



Empowering everyone with Windows 11

Accessibility tools in Windows

[ACCESSIBILITY](#)

[START >](#)



A more accessible Windows

Accessible technology is a fundamental building block that can **unlock opportunities** in every part of society.

By making **Windows 11** a more accessible experience, it has the power to contribute to more education and employment opportunities for people with disabilities across the world.

*In this story, we'll help you **become familiar with Windows 11 accessibility features** so you can help empower your customers to achieve more.*



Nothing about us without us

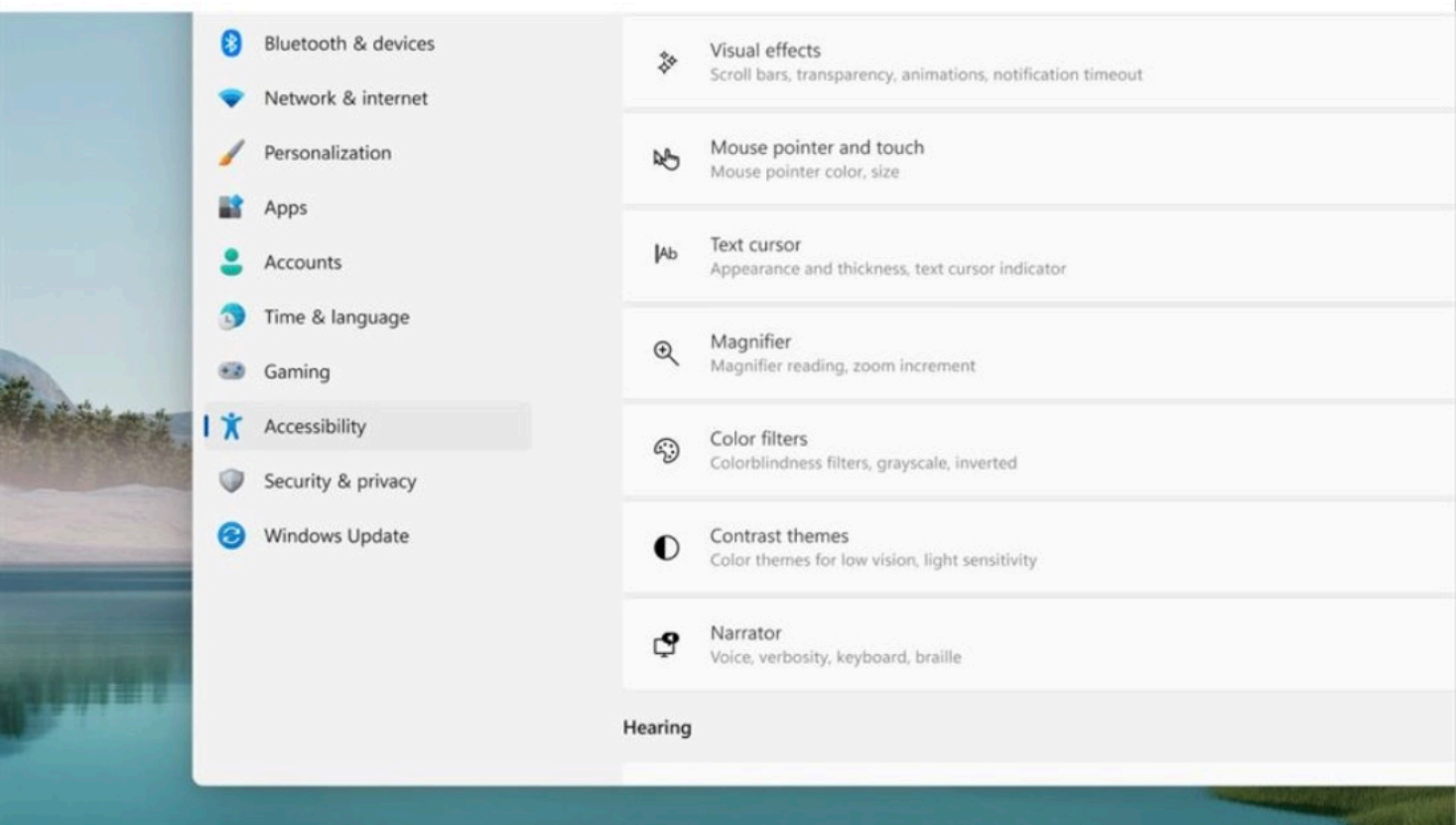


As a key priority at Microsoft, **accessibility is not optional**. It's about **creating experiences that are inclusive** of the 1 billion people with disabilities around the world.

Which is why, when it came to designing Windows 11, Microsoft **involved the disability community right from the start**. By inviting them into the design process, the new Windows is **more accessible than ever** with a host of innovative updates.



The new Accessibility pane



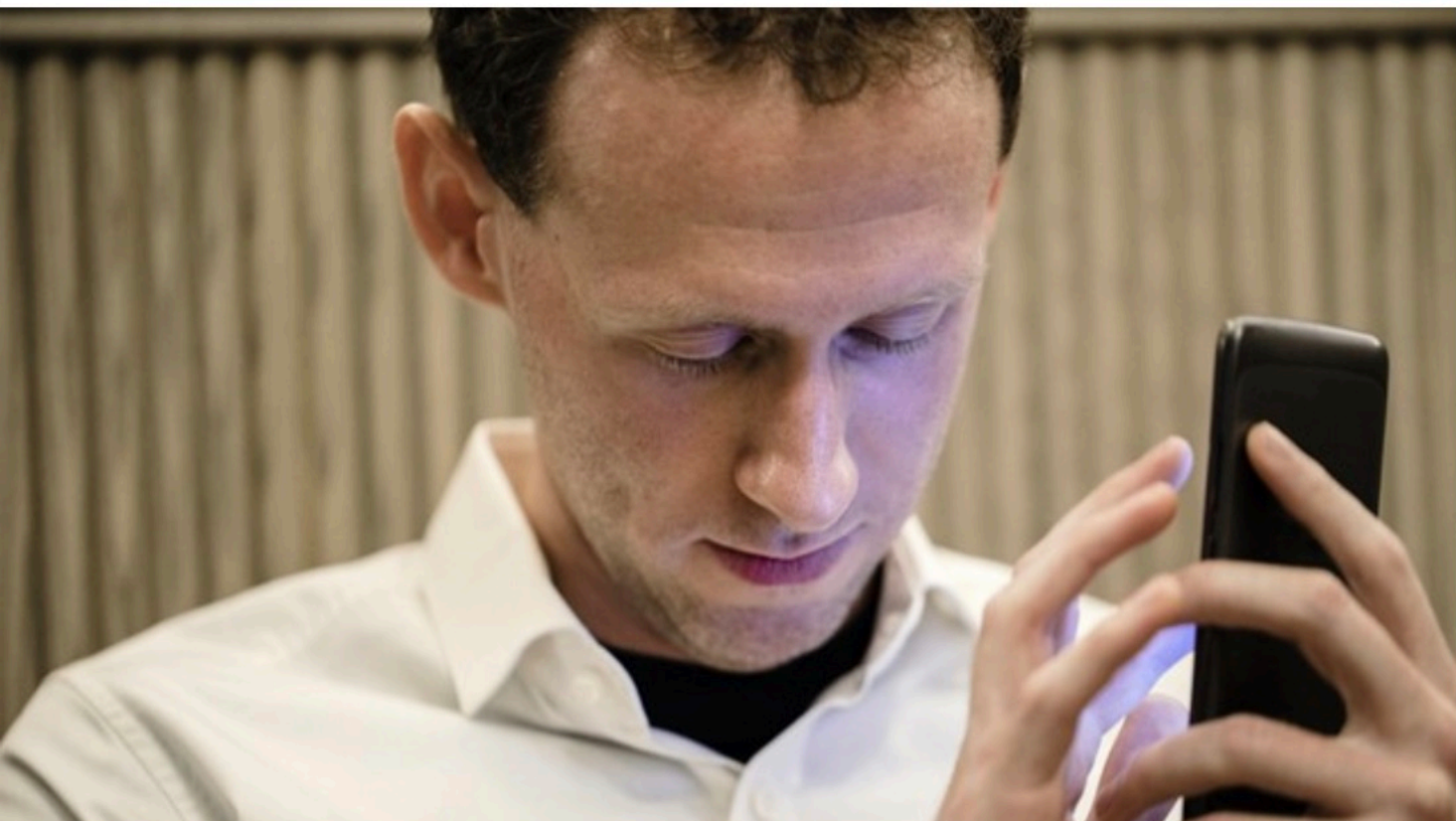
In previous versions of Windows, most accessibility settings could be found through Ease of Access.

