Windows laptop: Accessibility

Making Windows 10 easier and more comfortable to use.

The **Ease of Access** menu in **Windows Settings** can make Windows 10 easier to use in several ways, including making the text bigger, and the mouse easier to control. You can also use voice commands to get things done.

What you will need

Before you begin the course, your computer must have the latest edition of Windows, which is Windows 10. For more information about Windows 10, refer to the *Windows laptop: Security and privacy* guide. You should also check that your computer is connected to the internet via your home Wi-Fi and, if you're using a mouse, make sure that it's connected properly. You should be signed into your computer, and it should be showing the desktop.
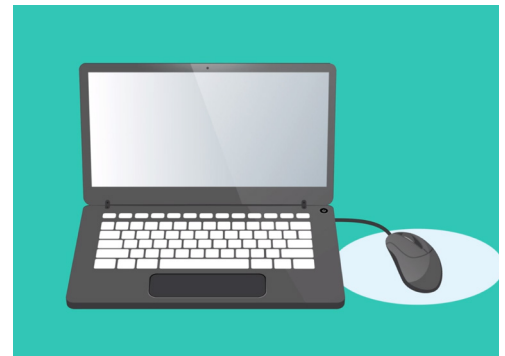
First steps

The **Ease of Access** menu is part of Windows Settings. To get **Windows Settings** up on the screen:

1. Click on the **Start** button in the bottom left corner of the Desktop. The **Start menu** will pop up.

2. On the left of the **Start menu**, find the small cog icon, and click it.

3. The **Windows Settings home panel** opens on the screen.

The **Windows Settings home panel** has various icons that let you access different options, grouped by topic. Click on any icon to explore the settings for that topic.

When you click an icon, **Windows Settings** shows a menu on the left, and options on the right. Any time you need to choose a different topic, click the **Home** icon in the top left of the screen, and the **Windows Settings home panel** will appear.

Most accessibility settings on your computer are found in the Ease of Access menu
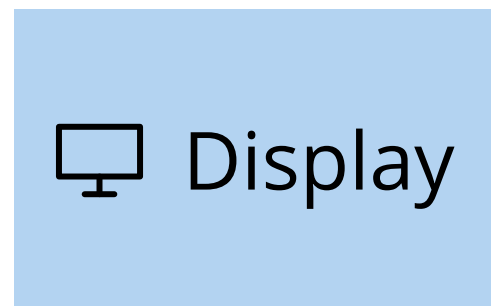
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Opening the Ease of Access options

When the **Windows Settings home panel** is on the screen, find and click the option called **Ease of Access.** The **Ease of Access** menu will appear on the left, and **Display** options on the right.

Making the text larger on the screen

To make all text on your computer larger and easier to read, look down the **Display** options until you see **Make text bigger**.

1. Find the sample text, and underneath, a slider control with a blue button.

2. Using your mouse, click on the button and slide it to the right to make text larger, and to the left to make it smaller.

3. The sample text will change size as you move the slider. When it's a size that suits, release the blue button and click **Apply**.

4. Your computer will show a **Please wait** screen for a moment, then all the text you can see will now be the size you have chosen.

Display

The Display setting lets you change the size of text and other items on the screen display options

Making everything larger on the screen

Changing the text size doesn't make icons, pictures, or anything else larger too. To change everything on the screen, look for **Change the size of apps and text on the main display.**

1. Click on the box underneath, and a list of percentages will appear. One of them has **(Recommended)** next to it, which is the default size for your computer.

2. Click on a larger percentage to make everything bigger. The screen will change right away.

There are many other options in **Ease of Access** and it's worth exploring them in your own time to see if they can help you.

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Making the mouse easier to use

The **mouse pointer** is the small arrow you see on the screen when you use your mouse. Sometimes the arrow is tricky to see because of its size, colour and how fast it moves.
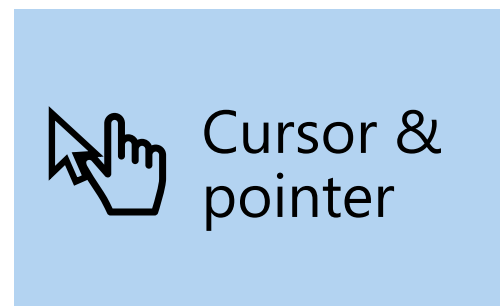
You can change these to suit you with **Cursor & pointer** options.

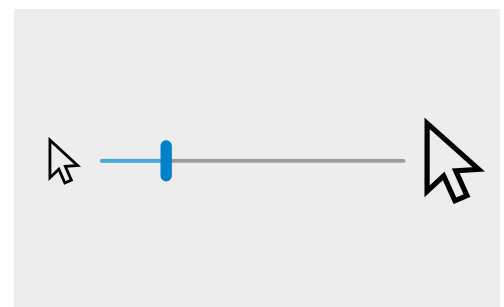To change the size and colour of the mouse pointer:

1. In **Windows Settings,** from the menu on the left, find and click **Cursor & pointer**. The options will appear on the right.

