

Guide to Set Up and Use Voice Control in macOS

What is Voice Control on the MacBook?

Voice Control is an accessibility feature on macOS that allows you to control your Mac entirely with your voice. You can dictate text, interact with apps, and control system features without using the keyboard or mouse.

NOTE: The keyboard and mouse continue to work while Voice Control is running.

Setting Up Voice Control

1. Ensure You Have a Microphone:

Make sure you have a functional microphone connected to your MacBook.

- Headset microphone
- Standalone microphone (such as a Samson Go Mic)
- MacBook's internal microphone (if working in a quiet environment)

2. Enable Voice Control:

- Click the Apple icon in the top-left corner or the screen (or press **^F2** and then Return).
- Select **System Settings**.
- Select **Accessibility** in the left navigation bar.
- In the right sidebar, move down to the **Motor** section and select **Voice Control**.
- Check the box or toggle the switch to **Enable Voice Control**.

NOTE: The first time you enable Voice Control, your Mac may download some additional files for speech recognition; make sure you have an internet connection.

3. Configure the Voice Control Settings:

- In the **Voice Control** settings pane:
 - * Choose the **Language** to use for voice commands.
 - * Select the **Microphone** you want to use if you have multiple input devices.
 - * Enable **Show hints** if you would like to see hints displayed while using Voice Control.
 - * Enable **Play sound when command is recognized** if you would like to hear audible feedback when Voice Control recognizes your speech as a command.
 - * Choose an **Overlay** method for quickly selecting controls on the screen. Controls include **Buttons**, **Check boxes**, **Edit boxes**, **List boxes**, **Menu items**, **App icons**, **Links**, etc. (anything you can select or click).
 - ◆ Options include:
 - ❖ **None** – No overlay will be displayed.
 - ❖ **Item Numbers** – Numbers will be displayed over all available controls shown on the screen. You will speak the number over the control you wish to select.
 - ❖ **Item Names** – Names of each control will be displayed over all available controls on the screen. You will speak the name over the control you wish to select.

- ❖ **Numbered Grid** – A numbered grid will be displayed on the screen.
 - ❖ You will speak the number of the quadrant where the control you wish to select is located, and the mouse cursor will be moved to the middle of that quadrant and a smaller numbered grid will display in that quadrant.
 - ❖ If the mouse cursor is still not on the control you wish to select, you will speak a number in the smaller numbered grid to move the mouse cursor closer to the control and keep doing this until the mouse cursor is over the control you wish to select.
 - ❖ Once the mouse cursor is over the control you wish to select, you will say Click and the number where the mouse cursor is located to click the control you wish to select.
- ❖ **Fade overlay after inactivity** – Enable this if you want the Item Numbers, Item Names, or Numbered Grid to fade after a specified amount of inactivity.
- ❖ **Fade after** – Enter the number of seconds of inactivity to wait until the overlay fades.
- ❖ **Fade by** – Move the slider to specify the percentage amount you wish the overlay to fade.
- ❖ **Voice Control Tutorial** – Select the **Open Tutorial...** button to open an interactive tutorial to learn and practice Voice Control commands.
- ❖ **Improve assistive voice features** – Leave this disabled!
- ❖ **Commands...** button – Select this to view all the Voice Control commands or if you need to create a new Voice Control command. (See #6 below)
- ❖ **Vocabulary...** button – Select this to add new words into the Voice Control vocabulary. This will help Voice Control understand words you say that are not in the default Voice Control vocabulary.
- ❖ **... v** button – Select this to select one of the following:
 - ❖ **Import Vocabulary...**
 - ❖ **Export Vocabulary...**
 - ❖ **Delete All Vocabulary...**
 - ❖ **Import Custom Commands...**
 - ❖ **Export Custom Commands...**
 - ❖ **Delete All Custom Commands...**
- ❖ **? button** – Select this to open the Voice Control settings section of the Mac User Guide.

Using Voice Control

4. Learn Basic Voice Commands

When Voice Control is enabled, you can use a variety of commands to control your Mac. Some common commands include:

- **"Open Safari"** — opens the Safari browser.
- **"Click File"** — clicks the File menu in the active app.

- **"Scroll down" / "Scroll up"** — scrolls the page.
- **"Show numbers"** — displays numbers next to clickable controls on the screen to make selection easier.
- **"Click 5"** — clicks the controls labeled with the number 5.
- **"Go to sleep or Stop Listening"** — temporarily disables Voice Control.
- **"Wake up or Start Listening"** — re-enables Voice Control.

NOTE: You can say "Show commands" to see a list of available commands.

5. Dictate Text

- Place the cursor in any text field.
- Start speaking to dictate text.
- Use commands like:
 - * **New line** to move the text cursor to the next line
 - * **New paragraph** to move the text cursor down two lines to start a new paragraph.
 - * **Delete that/Scratch that** to delete the last dictated text.
 - * **Select [word]/[line]/[sentence]/[paragraph]/[all]** to highlight a word/line/sentence/paragraph or everything on the page.
 - * **Insert before [word]** to move the text cursor before the word.
 - * **Insert after [word]** to move the text cursor after the word.
 - * **Show numbers** to display numbers overlaid on every selectable control displayed on the screen.
 - * **Hide numbers** to remove the numbers overlaid on the selectable controls.

6. Customize Commands (Optional)

- In the Voice Control settings, select the Commands... button.
- You can enable/disable existing commands.
- Click the "+" button to create a new custom command.
- Set the phrase you want to say, choose an action (open app, paste text, run script, etc.), and specify where the command applies.

7. Use Voice Control

- With Voice Control enabled, simply speak the commands to navigate and interact with your Mac.
- You can say **Go to sleep** or **Stop Listening** to pause listening or disable it temporarily.
- You can say **Wake up** or **Start Listening** to enable Voice Control if it is sleeping.
- To turn off Voice Control completely, say **Turn off Voice Control** or return to Accessibility settings and toggle it off.

8. Additional Tips

- Use **"Show grid"** to overlay a numbered grid on the screen for precise control of the cursor.
- Use **"Undo that"** to undo the last action.

- Speak clearly and in a quiet environment for the best results.
- Explore the Voice Control commands list to learn more about controlling your Mac by voice.

Learn More

[Use Voice Control on your Mac - Apple Support](#)

[Use Voice Control commands to interact with your Mac - Apple Support](#)