

# Free Dictation and Voice Control Options

Dictation (or speech-to-text technology) can be a great way to get your thoughts out without worrying about correct spelling or grammar. It can also be helpful if you experience physical limitations, such as wrist pain, when typing on a keyboard or your phone. Luckily, there are lots of free dictation options available on the devices and programs you're already using, and you can completely control some devices with your voice. Check out these resources for enabling dictation and/or voice control on your device of choice:

## Devices

### Computers

Most computers sold today will include a dictation option as part of their standard operating systems, but you'll need either a compatible headset with a microphone or a built-in microphone in your computer in order to dictate. You'll experience better accuracy with a headset microphone, since it won't pick up as much background noise as the built-in microphones that are included in most laptops.

### Windows

All computers running Windows 10 have a [built-in dictation option](#) that can be easily accessed by pressing the **Windows logo key + H**. The page linked above also contains a list of verbal commands you can use while dictating, such as "Stop dictation" or "Delete word." You can also completely control your PC with your voice, with Windows [Speech Recognition](#) commands. These features require an internet connection in order to work.

### MacBook/iMac

Apple computers also have a built-in [Dictation](#) option, as well as complete [Voice Control](#) features if this is preferable. Both are enabled in your computer's System Preferences menu. You'll need an internet connection to use the Dictation option each time, but you only need to be connected to the internet the first time you use the Voice Control features.

### Chromebook

Dictation is included as part of each Chromebook's [accessibility settings](#). You can dictate text on a Chromebook in most of the programs in which you might otherwise type with a keyboard. Dictation can be turned on in your Chromebook's Advanced settings, which you can open by pressing **Alt + Shift + s**. From there, head to the Accessibility settings, where you can enable dictation and any other accessibility features you might find helpful.

### Phones/Tablets

Similar to computers, you may experience better dictation accuracy if you plug a microphone headset into your phone, instead of using the built-in microphone that you would typically use for phone calls.

### iPhone/iPad

You can enable Dictation in the [Keyboard settings](#) on your iPhone or iPad. If Dictation is already enabled, you'll see a small microphone icon when your keyboard is open; you can tap this microphone to start

dictating. Please note, you may need a WiFi or data connection in order to dictate, depending on the age of your device. You can also control your Apple device with [your voice](#).

## Android

If you use the Gboard keyboard on your [Android device](#), you can tap the microphone to start dictating. Similar to Apple devices, the dictation experience might be a bit different on older devices. You can also use the [Voice Access app](#) to control newer Android devices with your voice.

## Programs

### Microsoft Word

In the online version of Office 365, a [Dictate](#) feature is available. You can access this feature by clicking the microphone icon in Word's Home menu. [Office 365 is free](#) for all TRU students, staff and faculty to install on their personal devices.

### Google Docs

If you're using the Chrome browser, you can [dictate inside Google Docs](#) and Google Slides. You can also enter voice commands for formatting, punctuation, and editing.

### Read&Write – Talk&Type

If you're using Read&Write on your Windows, Mac or Chromebook device, you can use the [Talk&Type](#) feature to dictate into any program that's compatible with Read&Write. TRU students, staff and faculty can [install Read&Write](#) on their personal computers for free, as well as use the program in any TRU computer lab on campus.