

Mac Basics: Dictation lets you speak text instead of typing

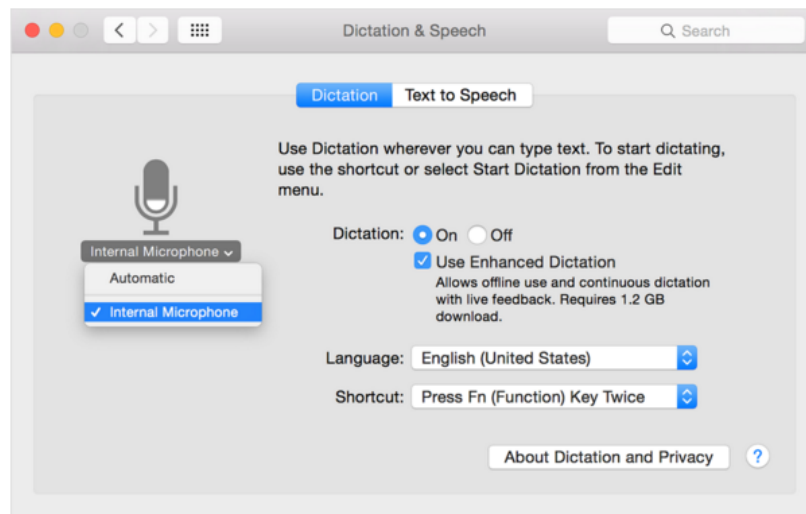
With Dictation, you can use your voice instead of typing text. No setup or special training is required.

Getting started with Dictation

Use these steps to turn Dictation on or off:

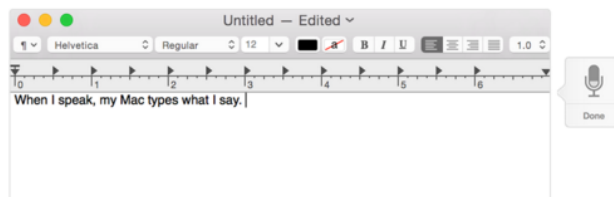
1. From the Apple menu, choose System Preferences.
2. From the View menu, choose Dictation & Speech to view Dictation preferences.
3. Click On to enable Dictation, or Off to disable it.

You can also choose a shortcut key, change your language, and select a microphone from Dictation preferences. If your computer or display doesn't have a built-in microphone, you can connect an external microphone to use Dictation.



Using Dictation in an app

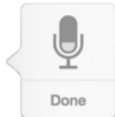
You can speak the text you want to enter in a text field, like a TextEdit or Pages document.



Use these steps to start dictating:

1. Click a text field or document window where you want to start typing.
2. Press the fn (Function) key twice, or choose Edit > Start Dictation.
3. Dictate (speak) what you want your Mac to type.
4. When finished, click Done or press the fn key again. Your spoken words then appear in the text field.

The input meter indicates how loud your voice is. If it's too quiet, try moving closer to your microphone or speaking louder.



- If the input meter does not fill when you speak, check that your microphone and sound input are set up correctly.
- If the input meter fills more than half of the microphone icon, there might be too much background noise, and Dictation might be less accurate.
- If the input meter barely fills when you speak, try moving closer to the microphone or speaking louder.

Your computer listens for up to 30 seconds at a time. If you need to dictate longer sentences, enable the option for Enhanced Dictation.

Enhanced Dictation

With Enhanced Dictation, text appears as you speak. This allows you to dictate continuously. Enhanced Dictation automatically stops listening when you switch to another window, press the Fn key again, or click Done.

Enhanced Dictation in OS X Mavericks and Yosemite also let you dictate without an active Internet connection. To use Dictation when you're offline, enable Enhanced Dictation in the Dictation & Speech pane of System Preferences while you are still connected to the Internet.

The first time you turn on Enhanced Dictation, your Mac downloads content that allows Dictation to work offline. The amount of free disk space required to download this content varies depending on the language you're using. After the additional software downloads, you can use Dictation even when an Internet connection isn't available.

Dictation may require an internet connection for some operating systems

Dictating commands

Dictation understands basic text-related commands such as "all caps," "new paragraph," and "new line."

When you say "period," "comma," "question mark," or "exclamation point," Dictation adds that punctuation in the current text field. When speaking a calendar date (like "January 30, 1983") you do not have to say "comma". The comma is automatically detected and entered for you. Insert emoticons into a text field by saying "smiley face" or "frowny face".

You can also enable [additional Dictation commands in OS X Yosemite](#).

Accents, dialects and languages

The more you use Dictation, the better it understands you. Dictation learns the characteristics of your voice and adapts to your accent. For best results, select your dialect from the Language menu in the Dictation pane of System Preferences. Note that some languages (such as English) have multiple options available to choose from.



You can select which language to use for Dictation in the Dictation and Speech pane of System Preferences. If you don't see your language listed, you can add it. Make sure you are connected to the Internet, then follow these steps to add or remove a language for Dictation.

1. From the Apple menu, choose System Preferences.
2. Click the Dictation & Speech icon.
3. Choose Add Language. from the Language pop-up menu.
4. Select any languages you want to add. Deselect languages you no longer want to use.