This has been **changed in Windows 11** to make it **easier to use and find** all the built-in accessibility features Windows offers. Most features are now in the **new Accessibility pane** located in **Windows 11 settings**.

Start > Settings > Accessibility



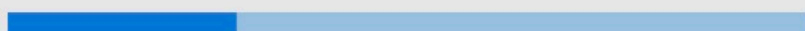
Make Windows easier to see



From the ability to personalize your viewing experience with adjustable size settings to color filters and narration, there are numerous features and options to help empower people with visual disabilities to work effectively.

Let's take a look at some Windows 11 accessibility features that help make Windows easier to see.

[LEARN MORE >](#)



Tools to help you see

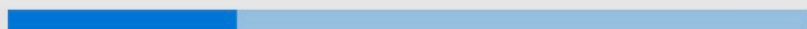
Most **Windows accessibility tools for vision** can be found in settings.

To access them, just select:

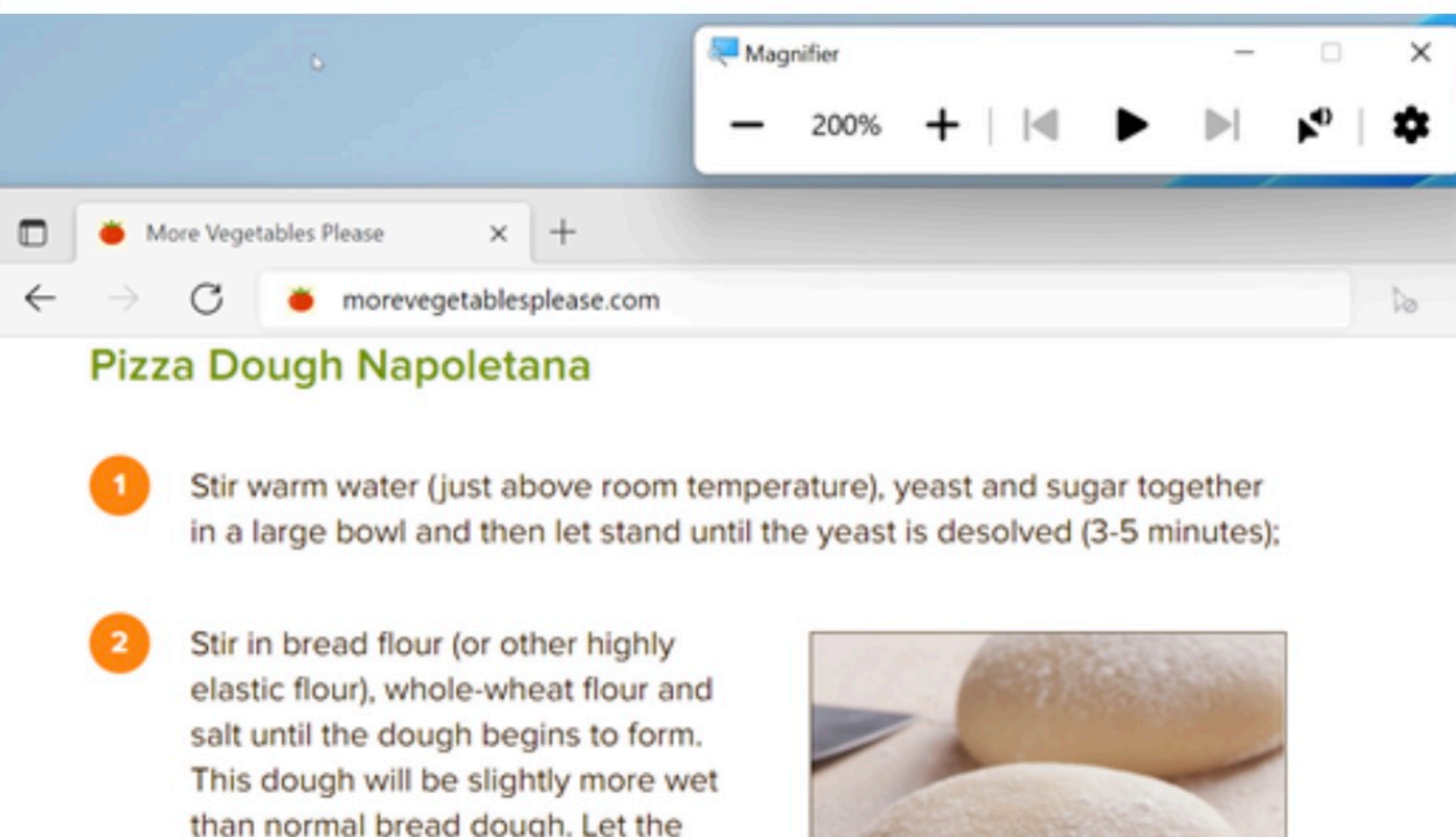
Start > Settings > Accessibility > Vision
and then choose your **tool**.



CLOSE



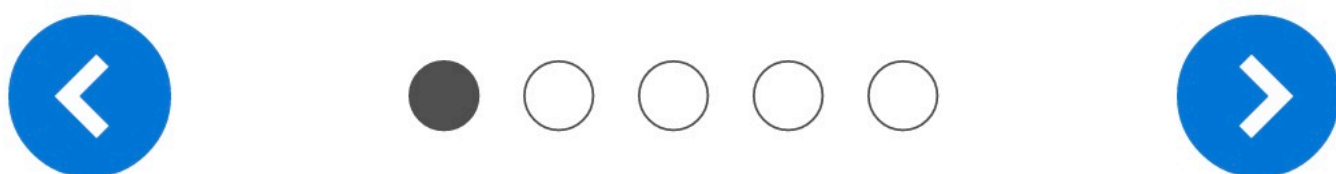
Visual tools



Adjust size

Tools like [Magnifier](#) allow you to customize the size of words and images to make things on the screen easier to see. Use them on all or part of the screen.

Tip: To hear your text in Magnifier, select Ctrl + Alt + Enter.

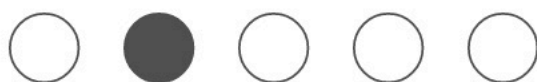


Visual tools

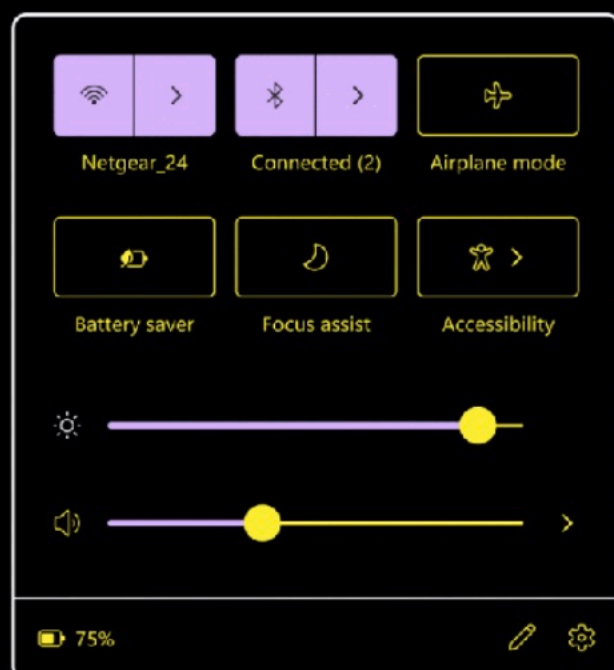


Color filters

Make photos, text, and colors easier to see by applying a color filter to your screen. Color filters **change the color palette** on the screen and can help you distinguish between things that differ only by color. [Learn to use color filters.](#)

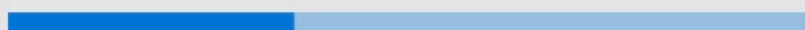
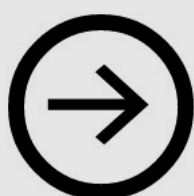
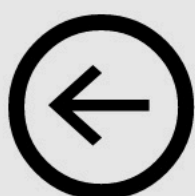


Visual tools



Themes

Whether you're sensitive to light or just work long hours in front of a screen, you can use the new **Dark themes** and **Contrast themes** in Windows 11 to **reduce screen brightness** and **increase contrast**—without sacrificing aesthetics. [Explore high contrast themes.](#)



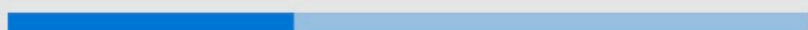
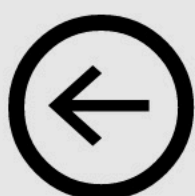
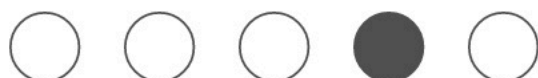
Visual tools



Narrator

Narrator is the built-in screen reader in Windows that **reads aloud** what's on your screen so you can use that information to navigate your PC. To start or stop **Narrator**, select **Windows + Ctrl + Enter**.


