# Android TalkBack

"Talk Back” is the name of the screen reader available on Android devices. This document sets out some useful information when using this feature and its settings.

For a more detailed breakdown of every aspect of the current TalkBack features visit [android accessibility](https://support.google.com/accessibility/android/answer/6006564?hl=en-GB#:~:text=Download%20Android%20Accessibility%20Suite%2C%20including,in%20to%20many%20Android%20devices.&text=Open%20your%20device's%20Settings%20app,apps%20and%20services%20for%20Android.), TalkBack. Also on our website is a copy of a list of **talkback gestures and keyboard shortcuts**

## Turn on TalkBack

There are three methods to activate Talkback.

### In settings

* Find and open Settings on the home screen.
* Select Accessibility, then select TalkBack.
* Select Use TalkBack.
* Tap OK.

### Use Shortcut

The default accessibility shortcut is holding down both volume buttons at the same time for a few seconds. Initially you will be asked to confirm if you want to turn on the volume keys shortcut. To confirm, you can select ‘Turn on’ or press both volume keys together again for a few seconds. It may not work first time on all devices in which case you will have to set up the accessibility shortcut in settings.

### TalkBack out the Box

On setting up a new phone you can activate TalkBack by pressing and holding two fingers on the screen at set up. TalkBack will commence when the device recognises this gesture and will automatically start a tutorial.

## General and essential TalkBack controls

TalkBack uses a series of gestures to efficiently navigate and interact with the screen.

### Unlock the phone

* locate the home button and double tap
* swipe up from the bottom with two fingers.

### Home screen

Go to the home screen from anywhere by swiping up then left.

### Calls

By default, TalkBack will announce the identity of an incoming call from here you can

* Swipe right to answer
* Swipe left to decline
* Swipe up to decline and send a text.

It is recommended to lock the screen rotation when using TalkBack and also to activate the power button to end call feature. These can really simplify the user experience.

## Exploring the screen

### **Touch**

Touching the screen with one finger will read aloud whatever is under the finger. One finger double tap will activate the selected item (that which was last read aloud).

### Constant touch

By slowly dragging one finger around the screen, TalkBack will announce the icons, buttons and other items. Once your required item has been located, double tap anywhere on the screen to select the item.

### **Swipe**

One finger swipe to the left will move to the next item on the screen, swipe to the right will move back. Double Tap to activate.

## **Navigation Settings**

One finger swipe up or down moves through TalkBack’s navigation settings. Once the preferred setting has been selected perform the above swipe gestures to operate the chosen setting.

### **The navigation settings include the following options:**

* Headings: Navigate by headings.
* Links: Navigate by links, such as email addresses, phone numbers, websites, addresses or any other links on the screen.
* Controls: Navigate by tick boxes, radio buttons, switches, sliders (seek controls), text fields and buttons.
* Default: Explore every element on the page in logical order.

### **Global context menu**

This is one of the two menus available on TalkBack that help you navigate your way around the screen and systems. The Global context menu includes features that can be accessed anywhere and on every screen.

The default gesture to access this is a swipe down then right though this can be personalized in settings.

**The menu is either represented in a list or circle form**

* Circle, hold one finger and drag to go through the list – lift finger once you reach the desired setting.
* List, swipe left or right to move through the list. Double tap to activate the desired setting.

**The global context menu includes the following options:**

* Read from top: reads all text on the screen from top
* Read from next item: reads all text on the screen from current position.
* Repeat last utterance: repeats the last phrase spoken.
* Spell last utterance: spells aloud the last phrase spoken.
* Copy last utterance to clipboard: copies the last phrase said to allow you to paste in a message or post.
* Screen search: type a word or item to locate it on the screen

(in the circle menu this appears in the top left of the screen).

* Text to speech settings: Open text to speech settings

(In circle menu this appears in the bottom right of the screen).

* Hide screen: sets a black screen for privacy (and to save battery)

(in circle menu this appears in the bottom left of screen).

## **Local context menu**

The second navigation menu this has features which are relevant to the app, screen or focus that talkback is on.

The default gesture to access the local context menu is a swipe up then right though this can be altered in settings.

From here the local context menu is navigated in the same way as the global context menu. The features will vary depending on what the focus is on.

## **Read continuously**

To read everything on your screen continuously:

* Swipe down then right to open the global context menu then go through the list to find either Read from top or Read from next item, double-tap to select.
* Tap with one finger to stop reading.
* Talkback won't stop reading until there is nothing left to read – at the end of a page it will automatically move on to the next one.

To skip forwards or backwards during continuous reading:

* On the screen, swipe right or left.
* If you're using a keyboard, press Alt + right arrow or Alt + left arrow.

### Shake to start continuous reading

A shortcut to read the text from the top of the screen – alternative is to use the global context menu. By setting this to on talkback will read all text on the screen when the device is shaken. Handy for long documents or emails.

## Talkback volume

### Change TalkBack volume

Hold a finger on the screen as you adjust the volume controls to change the TalkBack volume separate to that of other sources (music, podcases etc).

### Change earcon volume

It is possible to alter the volume of the other sounds that are made by TalkBack. Here they can be adjusted to suit preference.

### Audio ducking

While you can lessen the volume of talkback and its sounds it is still extremely important to hear what is being said. This lessens the sound of other media when TalkBack is relaying information.

## Editing text

If the focus is on an edit field (text box) the virtual on-screen keyboard will appear. It is worthwhile getting some practise moving your fingers around the keyboard to become familiar with the layout.

**Typing on the onscreen keyboard**

* Move your finger over the screen on the keyboard till you find the letter or character you are looking for.
* Lift your finger to type.
* pressing the volume up or down keys will move through the typed text character by character.

## Using the TalkBack braille keyboard

The TalkBack braille keyboard enables the user to type with an on screen six dot braille input. To use this, you must have TalkBack on and magnification off.

### **Braille keyboard set up**

* In the TalkBack settings select Braille keyboard.
* Select Tap to set up.
* In the dialogue, select Settings.
* Turn on TalkBack braille keyboard.
* Practise by bringing up the onscreen keyboard on an app where you can type.
* Select Switch input method.
* Select TalkBack braille keyboard.

### **Typing with TalkBack braille keyboard**

The steps below are also available in a tutorial on your device. To open the tutorial, three-finger swipe up on your screen. In the list of braille keyboard options, select Open tutorial.

To type using the onscreen Braille keyboard the device is held in landscape with the screen facing away. Allowing the first three fingers of each hand to rest on the dots to enable braille typing.

You can type in grade one and grade two braille.

### **Use gestures with the TalkBack braille keyboard**

* Delete letter: swipe left.
* Delete word: two-finger swipe left.
* Add space: swipe right.
* New line: two-finger swipe right.
* Submit text: two-finger swipe up.

To view a list of all gestures, three-finger swipe up on your screen. In the list of braille keyboard options, select See all gestures.

### **Hide the TalkBack braille keyboard**

* To hide the TalkBack braille keyboard, two-finger swipe down.
* To switch to your original keyboard, three-finger swipe down.

## External keyboard

**Check which keyboard you're using**

* Settings/system/language & input.
* Select keyboards – for English users use the google keyboard, others are available for download from the play store.

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