

Accessibility Features on Microsoft Windows

Accessibility Features

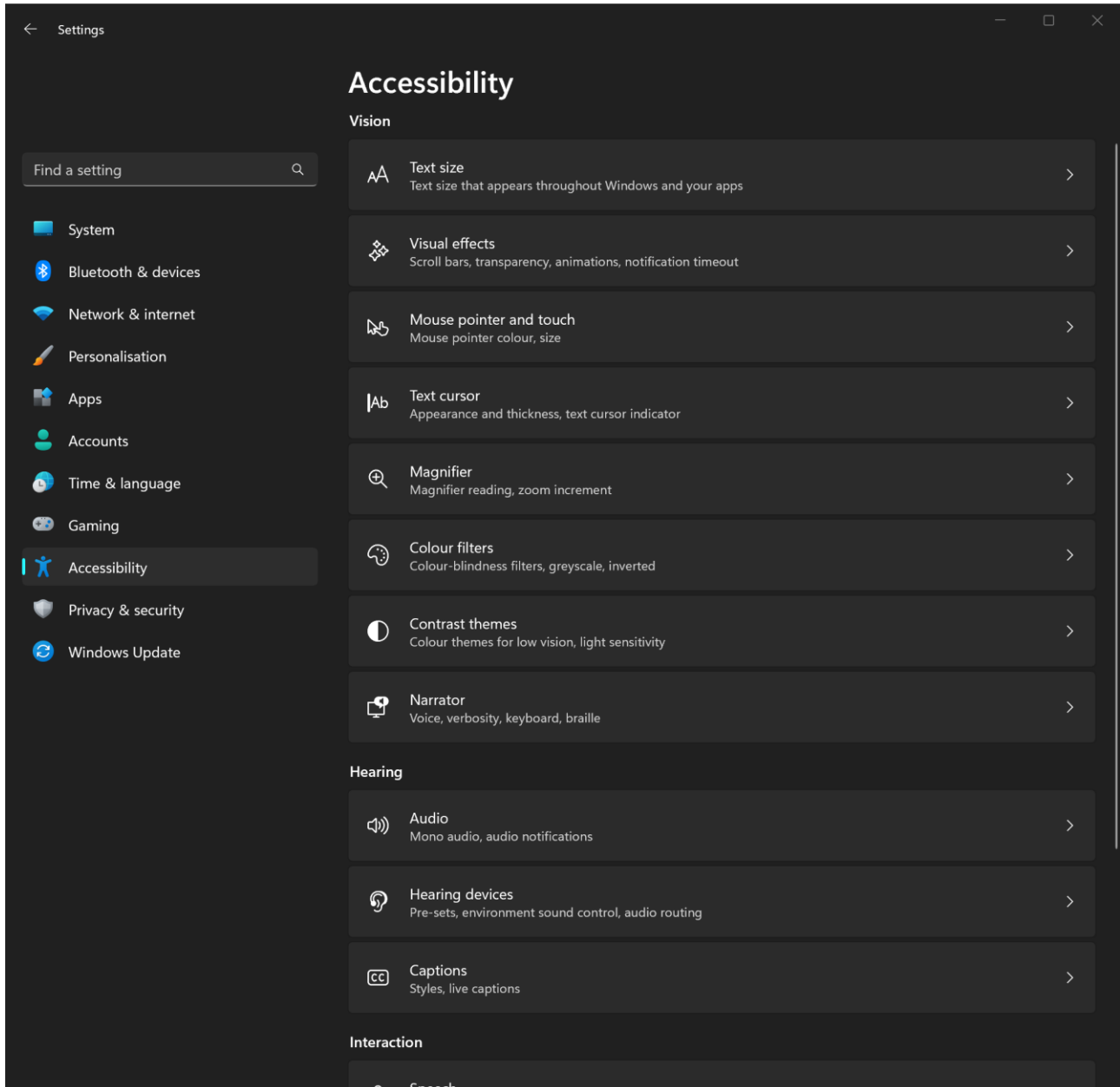
In this guide are some easy-to-use features that make the PC more accessible to everyone.¹