[Learn more about Narrator.](#)



Visual tools

Accessibility > Mouse pointer and touch

Mouse pointer

 Mouse pointer style



 Size



Know where you're pointing

Change the **color and size** of your mouse pointer, add pointer trails so you can see where your mouse is moving on the screen, and even change the speed of the pointer's movement.

To try it, go to **Start > Settings > Accessibility > Mouse pointer and touch**.

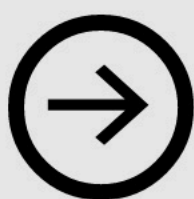


Using a Screen Reader



People with visual impairments can use their keyboard and a screen reader to **explore and navigate the [Start menu](#), [File Explorer](#), and [Settings](#) in Windows 11.**

They're also able to record their screen with the [Xbox Game Bar](#) and perform basic tasks such as searching for feedback, upvoting, commenting, and sharing in the [Windows Feedback Hub](#).



Make Windows easier to hear

Accessibility > Audio

Make your device easier to hear or use without sound.



Mono audio

Combine left and right audio channels into one.

On



Flash my screen during audio notifications

Never



Related settings



Sound

Volume levels, output, input, balance level, sound devices



App volume and device preferences

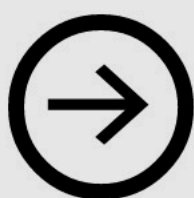
Volume levels per app, speakers



From captioning to audio options—if you have difficulty hearing your computer, Windows 11 has settings and features that can help.

Let's take a look at some of the accessibility features in Windows 11 that help make it easier to hear.

LEARN MORE >



Tools to help you hear

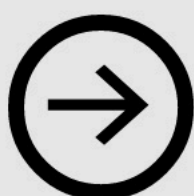
Most **Windows accessibility tools for hearing** can be found in settings.

To access them, just select:

Start > Settings > Accessibility > Hearing
and then choose your **tool**.



CLOSE

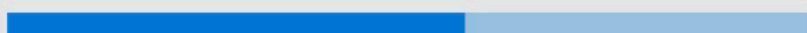


Audio tools

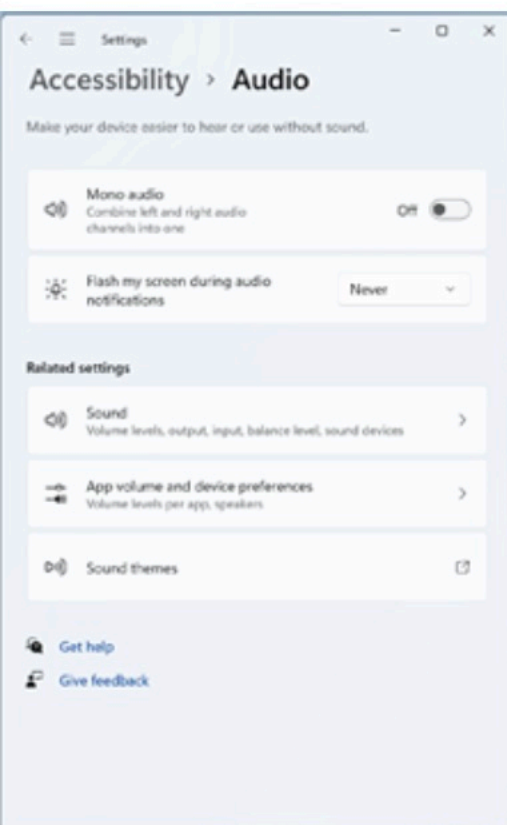


Hear all sounds in one channel

If you have partial hearing loss or deafness in one ear, Windows 11 lets you **convert stereo sound into a single channel**, even if you're using just one headphone. To use it, go to **Start > Settings > Accessibility > Audio**, then switch on the **Mono audio** toggle.

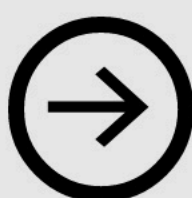


Audio tools

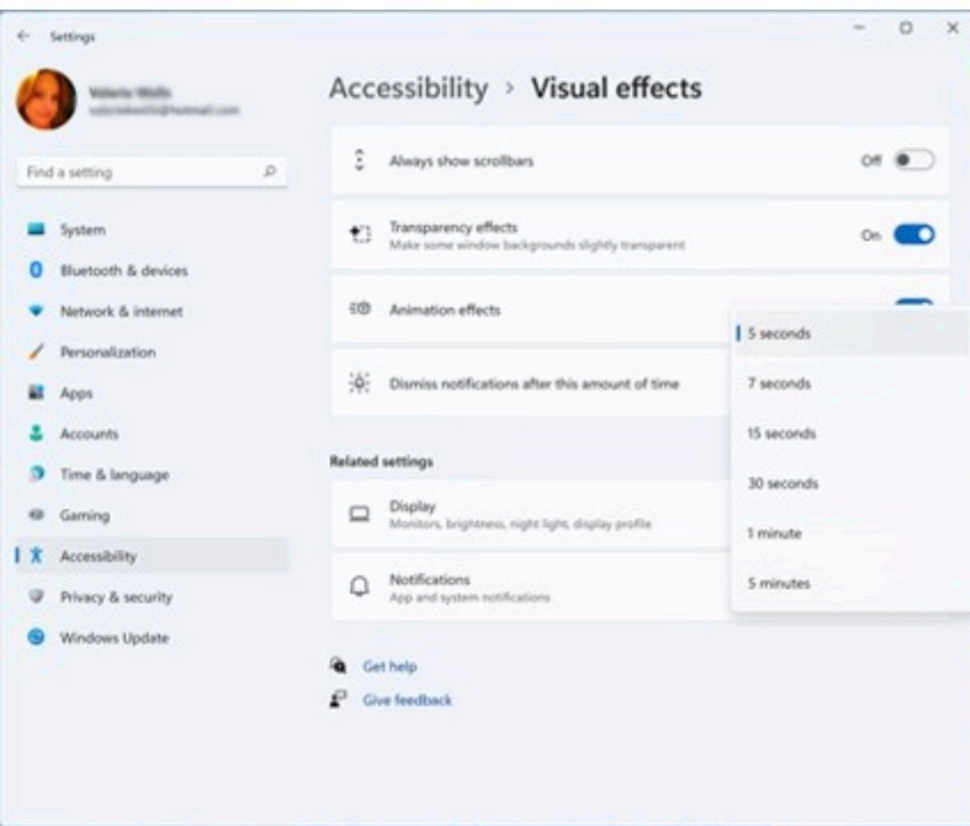


Display audio alerts visually

If you have trouble hearing audio alerts, you can choose to have your PC display them visually. Make the title bar of the active window, the active window, or the entire screen **flash when a notification arrives**—instead of relying on sound alone. [Learn how.](#)



