

Assistive technology for physical and motor impairments (Android)

Assistive technology enhances productivity and convenience by making daily tasks easier and more efficient. This tip sheet highlights some of the common built-in accessibility features on Android devices that may be useful for individuals with physical and motor impairments.



Tip: Before you get started, familiarize yourself with how to locate and open the Settings app on your device. It's a pre-installed app and typically has a gear icon.

Controlling your smart home

Controlling your smart home through your mobile device offers a transformative experience for individuals with physical and motor impairments. Smart home technology allows users to more easily manage their living environment - including lighting, temperature, security and entertainment systems - with simple taps and gestures on their mobile device.

How to control your smart home

Set up smart home devices: Ensure that your smart home devices are compatible with Android and have been properly set up and connected to your home network. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for each device.



Install smart home apps: Install the respective apps for your smart home devices from the Google Play store. These apps allow you to control and manage your devices from your Android device.

Connect devices to the app: Open each smart home app and follow the instructions to connect and pair your devices with the app. This typically involves connecting to your home Wi-Fi network and following the on-screen prompts.

TELUS Wise tips

- **Manage permission and privacy settings:** Some apps and social networking sites allow its developers to access your personal information like your contact list, location or photos. Read and update permission and privacy settings to control how your information is used and who is able to see it.
- **Protect your network:** Keep smart home devices on a separate “guest” Wi-Fi network, protecting your personal network in the event of a hack.

Create scenes and automations: Use the Google Home app to create scenes and automations. Scenes allow you to control multiple devices such as lighting and temperature, simultaneously with a single command, while automations enable devices to respond automatically based on triggers or schedules. For instance, a light can turn on when you enter a room.

Use voice control: If your smart home devices support voice control, you can use Google Assistant on Android to control them. Ensure that your devices are compatible with Google Home or Matter devices and follow the manufacturer’s instructions to set up voice control.

Control devices from Device control centre: You can access Device control by swiping down from the top-right corner of the screen. In the Device control centre, you’ll find shortcuts to control your smart home devices, such as lights, thermostats and locks.



Use the Google Home app: Android also provides a built-in Google Home app that allows you to control and manage your smart home devices in one place. Open the Google Home app to view and control your devices, create scenes and adjust settings.





Using Universal Switch

Universal Switch is a powerful accessibility feature on your device; it transforms the way individuals with physical and motor impairments interact with their devices. By enabling Universal Switch, users can navigate and control their device using external adaptive switches or the device's touchscreen. The customizable and intuitive interface enables users to interact with their device in a way that suits their abilities and preferences.

How to use Universal Switch

- Open the **Settings** app
- Tap on **Accessibility**
- Locate **Universal Switch**
- Toggle the switch next to **Universal Switch** to enable it

Did you know? When using the toggle switch, you can quickly tell if the feature is enabled. The circle to the left  means it's off, whereas the circle to the right  means it's on.

Connect external switches: Connect your external switches or assistive devices to your Android device using the appropriate interface, such as Bluetooth. Follow the manufacturer's instructions for connecting and configuring the switches.

Customize Universal Switch: In the Universal Switch settings, you can customize various aspects of the feature. For instance, you can define switch actions, adjust scanning settings, create custom gestures and more. Explore the settings to tailor Universal Switch to your specific needs.

Set up switches and actions: In the Universal Switch settings, tap on Switches to configure your connected switches. Assign specific actions to each switch, such as scrolling, tapping or navigating through menus. You can also create custom actions using the Custom Gesture option.

Using Assistant Menu

Assistant Menu is a feature on Android that provides a convenient way for users to access essential functions and shortcuts with ease, simplifying navigation.

How to use Assistant menu

- Open the **Settings** app
- Tap on **Accessibility**
- Tap on **Interaction and dexterity**
- Locate **Assistant Menu**
- Toggle the switch next to **Assistant Menu** to enable it
- To use Assistant Menu, tap on the icon on screen with four squares in a circle

Using One-handed mode

One-handed is a feature on Android devices that helps users easily access the top elements of the screen by bringing them closer to the bottom for one-handed operation without straining or adjusting grip.

How to use One-handed

- Open the **Settings** app
- Tap on **Advanced features**
- Tap on **One-handed** mode
- Toggle the switch next to **Off** to enable it
- Select **Gesture** or **Button** to control how you access this mode

Adjusting on-screen and external keyboard settings

Adapting the keyboard settings can improve typing efficiency and comfort for individuals living with physical impairments.

How to adjust on-screen and external keyboard settings

- Open the **Settings** app
- Tap on **General management**
- Tap on **Keyboard settings**
- Customize options such as keyboard repeat rate, key feedback and more for an optimal typing experience

Using speech-to-text

By converting text to speech, individuals can more easily consume information and communicate with others.

Enable speech-to-text:

- Open the **Settings** app
- Tap on **General management**
- Tap on **Keyboard list and default**
- Toggle the switch next to **Google Voice Typing** to enable it

Use speech-to-text:

- Open any app that requires text input, such as **Messages** or **Keep** notes
- Tap on the text input field to activate the keyboard
- Tap the microphone icon on the keyboard to start dictating your text
- Speak clearly and naturally and your speech will be converted to text in real time

TELUS Wise tip: Download the **Accessibility Suite** from the Play Store app. The Accessibility Suite is a collection of accessibility apps that help you use your device eyes-free or with a switch device.

Adjusting device settings and enabling accessibility features can enable users with physical or motor impairments to control a smart home, use switch controls, operate their device with one hand, take advantage of an external keyboard and easily convert speech to text. Experiment with different settings to find what works best for you.

Are you looking for additional support?

If you're a person with a disability, check out telus.com/TechForGood. Available nationwide, Tech for Good™ helps improve quality of life, independence and personal empowerment of people with disabilities by offering customized recommendations and training on assistive technology for mobile devices, computers and laptops.

Disclaimer: Please note that the instructions provided in this tip sheet may vary depending on your device model. It's recommended to refer to the user manual or contact the manufacturer for specific instructions related to your device.

