Accessibility in Windows 8

Windows 8

Windows 8 includes accessibility options and programs that make it easier to see, hear, and use your computer including Ease of Access and Personalization options. The built-in assistive technologies in Windows 8 work with both Windows 8 applications, and with desktop software, to provide seamless access to the entire Windows experience.

New in Windows 8

One of the most exciting aspects of Windows 8 is the introduction of touch-only devices. With touch devices, you can directly interact with everything on your screen by touch, without using a keyboard or mouse, including managing accessibility options in the Ease of Access Center.

Make your PC easier to use

In Windows 8, many of the most commonly used accessibility options are available right from the sign-in screen including Narrator, Magnifier, High Contrast, Sticky Keys and Filter Keys.

Click the Ease of Access button in the lower-left corner of your screen to choose the PC settings you want to have available each time you start your computer.
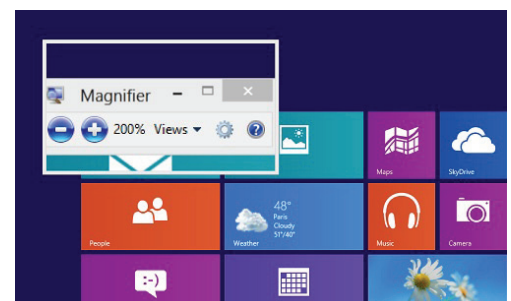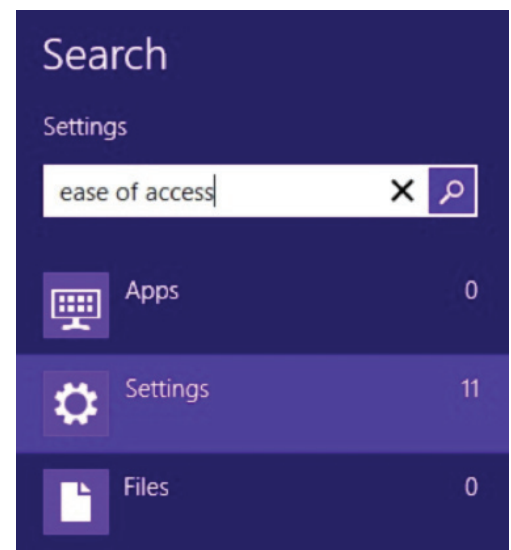
You can find more settings on the **Ease of Access** page. From the Start screen, using the keyboard, open the page by pressing the **Windows logo key+U**. If you use a touch-enabled device, swipe in from the right edge of the screen, and then tap **Search**. If you're using a mouse, point to the upper-right corner of the screen, move the mouse pointer down, and then click **Search**. Enter **Ease of Access** in the search box, tap or click **Settings**, and then tap or click **Ease of Access** in the results.

Narrator

Narrator, a screen reader that reads aloud the text that appears on screen, and describes events such as error messages, has been redesigned in Windows 8 to be substantially faster, and to support many new features. Whether you're an individual who is blind, has low vision, or, are fully sighted, you will be able to use Windows 8 from the first time you start your device.

Magnifier

Magnifier is a tool that enlarges your screen, or portions of your screen, making words and images easier to see. For users with low vision who have trouble seeing their devices, Magnifier makes it easier to see the screen and touch it too. If you use a touch-enabled device you can control Magnifier from the edges of your screen, and can easily enlarge or reduce the size of the Magnifier window by touching buttons on screen.

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On-Screen Keyboard
On-Screen Keyboard (OSK) is an Ease of Access tool you can use instead of relying on the physical keyboard to type and enter data. You don't need a touchscreen to use On-Screen Keyboard. OSK displays a visual keyboard with all the standard keys. You can select keys using the mouse or another pointing device, or you can use a physical single key or group of keys to cycle through the keys on the screen.

Speech recognition
With Windows Speech Recognition you can command your PC with your voice. Compose documents and email, and surf the Web by dictating and speaking the commands rather than using a keyboard or mouse.

Change text size
Make text and icons larger and easier to see without changing the screen resolution.

Personalization
Add a personal touch to your computer and make it more accessible by changing settings such as theme, color, sounds, desktop background, screen saver and font size.

Windows Touch
With a touch-screen device, you can just touch your screen for a more direct and natural way to work. Use your fingers to scroll, resize windows, play media, pan and zoom.

Keyboard shortcuts
Keyboard shortcuts save time and multiple mouse clicks. Press two or more keys to quickly perform a task without using a mouse.

Visual notifications
Replace system sounds with visual cues, such as a flash on the screen, so system alerts are announced with visual notifications instead of sounds.

Sticky Keys
Instead of having to press three keys at once (such as when you must press the Ctrl, Alt, and Delete keys simultaneously to log on to Windows), you can press one key at a time when Sticky Keys is turned on.

Mouse Keys
Instead of using the mouse, you can use the arrow keys on the numeric keypad to move the pointer.

Filter Keys
Ignore keystrokes that occur in rapid succession and keystrokes that are held down for several seconds unintentionally.

For More Information
Accessibility in Windows 8
www.microsoft.com/enable/products/windows8/

Video demos
www.microsoft.com/enable/demos/windows8/

Tutorials
www.microsoft.com/enable/training/windows8/

Twitter
Follow @MSFTEnable

Assistive technology
Assistive technology products are specialty hardware and software products that provide essential accessibility to computers for those with significant vision, hearing, dexterity, language, or learning needs. Many assistive technology products are compatible with Windows 8 and Windows 8 Professional. Select and shop for assistive technology products compatible with Windows 8 or Windows 8 Professional at www.microsoft.com/enable/at/.

Important
Windows RT only supports the installation of apps through the Windows Store. Windows 8, or Windows 8 Professional, is required for individuals using assistive technology software or devices. Be sure to check with your assistive technology manufacturer regarding compatibility before purchasing a new Windows 8 device.

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