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

Accessibility Settings

In Windows 11 you can find all of the accessibility settings grouped together in the Settings panel:

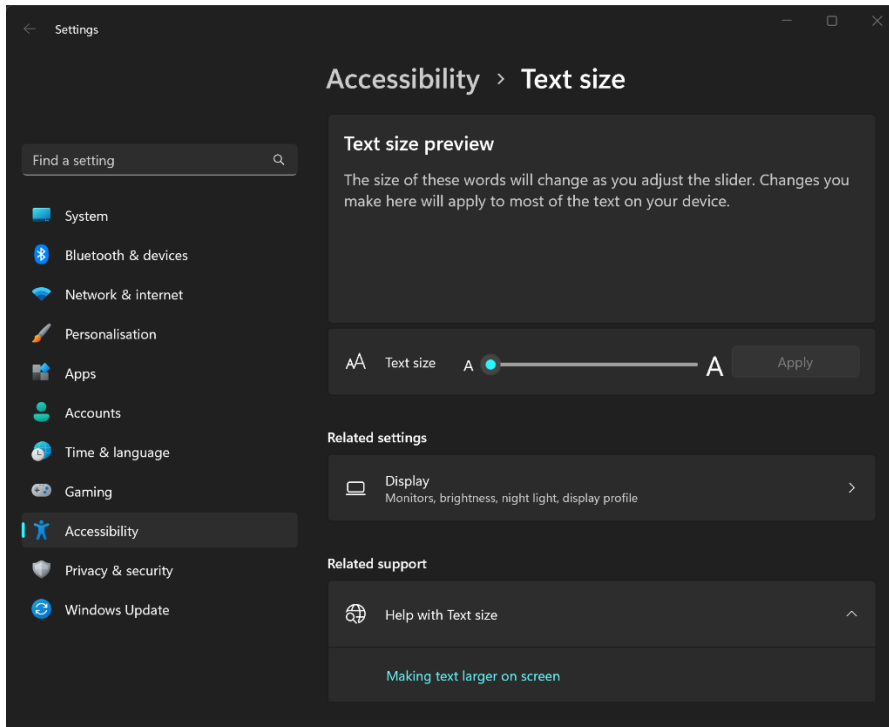


In this guide we will look at some of these options in a bit more detail so that you know how to customise Windows 11 for your needs.

Vision

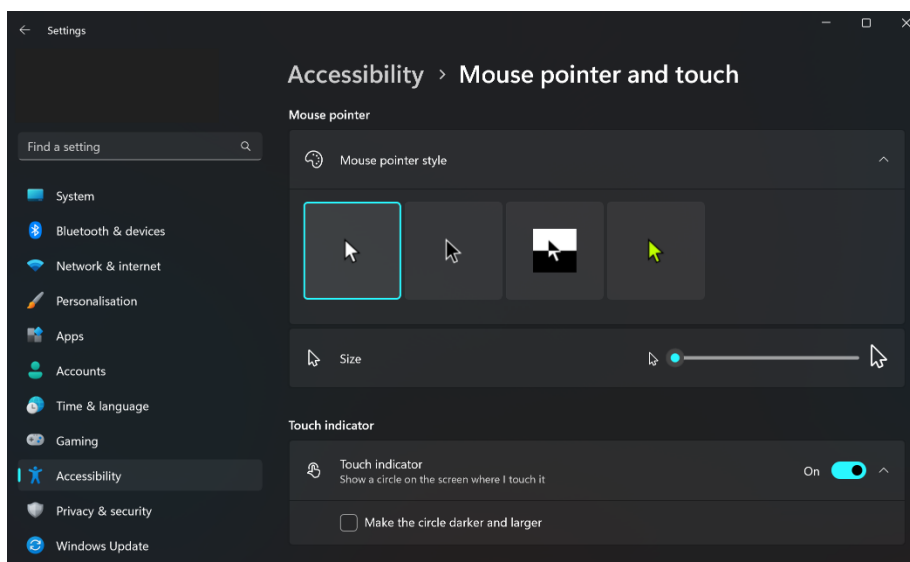
Adjust size

- To adjust the size of text, apps, and other items, select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Accessibility > Text size** and choose the appearance that you prefer for text.
- And to scale everything up, select the **Start** button and then **Settings > System > Display**