Audio tools

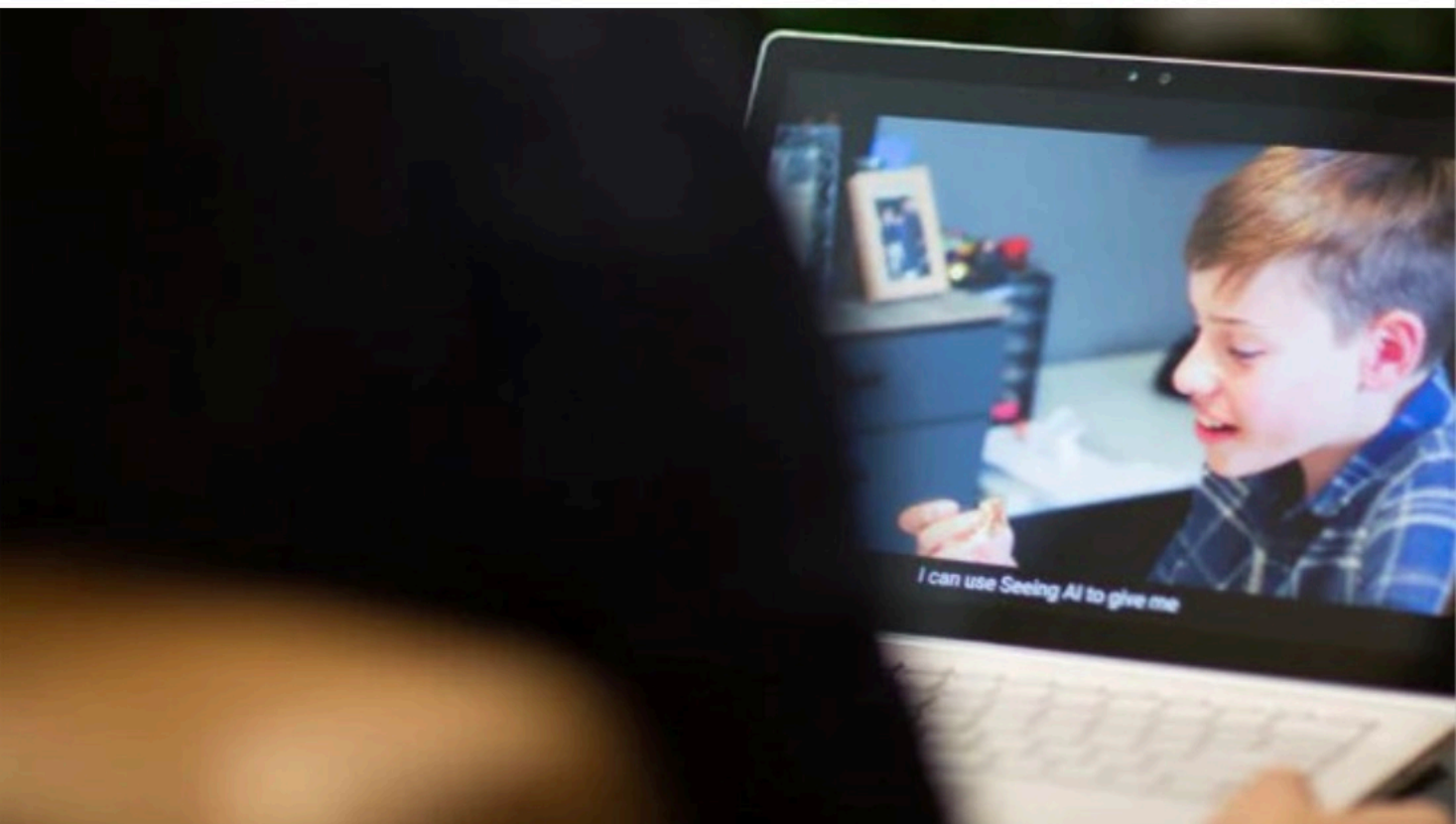


Keep notifications up longer

By default, Windows notifications disappear five seconds after they appear. If you want **more time to read them**, you can increase how long they're displayed. [Adjust your notification settings.](#)

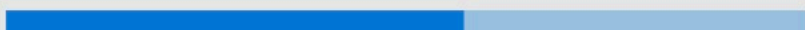
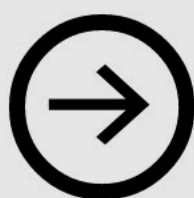
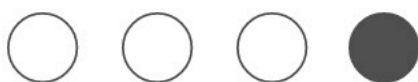


Audio tools



Closed captions

Whether you're deaf, hard of hearing, or learning a new language, you can use captions to **read the spoken words** in the videos you watch. And with caption themes in Windows 11, it's easy to [customize your experience](#). Learn how to use live captions in [Microsoft Teams](#).



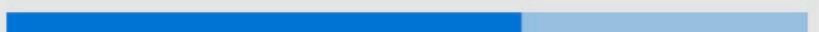
Enable focus and clarity



Everyone's brain is wired a bit differently. While some people find animations and background images helpful, others can find them distracting.

Let's look at how Windows 11 helps unlock your potential with tools that enhance focus, attention, reading comprehension, and more.

REDUCE DISTRACTIONS >



Minimize distractions

- **Minimize your visual distractions** by turning off animations, background images, and more in **Settings > Accessibility > Visual effects**.
- To automatically hide the scrollbars in Windows, turn off **Always show scrollbars**.
- To make some window backgrounds more opaque, turn off **Transparency effects**.
- If you don't want Windows to show animations, turn off **Animation effects**.
- To define how long notifications are shown, expand the **Dismiss notifications after this amount of time** menu and select the option you want.



CLOSE



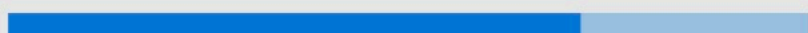
Neurodiversity tools



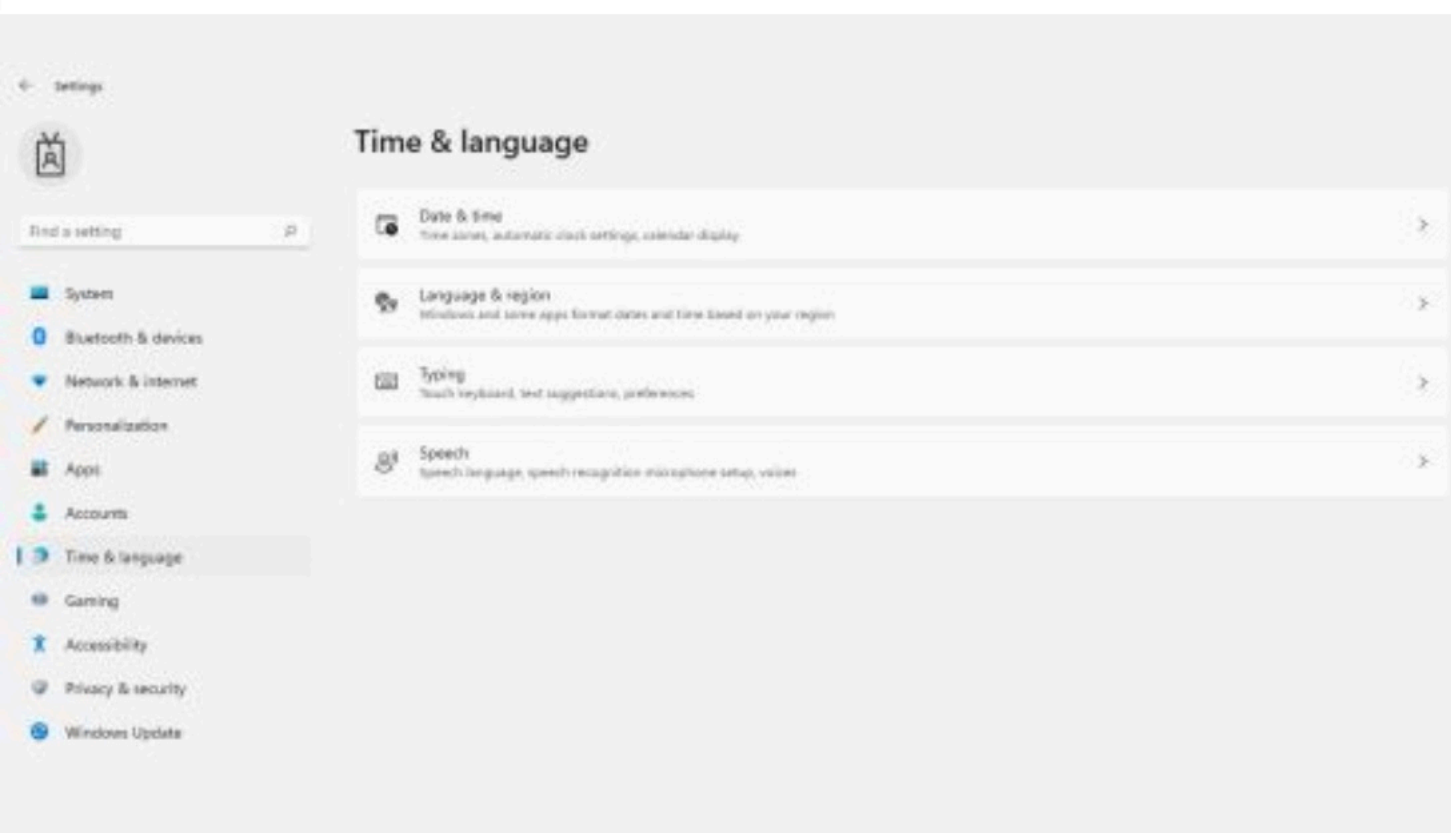
Simplify your Start menu

To reduce distractions and select what you want to see in the Start menu, such as apps, recently opened items, or folders, go to:

Start > Settings > Personalization > Start

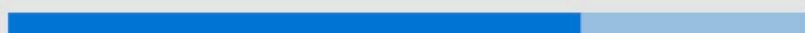
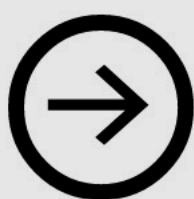
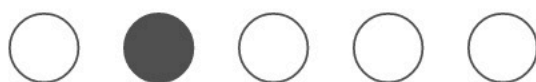


