

Android

An Introduction to Voice Assistant on Samsung Devices



Do you struggle to see the contents of the screen on your Samsung Smart Phone or Tablet? Well, if you do, you might benefit from using Voice Assistant!

What is Voice Assistant?

Voice Assistant is the built-in screen reader found on all Samsung devices. When Voice Assistant is enabled, it provides spoken feedback to let you know what is on the screen. It allows a person with little or no vision to use all of the features found in the Android Operating System, as well as thousands of third party applications!

Turning on Voice Assistant

To turn on Voice Assistant on your Samsung Smart Phone or Tablet, follow these suggested steps:

Note 1: It is possible to turn Voice Assistant on and off using a shortcut that involves holding the Power button and the Volume Up button on your device. However, this feature is not enabled by default. Therefore, sighted assistance may be required in order to turn Voice Assistant on.

1. From the Home Screen, activate the Settings icon. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.

Note 2: If you do not have a Settings icon on your Home Screen, activate the Apps button and then locate and activate the Settings app in the resulting screen.

2. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the button labelled Accessibility. This button also contains the text "Voice Assistant, Mono Audio, Assistant Menu". Upon doing this, the Accessibility screen will be displayed.

3. In the Accessibility screen, locate and activate the button labelled Screen Reader. This button also contains the text "Get spoken audio guidance and special controls that help you navigate without needing to see the screen". Upon doing this, the Screen Reader screen will be displayed.

4. In the Screen Reader screen, activate the button labelled Voice Assistant to turn the screen reader on. Upon doing this, a screen will be displayed which describes how Voice Assistant can take full control of your phone and provide

help in navigating and reading text based information, as well as when navigating inside apps. At the bottom of this screen, you will find two buttons, labelled Deny and Allow.

5. Activate the Allow button. Upon doing this, Voice Assistant will be turned on and you will hear a spoken announcement to confirm this!
6. Finally, activate the **Home** button, situated at the bottom centre of the screen. Note that in order to activate the button, you must first touch it, then perform a One Finger Double Tap (more about this later). Upon doing this, you will be returned to the Home Screen of your device.

Voice Assistant Gestures

Voice Assistant uses a series of finger movements, called 'gestures', to navigate the screen and activate controls. There are many types of gesture. Some gestures use just one finger, whilst others involve the use of two and sometimes three fingers. Gestures can be a little tricky to learn, but with practice and determination, you will find that you can access information with relative ease!

Navigating Screens with Voice Assistant

With Voice Assistant turned on, you can navigate the screen in two ways. The first method involves simply placing one finger on the screen and dragging it around. In doing this, whichever item your finger passes over, Voice Assistant will announce it. The last thing spoken by Voice Assistant is considered to be the Current Item.

The second method of navigation is to use the One Finger Swipe gesture. This gesture involves swiping one finger across the screen, a little like flicking an imaginary fly that had landed on the screen off! Upon swiping to the right, the next item will be selected and spoken by Voice Assistant. This item will become the current item. For reference, swiping to the left results in the previous item being selected and announced by Voice Assistant.

Note 3: Voice Assistant uses a cursor to navigate. This is represented by a thick border surrounding the currently selected item. Whatever is inside the border, will be spoken by Voice Assistant!

Following are the most commonly used Voice Assistant gestures.

One Finger Drag

This is known as the Explore gesture. It allows you to explore the contents of the screen. When your finger passes over an item, it is spoken by Voice Assistant.

One Finger Swipe Right

This is known as the Next Item gesture. It moves the Voice Assistant cursor to the next item and reads it. For reference, items can be icons on your Home Screen, blocks of text, buttons and text fields inside apps.

One Finger Swipe Left

This is known as the Previous Item gesture. It moves the Voice Assistant cursor to the previous item and reads it. For reference, items can be icons on your Home Screen, blocks of text, buttons and text fields inside apps.

One Finger Double Tap

This is known as the Activate gesture. It is used to activate the Current Item. Typically, items are icons, buttons or text fields. After touching the item you want to activate, you can perform the One Finger Double Tap anywhere on the screen, as the last item you touched is considered to be the Current Item!

Note 4: Buttons can have two purposes. The first is to display a new screen of information. The second is to turn a setting on or off. In either case, you activate it in the same way!

Note 5: When performing the One Finger Double Tap gesture, the taps need to be immediately after each other. You cannot delay, because if you do, Voice Assistant will interpret this as two separate Explore gestures!

Two Finger Swipe Right

This is known as the Scroll Left gesture. It is used on the **Home Screen** to display the next page. Upon doing this, Voice Assistant will announce "page X of Y", where X is the current page and Y is the total number of pages available.