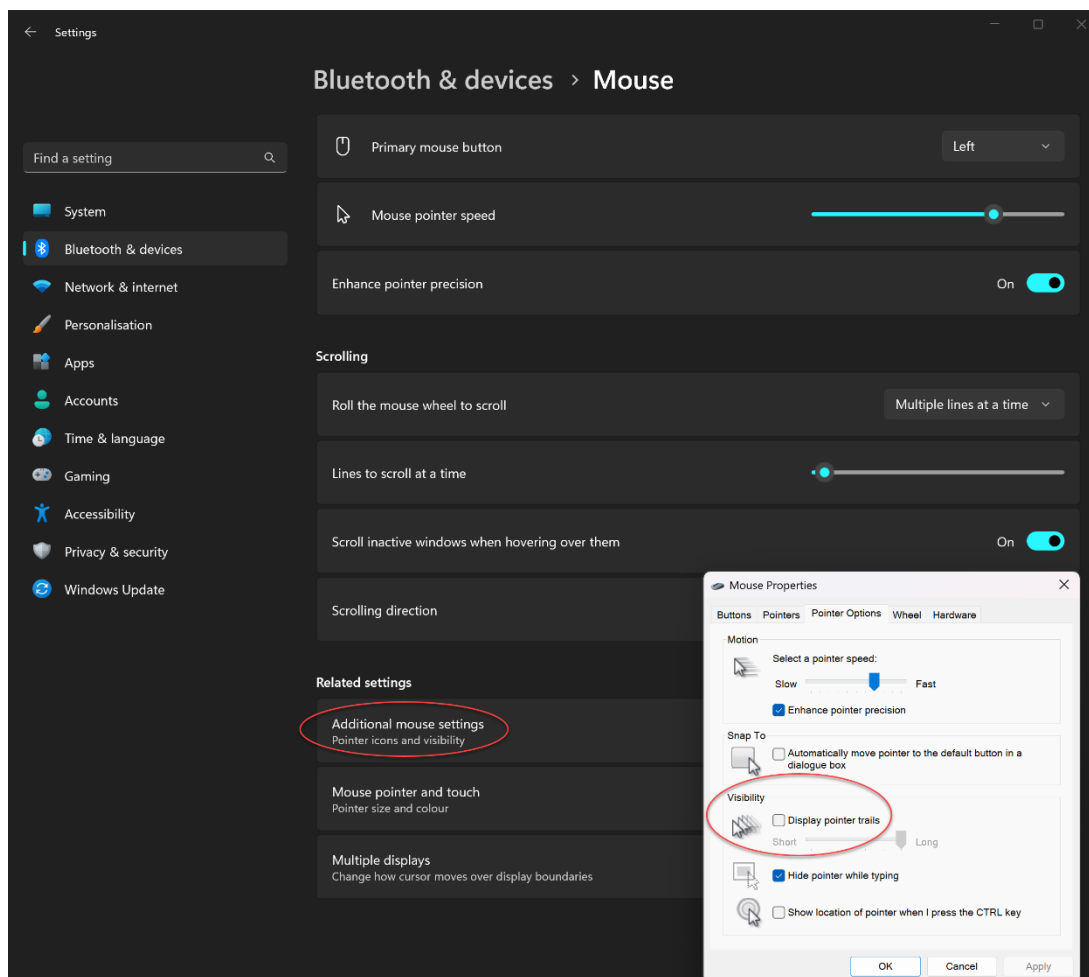


Customise mouse and cursor size

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



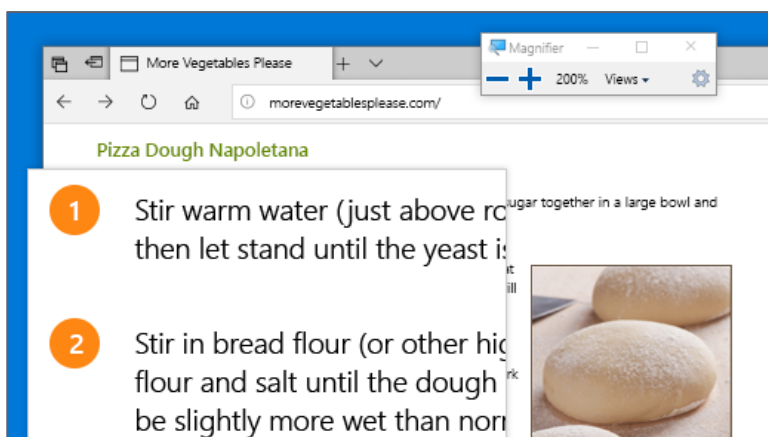
- By adding pointer trails you can see where the mouse is moving on the screen. Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Bluetooth & devices > Mouse > Additional mouse settings**. In the Mouse Properties window, select the Pointer Options tab, and then Display pointer trails.