Neurodiversity tools

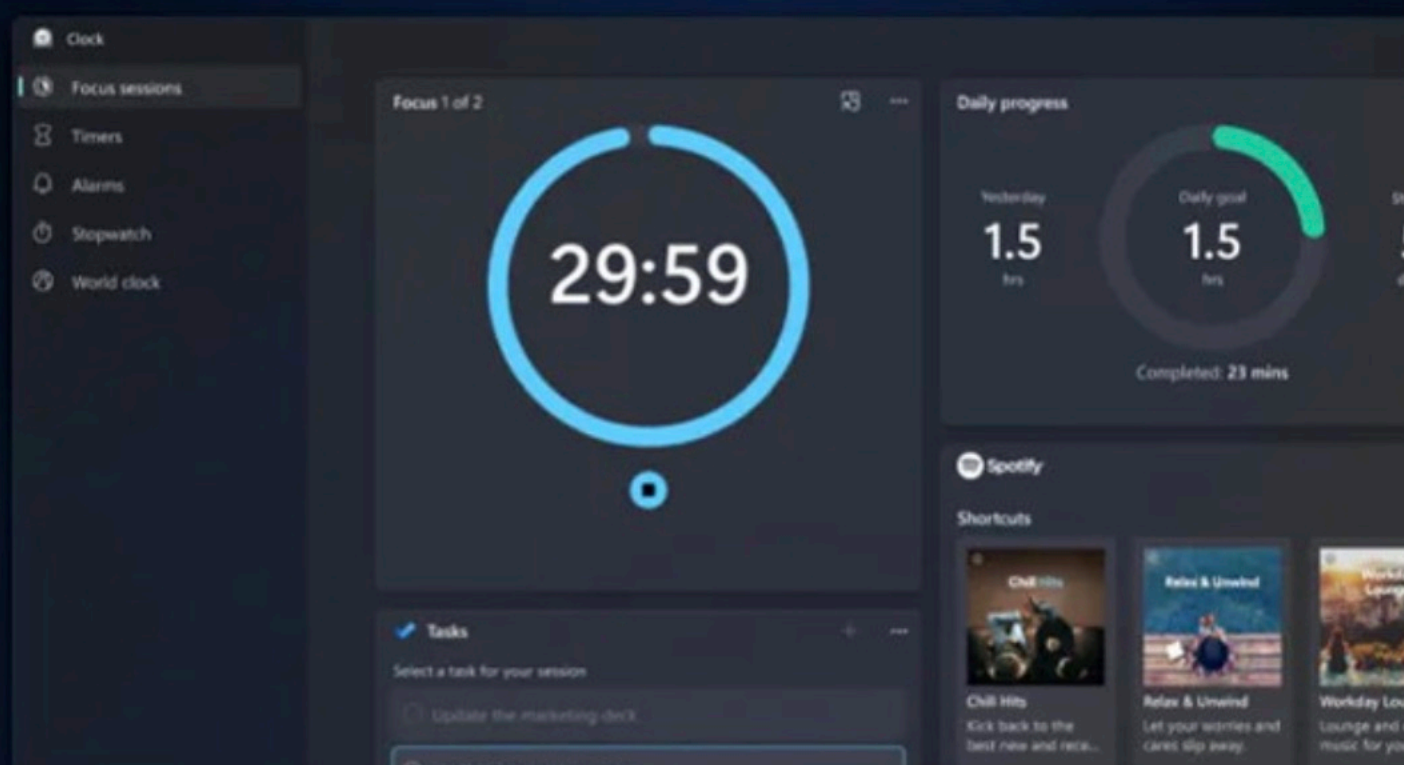


Type with confidence

[Turn on text suggestions](#) in Windows 11 to quickly complete challenging words. As you type, **suggestions appear** above your cursor, and you can easily select the one you want. To use text prediction in several languages, turn on **Multilingual text suggestions**.

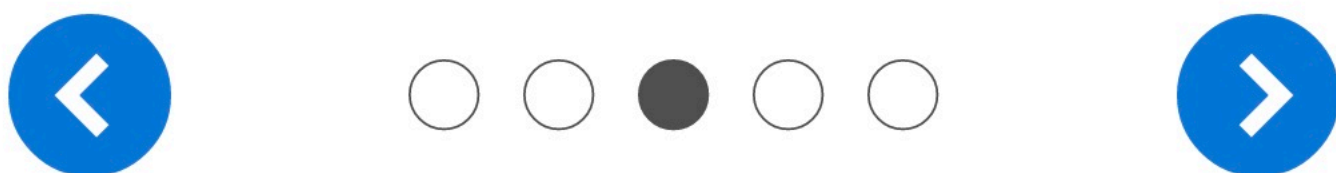


Neurodiversity tools

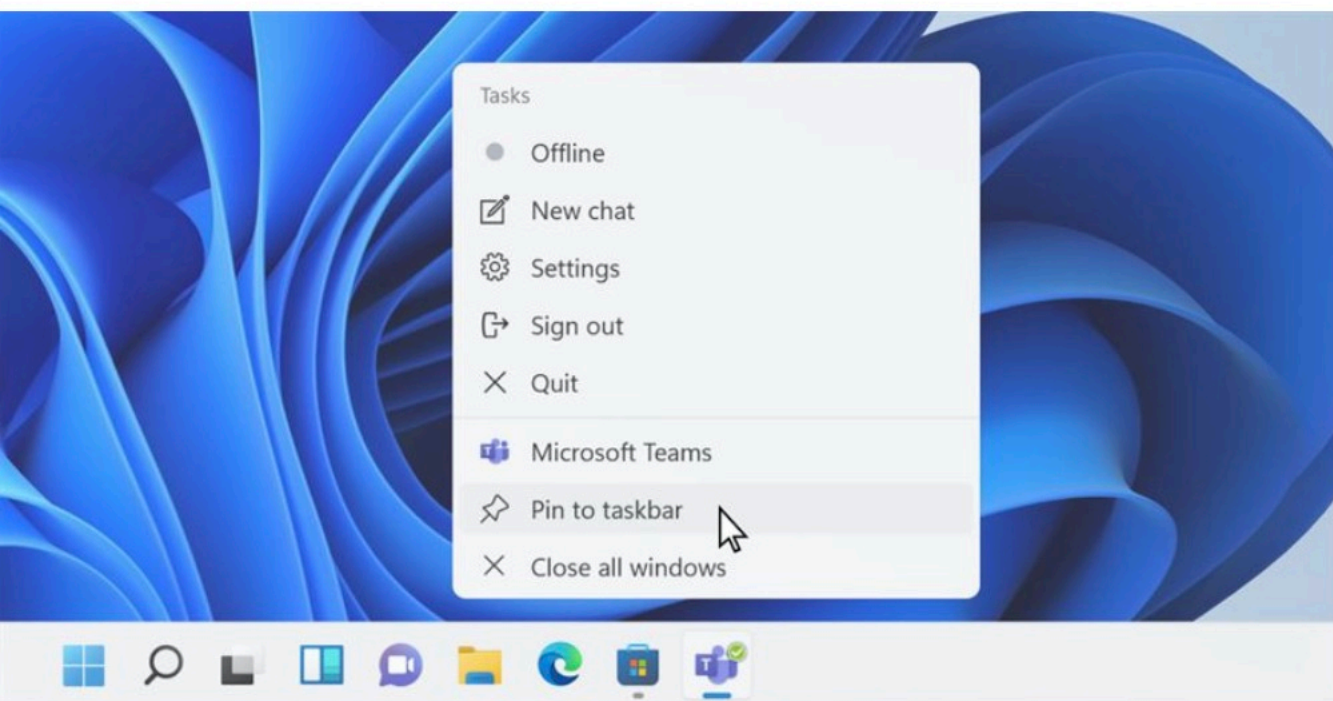


Focus assist

Use [Focus assist](#) to **define which notifications you see and hear** and when. You can also modify the notifications settings to **choose which apps display notifications**. The rest of the notifications go to the Notification center where you can see them at any time.