2. At the top, find **Change pointer size**. Underneath is a slider with a blue button. Use your mouse to slide the button to the right to make the pointer larger, and to the left to make it smaller. The pointer size changes right away.

3. To change the colour of the pointer, look under the slider control for four boxes, each showing a different mouse pointer.

4. Click on each box until you find the colour you like.

5. To set a custom colour, click on the colour box on the far right. Some colour options will appear underneath, and you can click the one you like.

6. If don't like any of these, click the grey square with the plus sign to see a colour chart. Choose a colour from the chart and click **Done**.

To change how fast the mouse pointer moves:

1. Look down the **Cursor & pointer** options until you see **Additional mouse settings** and click on it. You might need to use your mouse to scroll.

2. You will now see **Devices** in the left menu, and **Mouse** options on the right.

3. Under **Mouse,** look for **Related settings**. Under this, click on **Additional mouse options**.

Cursor & pointer

The Cursor & pointer setting lets you change the size of the mouse pointer

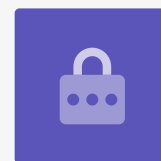A slider control increases and decreases the size of the mouse pointer

4. A little box will appear called **Mouse Properties**. In the box, click on **Pointer Options**.

5. The box will show a slider control, underneath the words **Select a pointer speed**. Use the mouse to slide the blue button to the left to make the mouse pointer move slower, and to the right to make it move faster.

6. When you've found a setting you like, click **OK** at the bottom of the box to save and return to **Windows Settings**.

The Mouse options let you change how fast the mouse pointer moves

It's usually safe to use Cortana, because your voice will be encrypted first so nobody else can understand it.

Using Cortana to give your computer voice commmands

Windows 10 comes with a voice control system called **Cortana.** To activate Cortana, look for a circle icon at the bottom of the screen, and click it.

Cortana's pop-up menu will appear. If this is the first time you've used Cortana, she might ask permission to get familiar with the way you talk.

If you're worried about this, click **Maybe Later**. You can keep using your computer without Cortana. If you're comfortable to continue, click **Sure.**

To ask Cortana a question, click the little microphone icon in the bottom right corner of her panel, and speak.
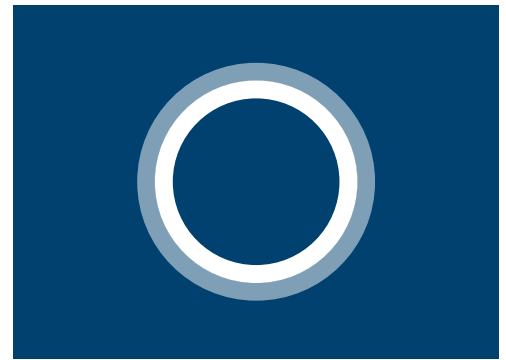
Making Cortana respond to "Hey Cortana"

It's convenient to have Cortana listen when you say the words **Hey Cortana**, but this feature needs to be switched on.

To get started, look back at **Windows Settings** and click the **Home** icon.

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1. From the **Windows Settings home panel**, click **Cortana.**

2. The Cortana menu appears, with **Talk to Cortana** options on the right.

3. In the options, find **Hey Cortana** and look for a switch under **Let Cortana respond to 'Hey Cortana'.**

4. When the switch is white, the feature is off. Click the switch to make it blue, and turn **Hey Cortana** on.

5. A tick box will appear and tell you your computer's **Sleep** function is now switched off. This means you can say **Hey Cortana** at any time, including when the computer is switched on but showing a black screen.

The icon for Cortana, your computer's voice and search assistant

If you can't see any of these options, it means your computer doesn't support the **Hey Cortana** function. You can still ask Cortana questions, but you have to click on her icon and type the question in.

Testing "Hey Cortana"

To test Cortana, say "**Hey Cortana"** in a clear voice. Either the whole screen will go black, with Cortana's icon in the middle, or Cortana will only appear in a small box at the bottom.

Which one happens depends on whether Cortana thinks you are busy with something else on the screen. She's considerate like that!

To use Cortana:

1. After saying "**Hey Cortana",** ask a question in a clear voice. For instance, ask Cortana to do a web search by saying **"Show me some picture of cattle dogs"**.

2. Cortana will open your computer's web browser and do an image search for cattle dogs. She will then show you a selection of pictures.

3. To learn how to give Cortana more advanced instructions, such as taking dictation or changing computer settings, say **"Hey Cortana, what can you do?"**.

4. Cortana will show a screen with lots of suggestions for commands she can understand.