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 > Accessibility > Magnifier**

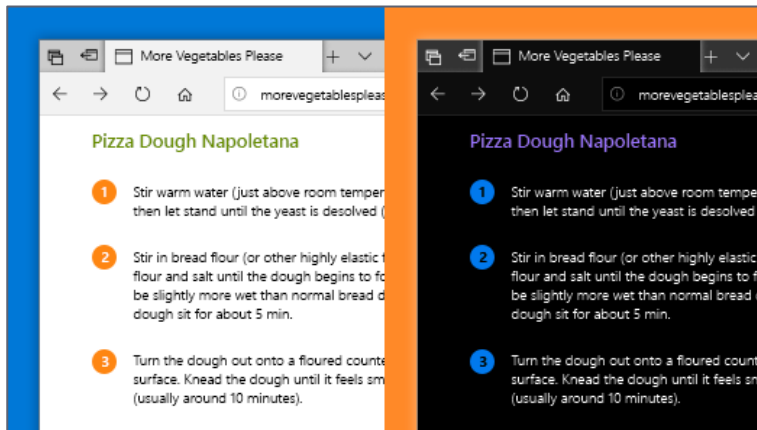
- To open Magnifier quickly, press the **Windows logo key + Plus sign (+)**.
- When Magnifier is open, use **Windows logo key + Plus sign(+)** or **Windows logo key + Minus sign(-)** to zoom in or out. To close Magnifier, press **Windows logo key + Esc**.



