

Using the Microsoft Office Speech Tool

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Although this document doesn't provide instructions for using the handwriting tool in Microsoft® Office XP® or later, there is a document on the Karlen Communications web site in the New Technology section that will guide you through using the handwriting tool.

If you use JAWS, you will need to make sure that the “disable language bar” checkbox remains unchecked, it's default state. To verify this, press JawsKey + J, choose Basics, press Alt + P for Windows System Properties and Tab to the disable language bar check box. Use JawsKey + NumPad 8 to read the current state of this control. If you use the hotkey to go to this control, you will change the state from unchecked to checked or vice versa.

Introduction and Background

The speech tool in Microsoft Office XP or later is not a hands free tool. You will need to use the keyboard or mouse with it. The speech tool is not designed to be hands free, it is designed to demonstrate the potential for using voice recognition in your work.

If you are thinking of using voice recognition, this is a good tool to start with. Working with the speech tool is representative of some of the issues and frustrations of working with voice recognition in general. It will also give you an idea of whether your voice is suited to using voice recognition.

This document deals with using the speech tool on a desktop or traditional laptop computer. There is another document that looks at using the speech tool on a tablet operating system. It can be found in the New Technology section of the Karlen Communications web site.

Additional Costs

A USB headset including earphones and microphone is recommended to provide maximum results. One model is the Plantronics® DSP 400®
http://www.plantronics.com/canada/en_US/catalog/display_product_detail.jhtml?prodId=prod440042. Although a desktop microphone may be used, this creates a problem. The voice recognition tool will pick up a lot of the ambient noise, the screen reader speaking, and interpret this as data entry.

The computer system should have a minimum of 512 MB RAM. If you are evaluating this technology on an older desktop or laptop computer, you might be able to use 256 MB RAM but there might be speed issues and potential crashes.

The Speech Tool With Adaptive Technology

If you are using a screen reader, you can switch from dictation mode to voice command mode using your voice. With the current version of the speech tool, it is difficult to access the language bar to close it. Once activated, it will always be running in the background but shouldn't interfere with other computer tasks. If you get a list of active applications, you'll find the language bar listed, however, if you move focus to it, focus won't stay there and you will still be unable to close the language bar independently.

You'll be able to use the reading keys from the screen reader to move through text and make corrections once the dictation is complete. It is a good idea to correct as you go, rather than wait until you've finished a document to go back and make corrections. This is how you'd work in a product like Dragon© NaturallySpeaking© Professional so if you're thinking of moving into a more robust voice recognition tool, it is wise to establish good working habits from the start.

Installing the Speech Tool

When you install the speech tool, you can install the handwriting tool [to be used with a tablet mouse on a desktop or laptop computer] at the same time. This article includes the handwriting tool in the installation instructions.

To install the speech tool in MS-Office:

1. Choose Start > Control Panel.
2. Select Add or Remove Programs.
3. Select Microsoft Office XP or 2003, [your current version of MS-Office].
4. Insert the program CD into the drive.
5. Select Change.
6. Select Add or Remove Features.
7. Select Next.
8. Select the Choose advanced customization of applications check box on the Custom Setup screen.
9. Select Next.
10. Use the right Arrow to expand the options for Office Shared Features.
11. Use the Right Arrow to expand the options for Alternative User Input. .
12. For both Handwriting and Speech, choose Run from My Computer by "right clicking" on the item and using the Down Arrow to find "Run from My Computer."
13. Use the right Arrow to expand the Conversion tools options.
14. For Handwriting, choose Run From My computer by "right clicking" on this item and using the Down Arrow to find "Run from My Computer."

15. Select Update.

To Use the Speech Tool

Make sure you install any software for the microphone headset and plug the microphone into the sound card and test it to ensure it is working.

1. Launch Microsoft Word.
2. Choose Tools > Speech
3. Use the wizard to set up the microphone and train a voice file.
4. Once training is complete begin dictating.

Using dictation mode lets you dictate text into documents. Using voice command mode lets you access menu bar, toolbar, and dialog box items. Speech will accept basic commands such as “select paragraph,” “select all,” or “cut that.” While in dictation mode, speech will accept direction to “go to bottom” or “new paragraph.”

As with any voice recognition tool, it is best to dictate in small chunks of text then pause and let the recognition tool catch up with you. This avoids misinterpretation of your speech while the computer tries to keep up with you. As you dictate, you’ll see a light blue highlight sort of looking line appear where the text will be recognized.

Correcting Text

To correct text that’s been dictated:

1. Switch to command mode
2. Select the word you want to change.
3. Switch to dictation mode.
4. Say “correct that.”
5. Using the mouse or the keyboard, choose the word you want from the context list of options.

If the word you want isn’t in the correction list:

1. Select the text while in command mode, switch to dictation mode and say the right word or phrase.
2. If the speech tool continues to have difficulty with a word, use the keyboard to type in the correct word or phrase.

You can also spell a word correctly by selecting it while in Voice Command mode, switching to Dictation mode, say “Spelling mode,” give it time to make the adjustment to spelling mode [simple pause], and then spell the word correctly. When you’re finished spelling the word, return to Dictation mode.

You can select text in command mode, switch to dictation mode and say the right word or phrase which will replace the selected text.

Voice Command Mode

You can use Voice Command mode for accessing menu bar items such as file, Edit, or Format. Simply switch to Voice Command mode by saying “Voice Command,” and then say “click File” or “click Format” to access these menu items. To choose an item from file, Edit or Format, say the name of the tool you want to access. For example, say click file, open. This will bring up the Open dialog box.

If you are in a dialog box, use the commands “Tab” and “Shift Tab” to move forward or backward through the dialog box.

Here are some commands you can use:

- Select line
- New line [to insert a new line]
- Enter [to insert a new line]
- New paragraph
- Go Home to move to the beginning of a line
- Go End to move to the end of a line
- Spacebar to insert a space
- Backspace to delete a previous character or space
- Delete to delete the current character or selected text
- Scratch that removes the last dictation
- Escape to cancel an action
- Tab to insert one tab stop or move forward one item in a dialog box
- Shift Tab to remove one tab stop or move back one item in a dialog box [note you don't say Shift + Tab]
- Go Up
- Go Down
- Go Left
- Go right
- Go Page UP
- Go Page Down
- Select paragraph
- Select All
- Select next word
- Select last word
- Select next line
- Select last line
- Select paragraph

To format text while in Voice Command mode, say the formatting command once you've selected text. For example say "bold," "italic," or "underline."

To change the font, say "font" and then say the font you want, for example Arial, Times New Roman, or Verdana.

Dictation Mode

While in Dictation mode, you can say punctuation such as colon, semi-colon, and period or dot.

To insert an apostrophe or quotations, say "open single quote" and "close single quote," and "open quote" and "close quote."

The insertion of numbers follows standard document processing rules. For numbers under 20, they are written out as words. You can say "5" but it will be written as "five." If you don't want to follow this rule, you'll have to manually insert the number 5.

For telephone numbers, simply say the number without pausing and it will be entered as a telephone number.

You can use symbols such as dash, backslash, forward slash, underscore, tilde, or ellipses.

To insert parenthesis, brace or bracket characters, you have some choice. The example is for brackets, but the wording is for all three.

"Open bracket", or "left bracket" and then "close bracket" or "right bracket"

Modifying Speech Tool Settings

To make changes to the speech settings, choose Start > Control Panel > Speech and make changes to the speech recognition options.

Resources

There are some general resources available on using voice recognition and the Microsoft Office Speech Tool. These can be found on the Karlen Communications web site under [Windows XP Tablet PC Resources](#).

End of document