

How to use the Windows “Text to Speech” feature to read aloud Word documents or Adobe PDF documents



Please note:

- These instructions below apply to using the PCs in St George’s Library. Please see over for information on how to use this feature on your own PC
- It is not possible to read text on Web pages but you could copy Web page text and paste into Word
- You will need a set of headphones – these can be borrowed from the Help Desk in Computer room 3. They are plugged in at the front of the PC under the Dell flap.

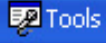
To read aloud Word documents

- Open Word – do this first, rather than open the Word document within Internet Explorer from a web page link, so that the Word menu bar is displayed
- Select **Tools** menu, **Speech** option
- The ‘Welcome to Speech Recognition’ dialog box is displayed – click **Cancel**, then **OK** to clear the warning message
- You should see the Language bar displayed. If no buttons are shown on the Language bar, click in the document and on the bar – this should then show the buttons



- You may need to add the Speak button to the bar; to do this click the **Options** menu here. Select **Speak text** option
- Open a Word document to be read aloud. Position the cursor where you wish to start.
- To start reading back the document from the cursor position, click **Speak**  button.
- To stop reading, click **Stop**  button on the Language Bar

To change the type or speed of the voice used for reading back Word documents:

- On the Language Bar, click **Tools**  button, **Options...**
- Click **Advanced Speech...** button
- Click **Text to Speech** tab
- Use **Voice selection** to change the voice used; there are 3 available
- Use **Voice speed** to adjust the speed of speaking


To read aloud Adobe PDF files

- Open Adobe Reader
- Open the PDF document from within Adobe Reader rather than from within Internet Explorer from a web page link, so that the Adobe Reader menu bar is displayed
- Select **View** menu, **Read out loud** option, **Read this page only** OR **Read to end of document**
- To stop or pause reading, select **View** menu, **Read out loud** option, **Pause** OR **Stop**

To change the type or speed of the voice used for reading back PDF files:

- In Adobe Reader, select **Edit** menu, **Preferences**
- Select **Reading**
- Adjust the settings under ‘**Read Out Loud Options**’
- Use **Voice** to change the voice used; there are 3 available (same as Windows)

To adjust the volume:

- Double-click on the  **Speaker** icon bottom right on the Task bar
- This will open the Volume Control dialog box to allow you to adjust volume

Using the “Text to Speech” feature on your own PC

The instructions overleaf may also work on your own PC, but are dependent on versions of Windows, Word and Adobe Reader installed.

If you have the following installed then the instructions overleaf will work on your PC:

- Windows XP – Home or Professional edition
- Word XP or Word 2003
- Adobe Reader version 7
- Internet Explorer 6 or above
- Sound capability with speakers or headphones

If you have an earlier version of Windows or Word (assuming you have sound capability):

- You can install a specialist application to give you ‘text to speech’ – for example:
 - ReadPlease 2003 – it is free and can be downloaded from <http://www.readplease.com/> . It requires you to copy and paste the text you want to read, eg from Word, a web page, a pdf document, into a ReadPlease document window before it can be read aloud
 - Screenreader v4 – Trial version can be used for 30 days, download from <http://www.texthelp.com> It then must be purchased for 28USD. Screenreader works in tandem with all Windows-based applications. It does not require you to copy and paste text - just select text to be read aloud
 - Read and Write 8 – more sophisticated application which also helps with literacy; costs 140GBP. Available for Mac and Windows. More information from <http://www.texthelp.com>

If you have an earlier version of Adobe Reader (assuming you have sound capability):

- Adobe Reader version 7 is freely available and can downloaded from:
<http://www.adobe.co.uk/products/acrobat/readstep2.html>

If you have a Mac PC:

- The BBC web site - “My Web for Mac” http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/mac/sub_root.shtml has very good guidance for using the screen reading capabilities of the Mac operating systems. See the section “Making my computer talk” http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/mac/seeing/talk/sub_2.shtml

For more general information on accessibility options

Options include increasing text size, changing screen colours, adjusting keyboard and mouse settings

- For tailoring the Windows and Web environment see:
 - BBC web site “My Web for Windows” http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/win/sub_root.shtml
 - Microsoft’s accessibility site <http://www.microsoft.com/enable/>
- For tailoring the Mac and Web environment see:
 - BBC web site “My Web for Mac” http://www.bbc.co.uk/accessibility/mac/sub_root.shtml
 - Apple’s accessibility site <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/>