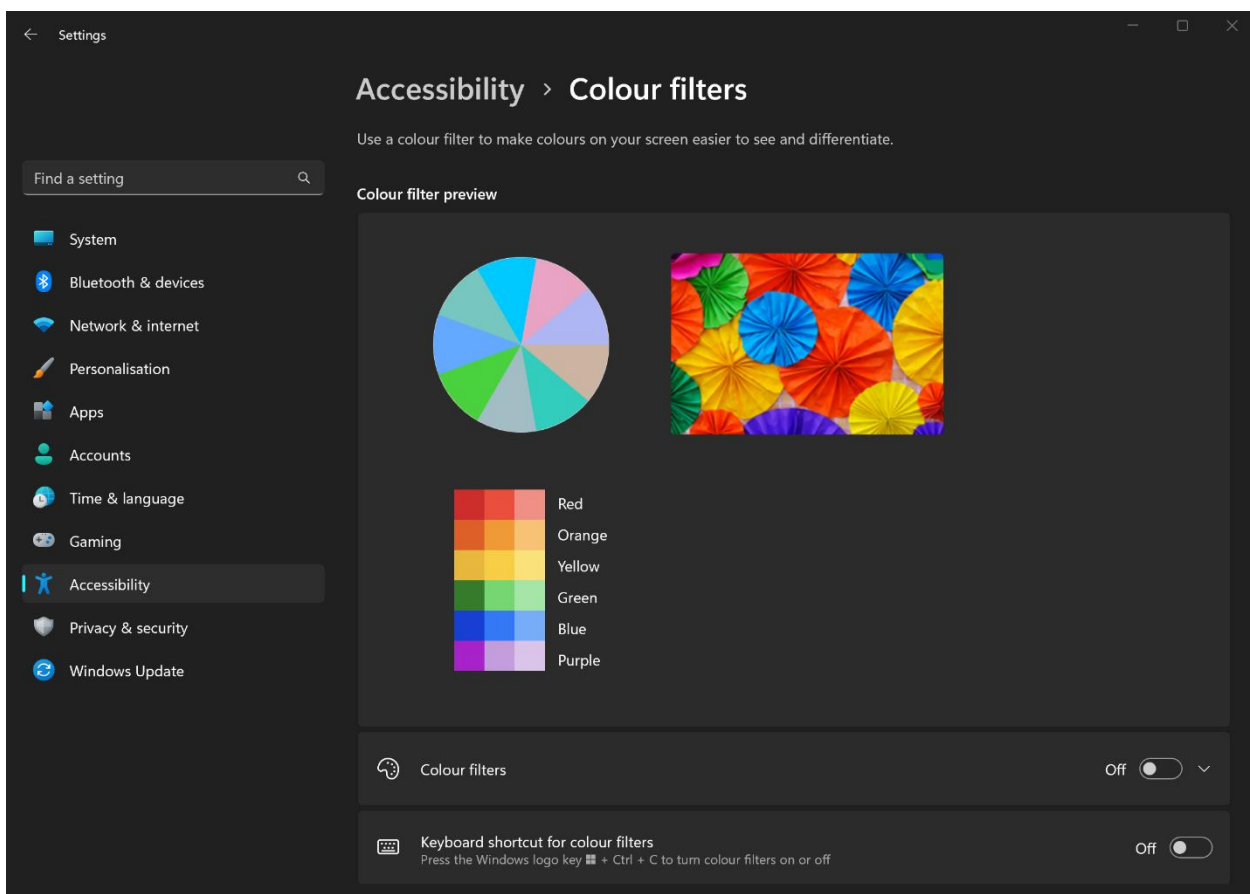
Apply colour filters

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 > Accessibility > 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 > Accessibility > Colour filters**, and select **Allow the shortcut key to toggle filter on or off**. Then press the **Windows logo key + Ctrl + C**.

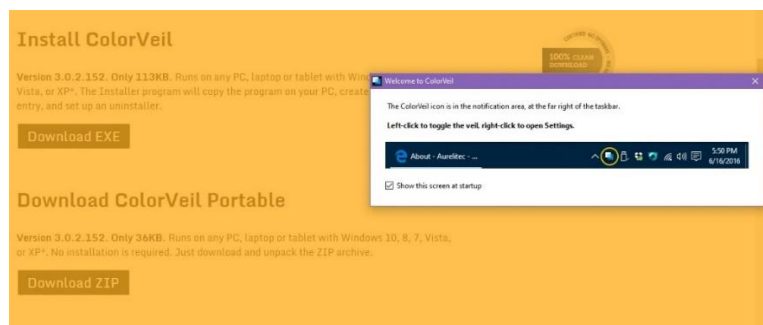


Windows Screen Tint

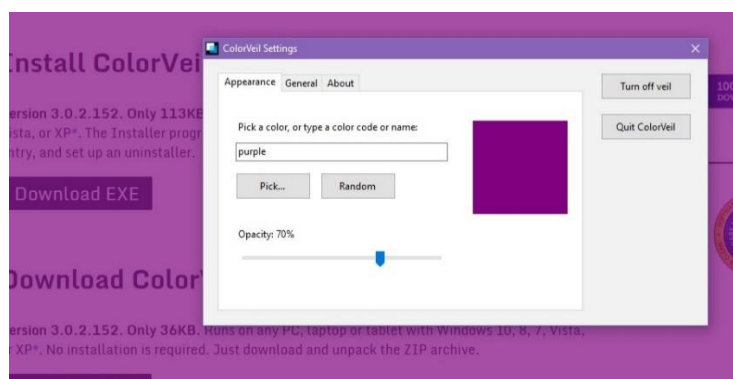
Microsoft have a free app called **ColorVeil** that will tint your screen to a colour and opacity that suits you for your **Windows PC**. To download go to [Colorveil download](#)



- 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**.
- Microsoft also provide a [Complete Guide to Narrator](#) online

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 > Accessibility > 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 > Accessibility > Audio**.
- Under **Flash My Screen**, choose how you want audio alerts displayed. You can choose to have the entire screen flash when a notification arrives, instead of relying on sound alone.