Two Finger Swipe Left

This is known as the Scroll Right gesture. It is used on the **Home Screen** to display the previous page. Upon doing this, Voice Assistant will announce "page X of Y", where X is the current page and Y is the total number of pages available.

Two Finger Swipe Up

This is known as the Scroll Down gesture. It is used inside apps to scroll the screen down. Place two fingers on the screen, and slowly slide your fingers up the screen. Upon doing this, you will hear a tone and the next few options will come into view!

Two Finger Swipe Down

This is known as the Scroll Up gesture. It is used inside apps to scroll the screen up. Place two fingers on the screen and slowly slide your fingers down the screen. Upon doing this, you will hear a tone and the previous few options will come into view!

Two Finger Triple Tap

This gesture is used to read the information displayed in the Status Bar at the top of the screen. Typically, this is the strength of the WIFI connection, the phone signal, the time and the battery level.

Note 6: When performing gestures that involve two or more fingers, leave a small gap between the fingers. This will help Voice Assistant to recognise how many fingers are touching the screen!

There are a few more gestures you can use with Voice Assistant. However, these should be sufficient to get you going!

Adjusting the Voice Assistant Speech Rate

You can increase or decrease the speed at which Voice Assistant speaks by doing the following:

1. Perform a Three Finger Swipe Right until Voice Assistant says "Speech Rate".
2. Now perform a One Finger Swipe Up to increase the speech rate, or a One Finger Swipe Down to decrease the speech rate. Each time you swipe, the speech rate will be adjusted by 5%.

Note 7: The Three Finger Swipe Right gesture is used to select various Voice Assistant settings. When you select the desired setting, use a One Finger Swipe Up or Down to explore the options for that setting. For reference, you can also use a Three Finger Swipe Left to cycle through the settings in the opposite direction.

Turning Off Voice Assistant

There are two ways of turning Voice Assistant off. For completeness, both methods are outlined below:

Method 1 - Via the Settings App

To turn Voice Assistant off via the Settings app, follow these suggested steps:

1. From the Home Screen, locate the **Settings** icon and perform a One Finger Double Tap. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
2. In the Settings screen, locate the **Accessibility** button and perform a One **Finger Double Tap**. Upon doing this, the Accessibility screen will be displayed.
3. Next, locate the Screen Reader button and perform a One **Finger Double Tap**. Upon doing this, the Screen Reader screen will be displayed.
4. Finally, locate the Voice Assistant button and perform a One **Finger Double Tap**. Upon doing this, a popup window will be displayed. You will be prompted to confirm that you want to turn off the screen reader. Locate the Turn Off button, and perform a One Finger Double Tap.

Method 2 - Using a Direct Access Shortcut

Before you can turn Voice Assistant off using a shortcut, you must first enable an Accessibility feature called Direct Access. This allows you to enable certain Accessibility features by using the Power button and the Volume Up buttons on the side of your device.

To enable Direct Access for Voice Assistant, follow these suggested steps:

1. Locate and activate the Settings icon. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
2. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the button labelled Accessibility. Upon doing this, the Accessibility screen will be displayed.
3. In the Accessibility screen, locate and activate the button labelled Advanced Settings. This button also contains the text "Manage Direct access and other advanced settings". Upon doing this, the Advanced Settings screen will be displayed.
4. In the Advanced Settings screen, locate and activate the button labelled Power and Volume Up keys. Upon doing this, The Power and Volume Up Keys screen will be displayed.
5. In the Power and Volume Up Keys screen, you will find a switch at the top for turning Direct Access on and off. Activate this switch until it is On.
6. Locate and activate the button labelled Voice Assistant. Upon doing this, a screen will be displayed which describes how Voice Assistant can take full control of your phone and provide help in navigating and reading text based information, as well as when navigating inside apps. At the bottom of this screen, you will find two buttons, labelled Deny and Allow.
7. Activate the Allow button. Upon doing this, you will be able to turn Voice Assistant on and off using the Power button and Volume Up Key.

Now you have enabled the Direct Access shortcut, you can press the Power button and the Volume Up button together to turn Voice Assistant off. To turn it on again, simply press the Power button and Volume Up buttons together again!

Note 8: It is possible to assign more than one Accessibility feature to be turned on or off using Direct Access. If you have 2 or more features enabled, a popup window will be displayed prompting you to choose the desired option. Activate the appropriate button to turn the desired feature on/off.

This is the end of the introduction to the Voice Assistant screen reader found on Samsung devices. I hope you found it useful!