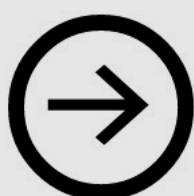
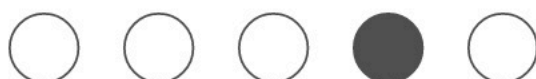
Neurodiversity tools



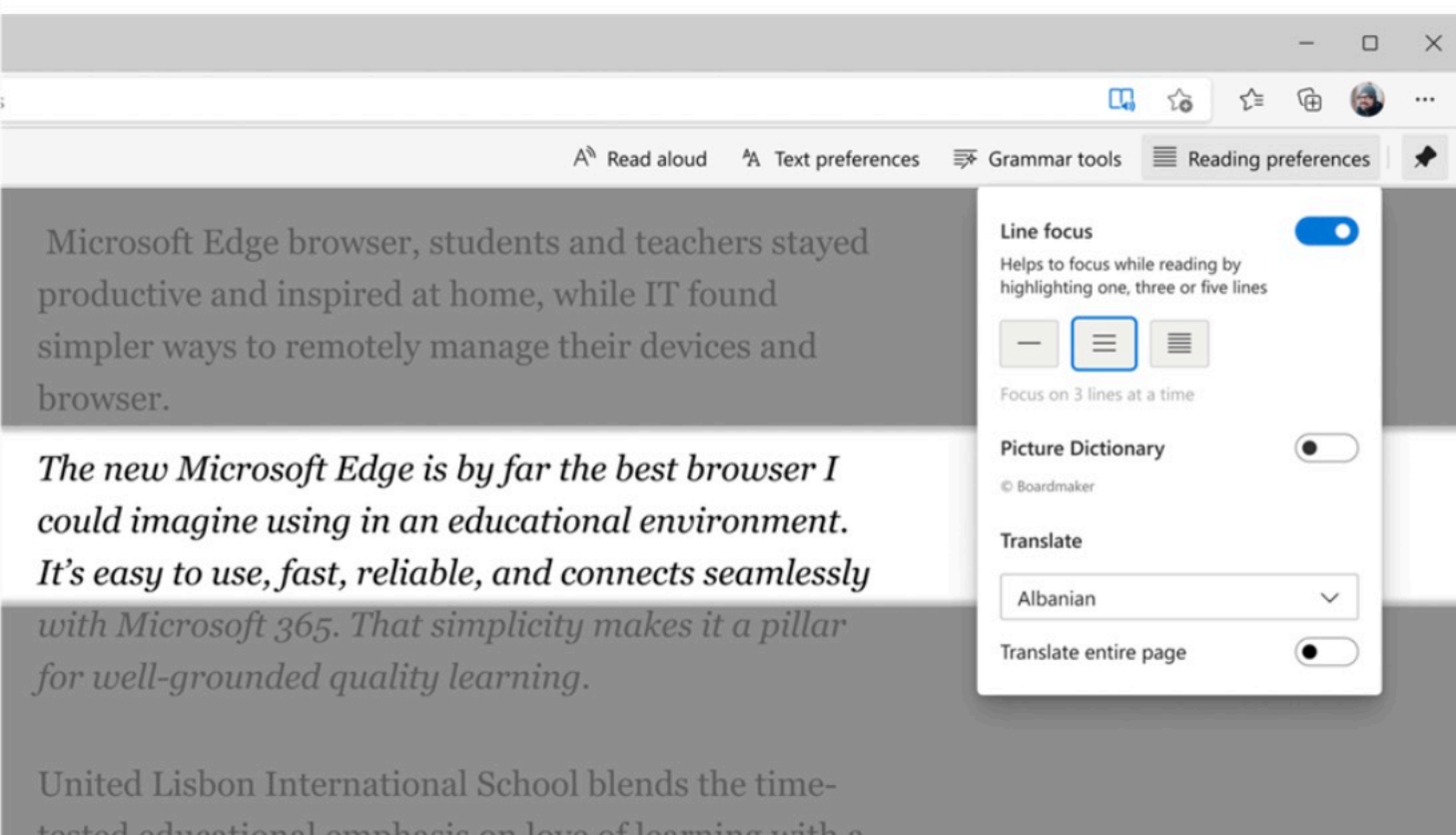
Customize your taskbar

Use the [taskbar](#) in Windows 11 for more than seeing your apps and checking the time.

Personalize it by **changing the color**, **pinning your favorite apps**, and moving or **rearranging taskbar buttons**.

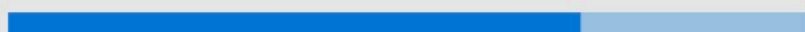


Neurodiversity tools



Immersive Reader in Microsoft Edge

Improve reading fluency, comprehension, and focus by removing visual clutter, customizing text spacing, or zooming in on a few lines of text at a time. [Learn how](#) to use **Immersive Reader in Edge**.



Navigate the digital world

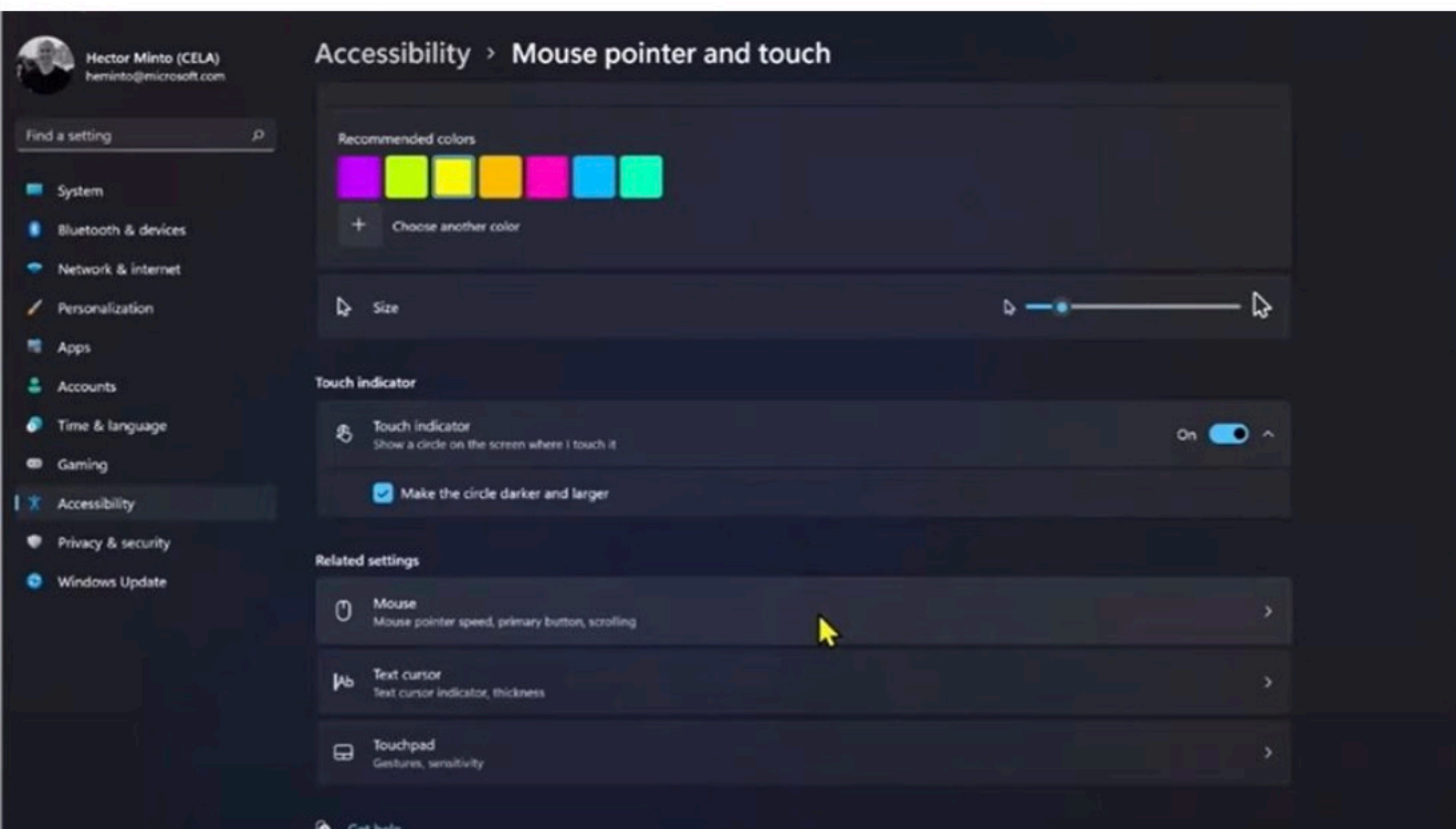


Microsoft's suite of products help people living with arthritis, quadriplegia, spinal cord injuries, and other mobility issues to navigate the digital world in non-traditional ways.

Let's take a look at some Windows 11 tools that can help empower people with mobility challenges.