Captions

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

- Select the **Start** button, then select **Settings > Accessibility > 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

You can minimize visual distractions by turning off animations, background images, and more. Follow below steps to minimize visual distractions:

- Select **Start > Settings > Accessibility > Visual effects**.
- To minimize distractions, adjust one or more of the following settings:
 - To automatically hide the scrollbars in Windows, turn off the **Always show scrollbars** toggle.
 - To make window backgrounds more opaque, turn off the **Transparency effects** toggle.
 - If you don't want Windows to show animations, turn off the **Animation effects** toggle.
 - To define how long notifications are shown, expand the **Dismiss notifications after this amount of time** dropdown menu and select the option you want.

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**.

Quiet down those notifications

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

- **Select Start > Settings > System > Focus**

Read with fewer distractions

For a clean and simple layout, use **Immersive Reader** in the Microsoft Edge browser address bar to bring whatever you're reading front and centre.

Open the web page you want to read in Microsoft Edge, select the text you want to read, **right-click**, and select **Open selection in Immersive Reader**.

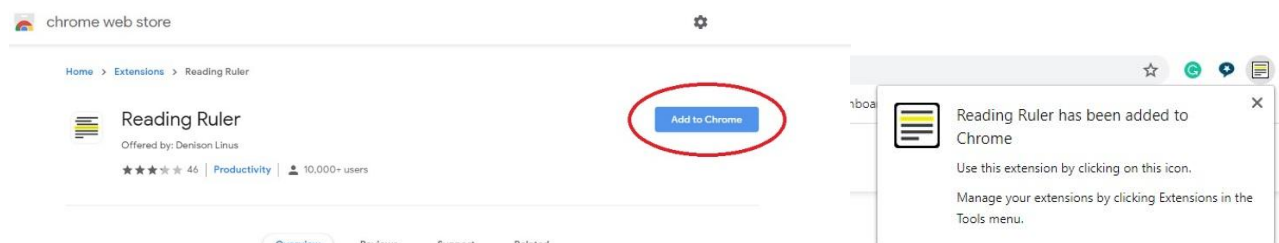
The page will open in a simplified layout. To customize the page display, use the options on the toolbar at the top of the page. For example, under Text preferences you can modify the background colour using themes or change the font.

To exit the Immersive Reader, select the **Exit Immersive Reader** icon on the address bar or press the Function key+F9.

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**.

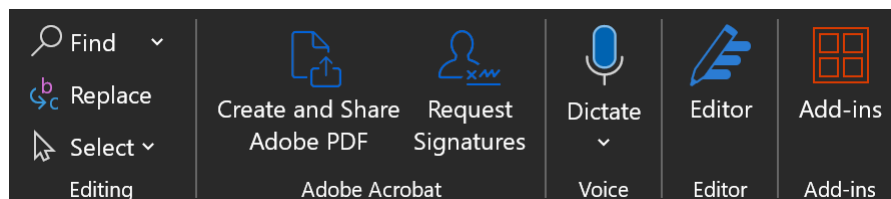


- Once installed the reading ruler will appear at the end of your browser toolbar.
- This extension produces a yellow highlight over text within a webpage and can help to keep focus when reading.
- This extension can be used with **any operating system** that has the Chrome browser installed.



Dictation

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

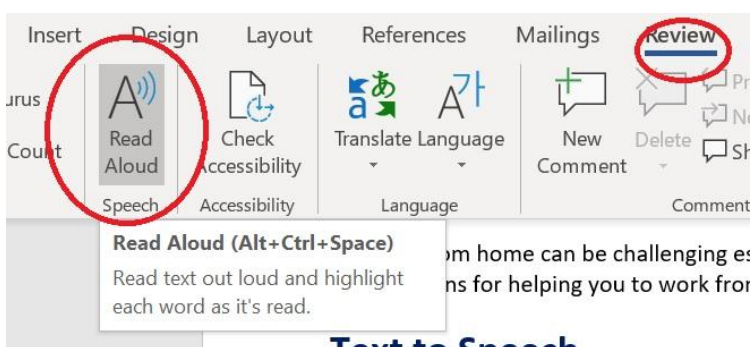


- For more information and some useful commands please go to [Microsoft's page on using voice typing to talk instead of type on your PC](#). This function is available for all users who have Microsoft Word installed on their device.
- Or if you have the **Claro Chrome/Edge extension** installed in your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

