people with low vision. Utilizing the potential of Apple's iDevices, these apps are intended to assist with everyday tasks, increase independence and generally make things easier.

Educational apps to support vision impairments (Some are free)

<http://atclassroom.blogspot.com/2011/10/at-apps-and-accessibility.html>

Extensive list of apps and resources to support students with vision impairments.

VoiceOver Compatible Apps for iPhone and Mac

<http://www.disabled-world.com/assistivedevices/apps/voiceover-applications.php>

List of handy and accessible compatible VoiceOver Apps for iPhone and Mac computers for persons with vision impairment/blindness

Android

Android Apps Specializing in Access for the Visually Impaired and Blind

<https://andreashead.wikispaces.com/Andriod+Apps+for+VI+and+Blind>

An extensive list of android apps for individuals with blindness and vision impairments.