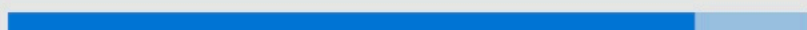


Mobility tools

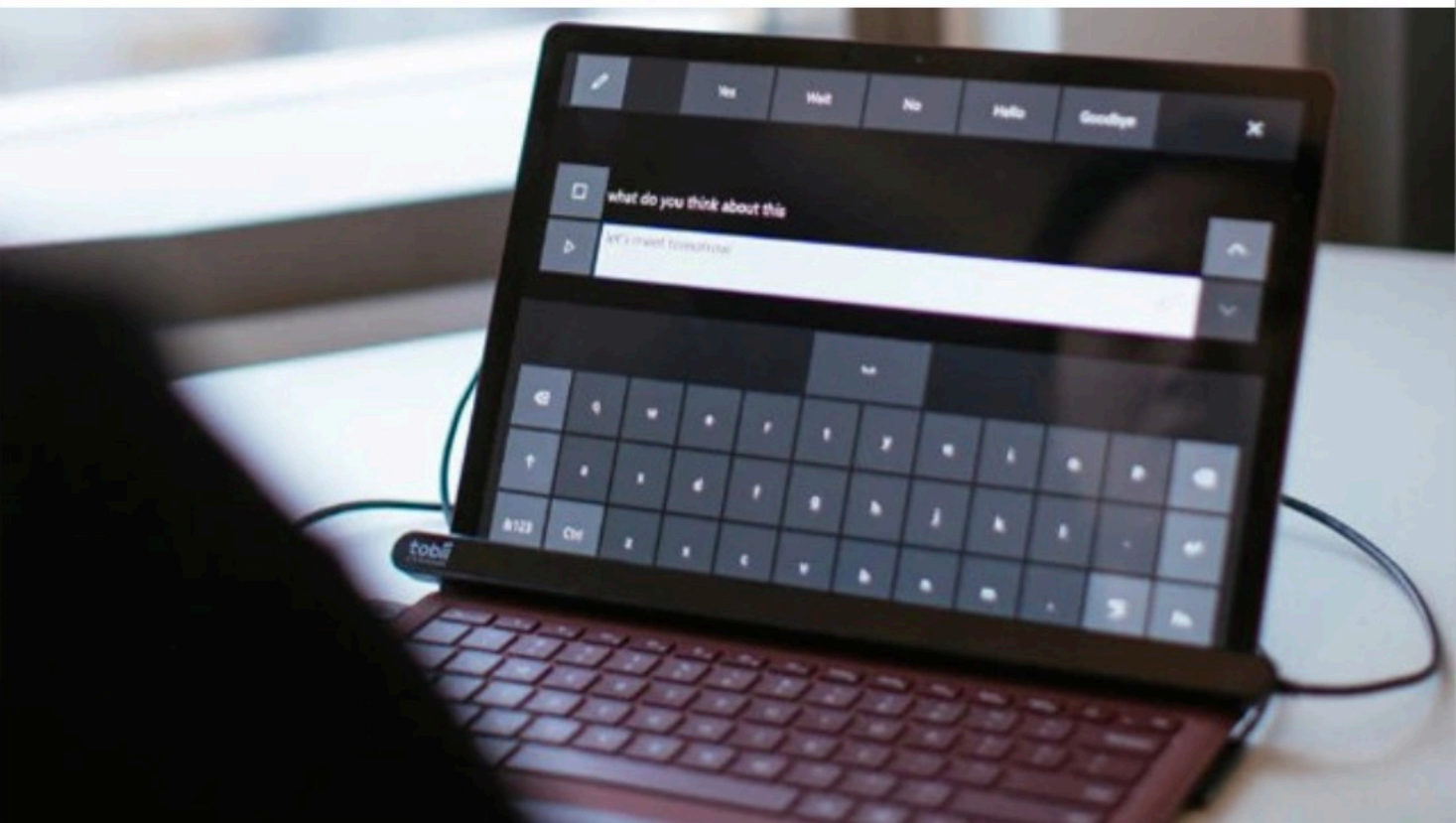


Make your mouse and keyboard easier to use

Change the shape and color of the mouse pointer or use **Mouse Keys** to **move the mouse pointer with the numeric keypad**. If you have trouble pressing two keys at the same time, **Sticky Keys** let you type commands one key at a time. [Make devices easier to use.](#)

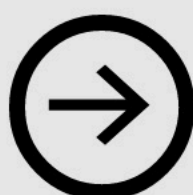
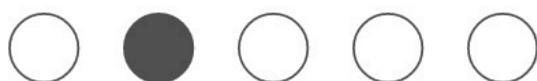


Mobility tools



Type with your eyes

Eye control makes it easy and efficient to control Windows and apps. With a variety of **eye tracking enabled cameras** and a simple-to-use launch pad, your eyes have the power to control anything on the screen (eye tracking hardware sold separately). [Get started.](#)

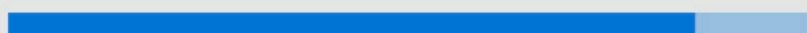


Mobility tools

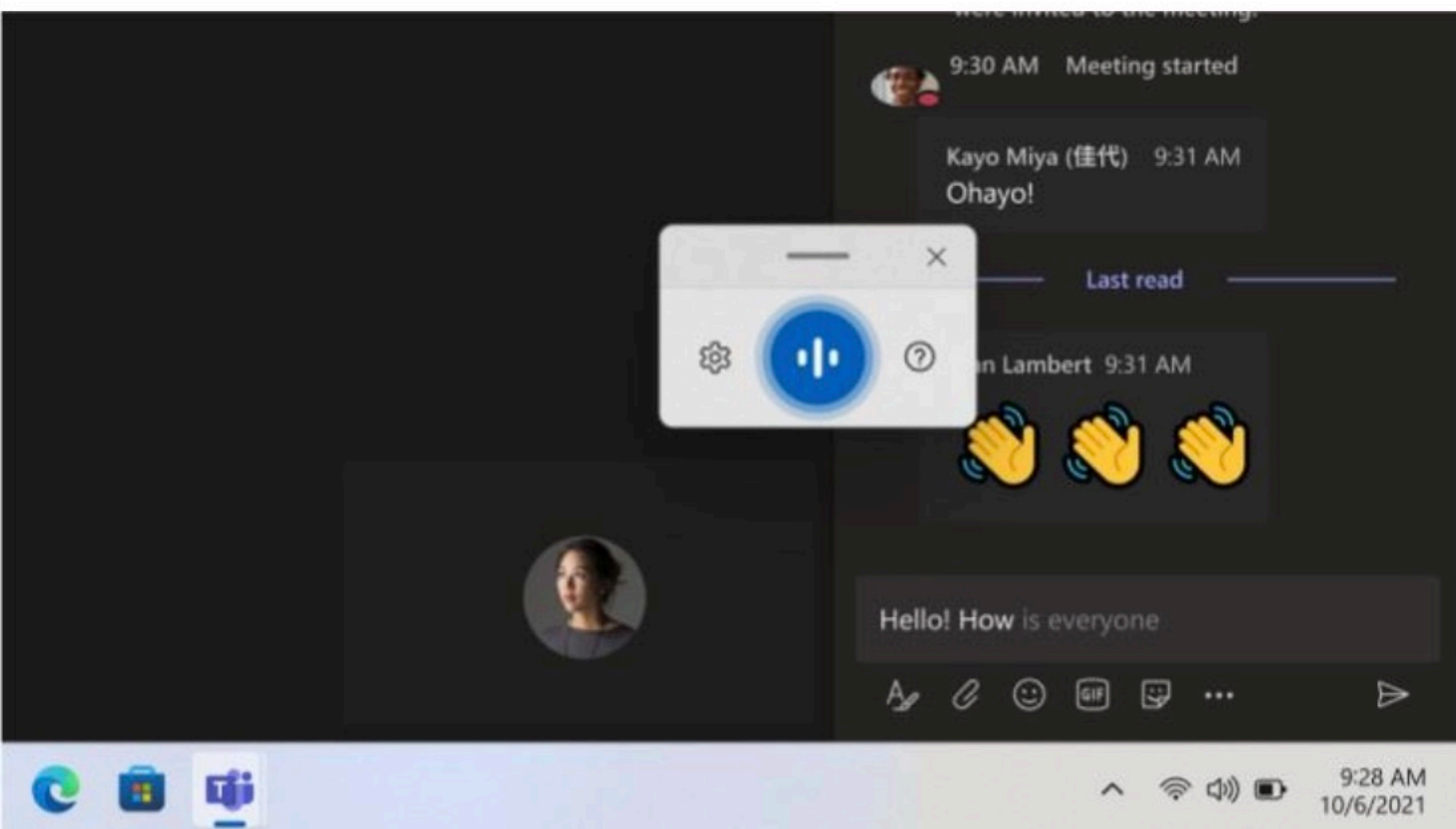


Log in your way

Use the more personal, more secure way to get instant access to your Windows 11 devices using a PIN, facial recognition, or fingerprint. With [Windows Hello](#), you can **quickly and securely sign-in with just a look or touch**, (requires specialized hardware).