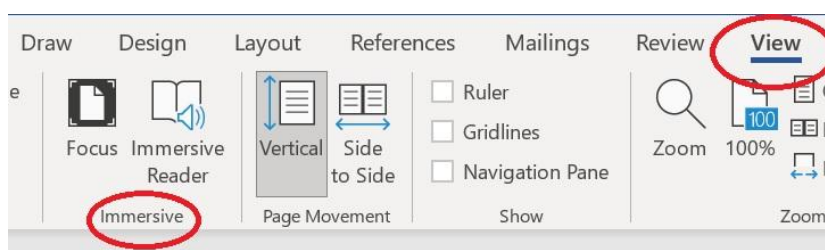
Text to Speech

Windows Read Aloud and Immersive Reader

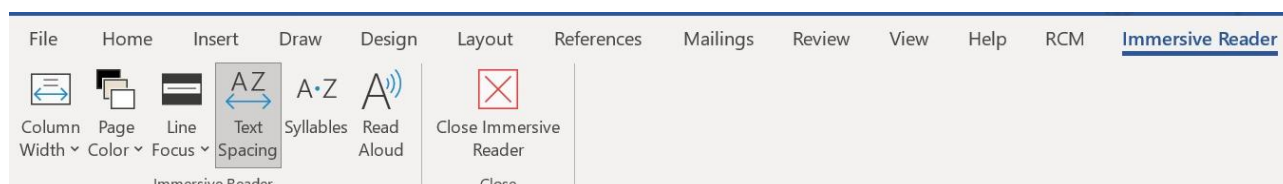
- If you have a **Windows PC** Microsoft Word has a text to speech function called **Read Aloud** found under the review tab.



- 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.



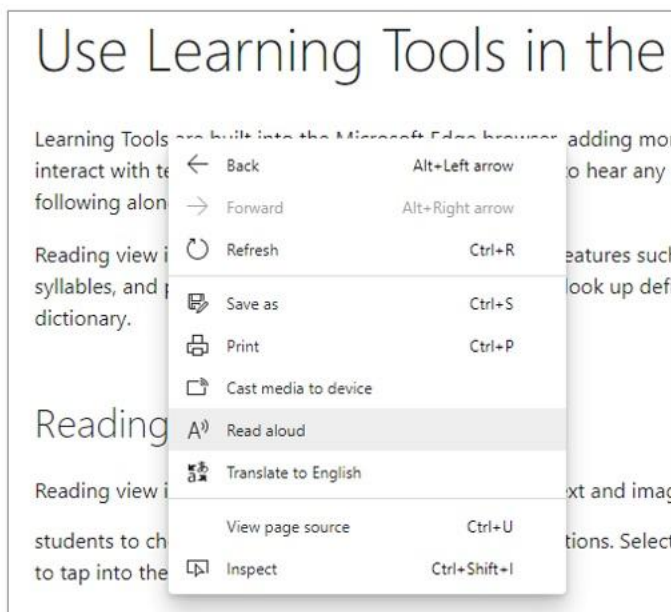
- These options can provide features such as the text spacing or changing the page colour.

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.

