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## WANT TO TALK TO YOUR PC? HERE'S HOW TO ENABLE SPEECH TO TEXT IN WINDOWS 10

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Are you ready to start dictating your documents and text with your voice? Instead of offering separated dictation or speech-to-text capabilities, Windows 10 conveniently groups its voice commands under **Speech Recognition**, which interprets the spoken word across the operating system for a variety of tasks. Let's go through how to properly set up these recognition features and improve Windows' "ear" for your voice.

*Note that speech recognition is only currently available in English, French, Spanish, German, Japanese, Simplified Chinese, and Traditional Chinese.*

## Finding a mic



The first step is making sure that you have the right hardware for speech-to-text options. You may not think much about this step – after all, the Surface lines of tablets and laptops come with built-in mics, which are a common accessory in many of today's computers. That said, do you need anything else?

The problem here is one of quality. While built-in mics work well for more simple tasks — such as Skype conversations and quick voice commands — you have to consider distortion and mic quality if you really want

to capitalize on speech-to-text. In the past, Microsoft has warned that its speech recognition features are best suited for headset microphones that interpret sounds with greater clarity and are less susceptible to ambient noise. If you're serious about using speech recognition for Windows 10, it's a good idea to pick up a headset that is compatible with your computer.

If you are going to buy hardware, do it sooner rather than later, as the speech features tend to work best if you don't switch devices after training. If you do decide to get a new mic, then you will want to head over to the Windows 10 search box and type in "microphone." This will allow you to go directly to the **Set up a microphone** section of your **Control panel**. Choose to set up a new microphone through settings and make sure it's working before progressing to the next step.

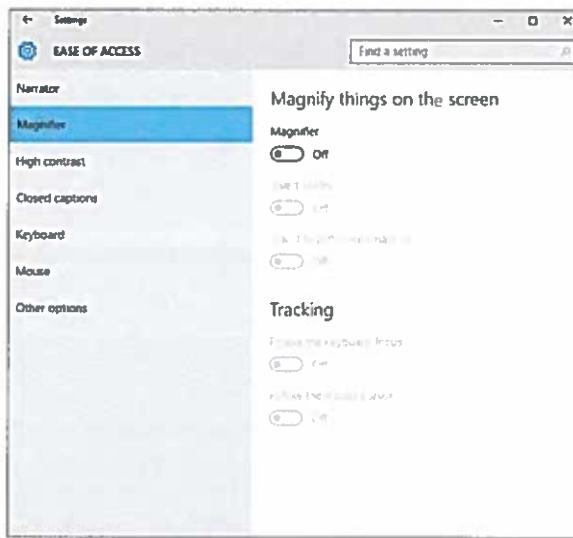
## Setting up speech recognition

With your mic ready, it's time to start configuring your various speech recognition capabilities. In Windows 10, this is a more seamless process than it has been in the past. These steps and tutorials will affect an array of Windows programs, but you may also want to make sure dictation is enabled in any writing apps that you prefer to use. Begin with the steps below.

**Step 1: Access Settings.** You can do so by searching for it in the search box or via voice command, if you aren't sure where it is in Windows 10.

**Step 2: In Settings,** select the sidebar option for **Ease of Access**. This will bring up another menu with a number of accessibility options.

**Step 3: One of the first Access options** you'll see is for **Narrator**. The Narrator options allow you to control the ability to hear text and control/menu options that appear on the screen. This makes an excellent combination with speech-



**Step 5:** Inside the **Speech Recognition** menu, you will find a collection of different tools and commands. If you haven't already set up your microphone, this is a great time to do it using the **Set Up Microphone** feature. Afterward, use **Start Speech Recognition** to activate the listening mode. After completing the brief wizard, Windows will inform you that you can now control your computer using your voice.

**Step 6:** Now it's time to take the **Speech Tutorial**. This is a mini-class designed to show you how Windows uses speech recognition, and what you need to get started. It includes lessons on basic commands to get around – "Click and "Select," for instance – as well as commands focused on dictation, such as how to start new paragraphs or delete words. Even if you've done some Windows dictation in the past, it's a good idea to start the Tutorial and follow the instructions to learn what's changed this time around.

### Training your computer and more

At this point, you can venture into Windows docs and use speech-to-text with a variety of Microsoft files – you're all set. However, we recommend you stick around a bit longer to improve Windows' voice recognition capabilities. Microsoft's latest software has the ability to learn your voice with a little training, and that can really pay off with a few sessions.

To begin, click on **Train your computer to better understand you** in the **Speech Recognition** menu. As indicated, this will be a training task where you read on-screen text to the computer so that it better understands how you pronounce certain words and sounds. This is a piece of must-have customization for Windows speech-to-text, no matter how American Newscaster or Received Pronunciation your accent may sound. Run it a couple times to see if text accuracy improves as a result.

Also, note the option toward the bottom that allows access to the **Speech Reference Card**. This gives you

to-text if, for example, you are using it because of a disability. Spend some time adjusting the Narrator as needed before moving on.

**Step 4:** Go to the **Speech Recognition**. If you cannot find it, then use the search box in the upper-right corner of the window to search for "speech recognition," which should bring up an option to open the right menu.