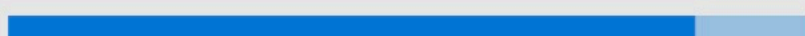
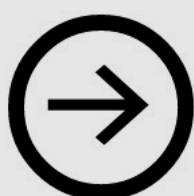
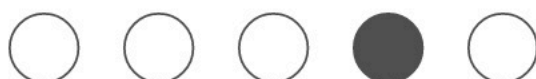
Mobility tools



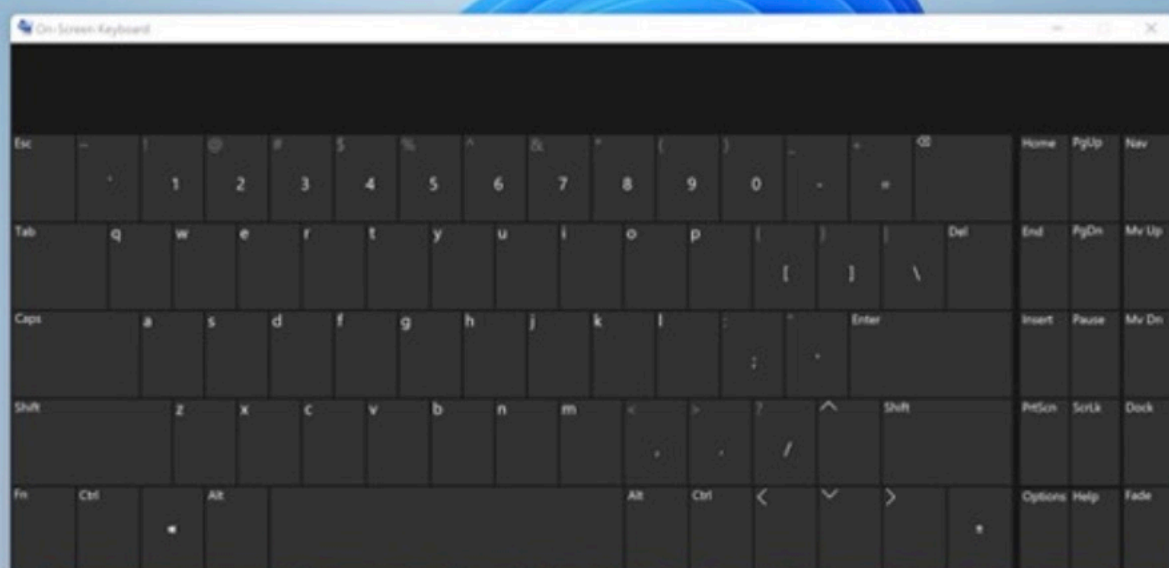
Type and navigate with your voice

Whether you're composing a document, emailing a friend, or surfing the web, dictation will convert your speech to text—and with the power of AI, it will even take care of the punctuation!

[Learn](#) to type with your voice in Windows 11.

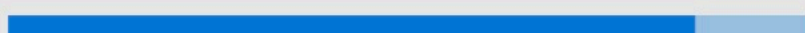
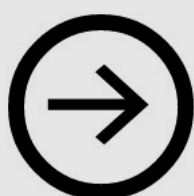
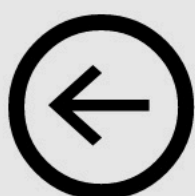


Mobility tools

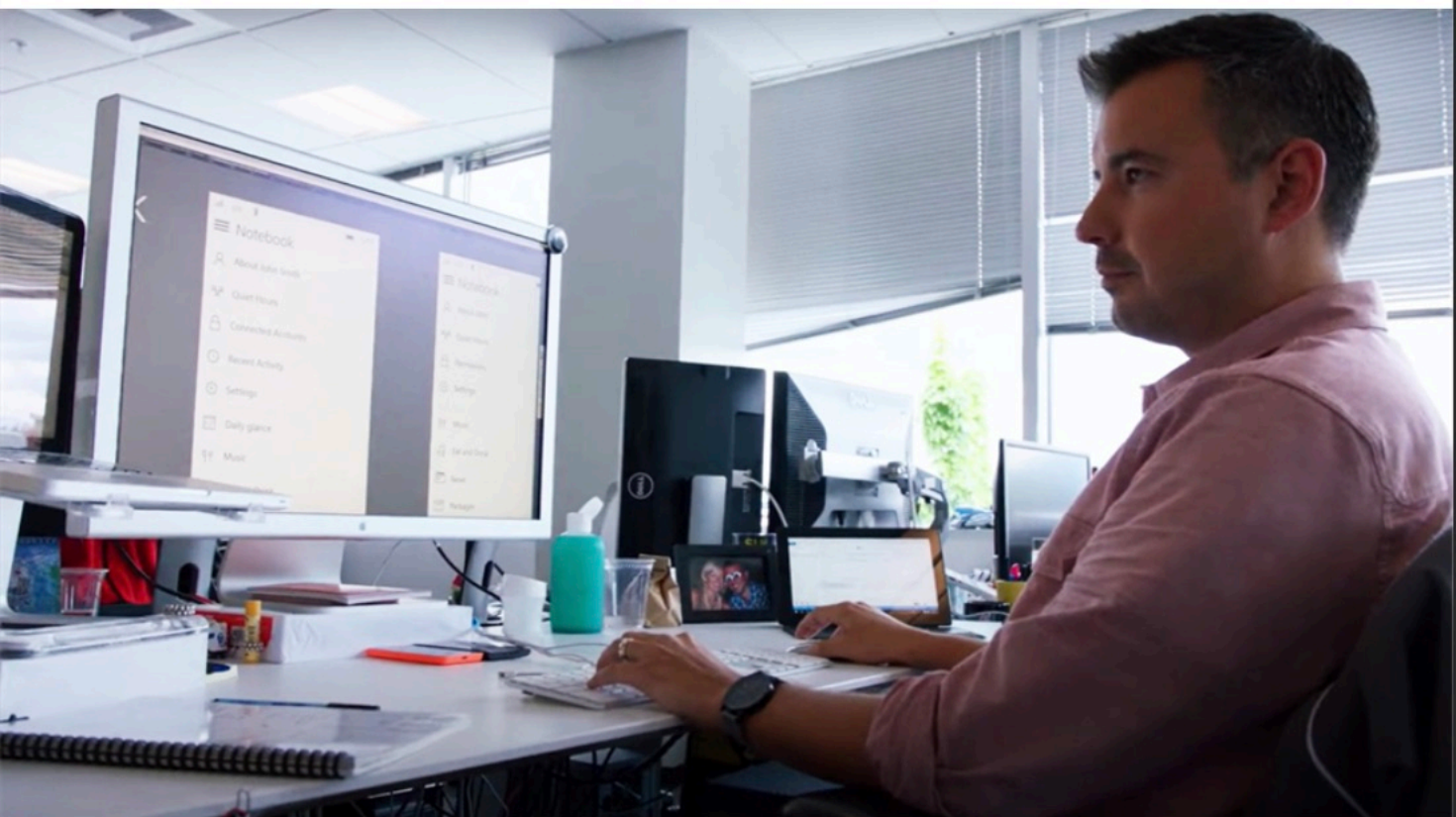


Type without a keyboard

As a **built-in Accessibility tool**, the [On-Screen Keyboard](#) (OSK) displays a **visual keyboard** with all the standard keys. This allows you to use your mouse or another pointing device to select keys, or use a physical single key or group of keys without the need for a touchscreen.



Support resources



One of the best resources where your customers with disabilities can get support with Windows, Microsoft Teams, Xbox, and other Microsoft products is the [Disability Answer Desk](#).

Here they can **get help with product issues, accessibility questions,** and the use of **assistive technology**.

This one hour [Windows 11 Accessibility webinar](#) also has many of the topics we've covered in this Story.





Accessibility is a priority

As the **most inclusively designed version of Windows**, Windows 11 is empowering people with disabilities to achieve more.

And by **integrating accessibility and inclusive design** throughout both our products and culture, we are working to ensure our products are accessible to more people than ever before.

Let your customers know that providing accessible experiences is a priority for Microsoft, and keep checking ExpertZone for more helpful accessibility tips.



Select 'X' to close.