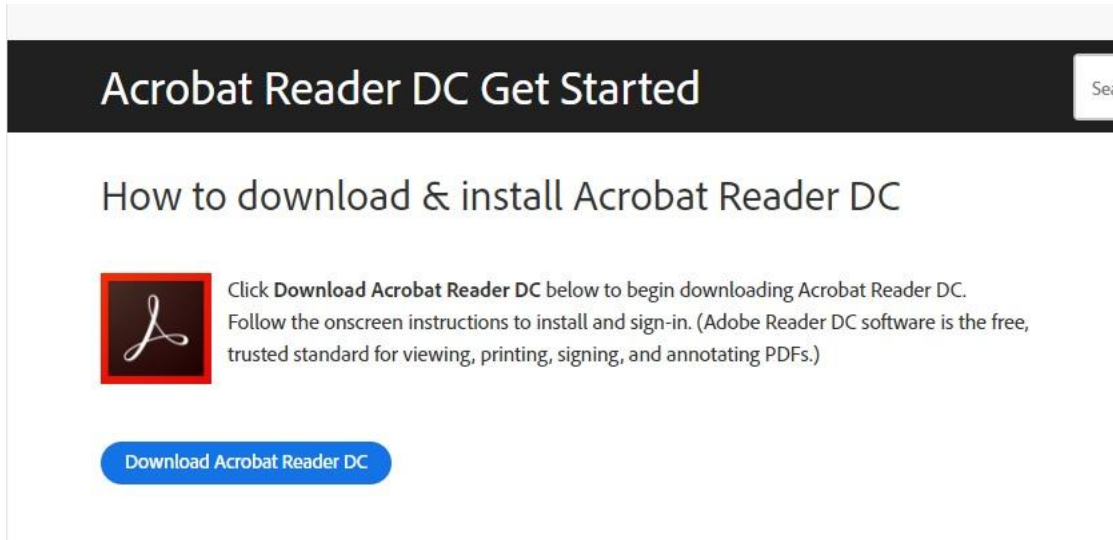
Word has an Immersive Reader panel, which allows you to change the background colour and adjust the text spacing.

- 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.

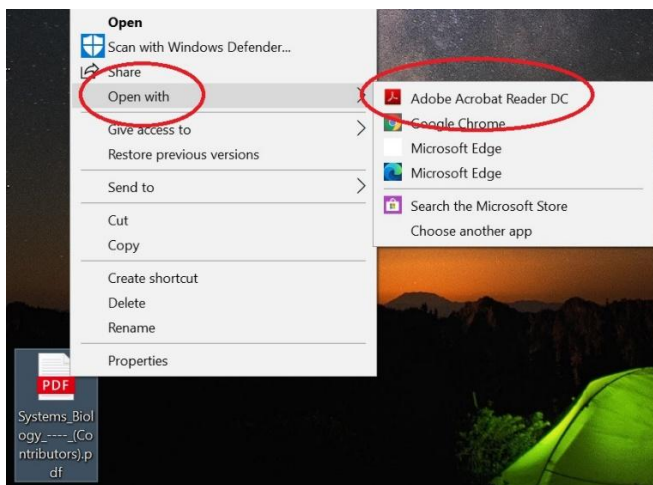


Adobe Reader

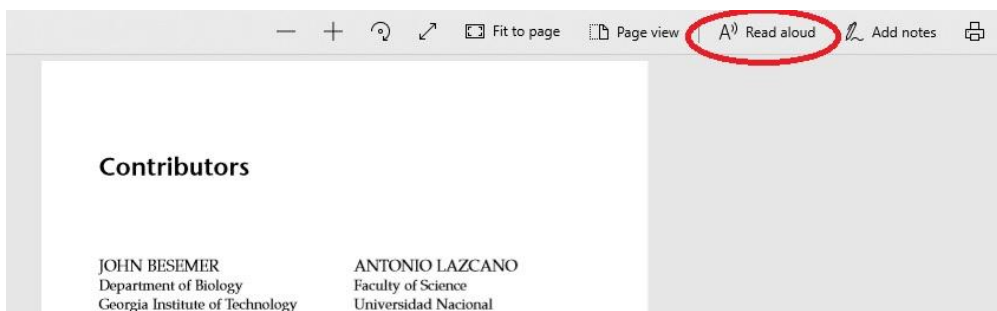
- Adobe **Acrobat Reader DC** is a free piece of software that has a **Read Aloud** function. It is compatible with **all operating systems**. To download go to [Adobe](#)



- 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. [Launch Chat here](#)

Call us

Available Monday to Friday from 6am to 10pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 7am to 6pm (PST). 1-800-936-5900

Be My Eyes

A free app that connects blind and low vision people with volunteers for visual assistance through a live video call. Simply download the Be My Eyes app and the Microsoft Support team is available through 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