



Mac Accessibility Guide

Making Education More Accessible

This guide outlines the key accessibility features built into Mac, focusing on support for Vision, Hearing, and Motor Skills in educational settings.

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Empowering Every Student

Apple technology is designed to support every learner – with built-in features that empower students of all abilities to access, engage with, and enjoy their education. Every student deserves a learning experience that is creative, collaborative, and meaningful.

Mac is a powerful device built to adapt to the diverse needs of today's classrooms. With accessibility features built directly into macOS, students with visual, hearing, or motor skill challenges can fully participate in their learning. Whether supporting a student with low vision, hearing loss, or physical mobility needs, Mac offers inclusive tools that foster independence, build confidence, and unlock every learner's potential – ensuring no student is left behind.

Removing Barriers

This guide explores how Mac supports three key areas of accessibility: **Vision, Hearing, & Motor Skills**. This guide will cover the various tools that can be utilised to enable and enhance participation, communication, and achievement within the classroom.





Features for Vision Support

Who Is This For?

- Students who are blind, low vision or with visual impairments.
- Learners with colour blindness or light sensitivity.

Key features:



VoiceOver

A powerful built-in screen reading descriptive tool, providing auditory descriptions of each onscreen element and provides helpful hints along the way.

- Describe onscreen elements – buttons, icons, text, and even images.
- Users can navigate with a keyboard, trackpad gestures, or braille displays.



Display & Text Size Adjustments

Designed for users with partial sight or reading difficulties.

- Increase text size and boldness. Enhance contrast and reduce motion.
- Apply colour filters or invert colours to reduce visual strain.



Hover Text

Displays a large, high-contrast text window when the cursor hovers over items – ideal for reading toolbars, buttons, and text.

- Allowing students to focus on content, not navigation struggles.



Zoom

A built-in screen magnifier that can be activated with a simple gestures.

- Offers full-screen or picture-in-picture magnification.



Features for Hearing Support

Who Is This For?

- Students who are deaf or hard of hearing.
- Learners with fluctuating hearing loss - need visual reinforcement of audio content.

Key features:



Live Captions

Generates real-time captions for any audio content on iPad.

- Works across FaceTime, video content, and other supported apps.
- Particularly useful in group work, presentations, and remote learning.



Sensory Alerts

Replace or supplement traditional audible alerts with visual or haptic feedback.

- Quiet, private notifications for students with sensory needs.
- Enables non-disruptive alerts (e.g. flashes) to avoid drawing unnecessary attention or triggering sensory discomfort.



Sound Recognition

Detects and alerts students to important sounds like, fire alarms, or a person speaking. Displays a visual notification when specific sounds are detected.

- Ideal for safety and awareness – Enhances independence by helping students stay aware of their environment without relying on others.



Subtitles & Closed Captions

System-wide support for captioning in videos and educational apps.

- Encourages better understanding & literacy development. Also useful for learners in noisy environments & with English as an Additional Language.



Features for Motor Skill Support

Who Is This For?

- Anyone with limited hand dexterity or coordination
- (Students with cerebral palsy, muscular dystrophy, or other motor conditions)

Key features:



Assistive Touch

A customisable onscreen menu that lets students perform gestures with a single tap. Enabling a virtual button for navigation and actions.

- Limited on Mac. Similar functionality is achieved through Pointer Control, Switch Control, or external devices.



Switch Control

Allows full control of Mac using a single switch or series of switches, scanning through on-screen items and selecting them.

- Fully customisable panels supporting navigation, typing, launching apps, using switches, keyboard scanning, or adaptive devices.



Voice Control

Lets students navigate, and control your Mac using only their voice.

- Works offline, supports dictation, app control, and pointer movement.
- Supports navigation (Open Safari, Swipe left), and commands.



Dictation

Allows users to speak instead of type, converting spoken words into written text in real time.

- Helps students structure thinking aloud, supporting memory & understanding.
- Works system-wide – in Notes, Word, Safari, email, and more.
- Removes barriers to writing tasks & encourages spoken word.
- Activated via keyboard shortcut or voice.

Get Started

See how to enable these features in Settings.

Explore our accessibility video tutorials for more information and guidance on how to get the most out of your classroom devices.

Accessibility Shortcuts for Mac

Quickly toggle accessibility features like Zoom, VoiceOver, or Switch Control using a simple shortcut or Touch ID.

WATCH NOW

Zoom for Mac

Magnify any part of the screen, helping the user clearly view text & images. Offers full-screen or (PiP) zoom options.

WATCH NOW

Dark Mode for Mac

Reduces screen glare and eye strain, helpful during long periods by reducing bright, distracting interfaces.

WATCH NOW

Hover Text for Mac

Displays a large, high-contrast popup of any item the pointer hovers over, including buttons, text, or menu items.

WATCH NOW

Pointer Size for Mac

Enables adjustment of pointer size, contrast, and colour, making it easier to track across complex websites.

WATCH NOW

Text Size for Mac

Adjust system text size, making it easier to read menus, toolbars, and sidebar. Helps reduce visual strain.

WATCH NOW

Spoken Content for Mac

Reads out selected text, menu items, or content under the pointer, helping students access written information.

WATCH NOW

Head Tracking for Mac

Move the pointer using subtle head movements via Mac's built-in camera – Enables non-touch learners to navigate.

WATCH NOW

Speak to an Expert

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Our Education Consultants partner with institutions across the UK to deliver tailored Apple solutions that align with each project's financial, curriculum, and technical needs.

Ready to discuss? Reach out by email, phone, or book a meeting with our team.

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