

Chrome Extensions for Accessibility

Students with special needs have a great ally in technology. Google Chrome offers many extensions that can assist in a variety of areas; including, text to speech, speech to text, readability, reading comprehension, focus, and navigation. This following list offers resources that may help increase student access to instructional materials.

To access extensions students should use the Chrome browser for optimal use. Students can add the extensions by accessing the links below or by searching directly within the Chrome Web Store. <https://chrome.google.com/webstore>

Text to Speech Extensions

1) Read&Write for Google Chrome

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/readwrite-for-google-chro/inoeonmfapjbbkmdafoankkfajkcphqd>

The "Swiss Army Knife" of extensions with tools including word prediction, dictionary, picture dictionary, text to speech, screenshot reader, speech maker, screen masking, translator, highlighters, voice note, speech to text, dictionary, and picture dictionary and more. Works on webpages, PDFs, Google Docs, and Google Slides.

2) Read Aloud

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/read-aloud-a-text-to-spee/hdhinadidafjejdhmfkjgnolgimiapl>

This text-to-speech extension will read either the entire page or just the text that you have selected. In addition to the normal options to adjust the speed, pitch, and volume of the voice, the best feature is the wide collection of high-quality voices to choose from.

3) Announcify

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/announcify/mmiolkcfamcbpoandjpniefiegkcpeoan>

This is another text to speech tool that not only reads a webpage, but also removes distracting elements from the site. The only drawback is the inability to select specific text to read, as the entire page is read aloud.

Speech to Text Extensions

4) VoiceIn Voice Typing

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/voicein-voice-typing/pjnefijmagpdjfhhkpljicbbpicelgko>

This speech-to-text extension allows the user to dictate text for any text box or text entry portion of a web page. You can either click the extension or right-click and choose "Start recording" to use it. Be sure to click the extension again to turn off the speech-to-text function when done.

Readability Extensions

5) Mercury Reader

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/mercury-reader/oknpjibmpnndlpnmhnekjpcelpnlfdi>

Make any website easier to read by removing ads, comments, and all other distractions, so just the core content remains. Users can also adjust the font size and color scheme of the new text. (For a list of 10 more extensions that clean up webpages, see here: <http://www.controlaltachieve.com/2016/11/10-readability-alternatives.html>)

6) OpenDyslexic

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/opendyslexic/cdnapgjopgaggbmfghiinmmbdcglnam>

Override all fonts on a webpage with the OpenDyslexic font, making the text more easily readable.

7) Dyslexia Friendly

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/dyslexia-friendly/miepjgfkommhllbbjaedffcpkncboeo>

This extension replaces the fonts on a web page with either OpenDyslexic or Comic Sans, and provides a horizontal shaded bar to help the user stay on the correct line when reading. The only drawback is there is no easy way to toggle it on and off, so you will want to use an [extension management tool](#) to let you turn it off when not in use.

8) BeeLine Reader

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/beeline-reader/ifjafammaookpiajfbedmacfldaiamgg>

This tool creates a more readable version of a web page by removing all the ads, comments, and other extra distracting items, and then applies a color gradient to the page text guide your eye from one line to the next. (Limit of 5 articles per day for free version.)

9) MagicScroll Web Reader

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/magicscroll-web-reader/ecldhagehndokdmaiaigoaecbmbnmfkc>

Turn web pages into a flippable e-book with easy clickable or keyboard control, as well as control over font size and page color as well.

10) Readline

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/readline/hjbkmfadmomgaokjodomncmbgmmodona>

Although originally designed as a speed reading tool, you can slow the WPM rate down so students can use this to focus on one word at a time when reading to not lose their place.

11) Visor

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/visor/lhpbckonakppajdgicbjdfokagjofnob>

This screen overlay tool darkens out the page except for a horizontal band you can move up and down as you read, helping the student focus.

12) High Contrast

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/high-contrast/djcfdncoelnbljdjfhinnijhdjlikmph>

This tool can make webpages easier to read by changing the colors to increase contrast, invert the colors, or switch to gray-scale.

13) Color Enhancer

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/color-enhancer/ipkjmjaledkapilfdigkgfmpkpfnkjh>

For people who are partially color-blind, this tool can help adjust and improve webpage colors.

Reading Comprehension Extensions

14) Google Dictionary

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/google-dictionary-by-goog/mgijmajocgfcbeboacabfgobmjgicaja>

Don't get stuck on an unknown word. Double-click on any word to get a pop-up definition, as well as spoken pronunciation for many words.

15) Resoomer

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/resoomer/dojncllhekcfenhdnddlihekcocdming>

This is another summarization tool for web pages. It opens up a new tab with a cleaned-up version of the page, as well as three levels of summary.

16) Internet Abridged

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/internet-abridged/eoijcdgmjicegdifaohkbmpojohhlmmo>

This article summary tool gives you a pop-up window with a short bullet list of the main sentences from the page.

17) Auto Highlight

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/auto-highlight/dnkdpbjfnmekbkchfjapfneigjomhh>

This extension takes a different approach to summarizing. Instead of removing the non-essential portions of the text, it highlights what is most important. This allows the reader to still look at the rest of the article if needed. Three levels of highlighting can be chosen.

Focus Extensions

18) Simple Blocker

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/simple-blocker/akfbkbiialncppkngofjjpglbbobjoeoe>

This tool helps students to stay focused on their work by blocking distracting websites. The user can choose the sites to block, how long to block them, and optional password protection.

19) uBlock Origin

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/ublock-origin/cjpalhdlnbpafiamejdnhcphjkbkeiagm>

A simple but powerful ad-blocking extension to help remove distracting ads from websites, making pages less cluttered and easier to read.

20) Move It

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/move-it/kopilngnmfklhhjocfdlokmodibcbmk>

For students who need a break, this extension can be set to periodically have them stop working and do something physical for a moment.

22) Google Keep

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/google-keep-chrome-extends/lpcaedmchfhocbbapmcbpinfgnhiddi>

Keep allows users to save and retrieve any information they come across including text, links, pictures, speech, handwriting, doodles, and more. The tool works as an extension, web site, Android app, and iOS app, and integrates into Google Docs, Slides, and Drawings.

Navigation Extensions

22) Click-free Browsing

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/click-free-browsing/ipfpfhnlkoddglhimhdbboidjcfjlkji>

For users who have a difficulty clicking a mouse, this extension adds on-screen navigation buttons the user can simply hover over to use.

23) Vimium

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/vimium/dbepggeogbaibhgnhhndojpepiihcmelb>

Provides keyboard shortcuts for navigation and control for someone with difficulty using a mouse.

24) CrxMouse

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/crxmouse/jlgkpaicikihijadgifklkbpdaibkhjo>

Use mouse gestures to navigate including forward, backward, scrolling, refreshing, switching tabs, and more. The user can even program their own custom mouse gestures to open programs and perform other tasks.

25) Caret Browsing

<https://chrome.google.com/webstore/detail/caret-browsing/fklpgenihifpccgiifchnihilipmbffg>

This extension gives you a movable cursor in any web page, allowing you to move through the text with your arrows keys and select text with the keyboard.

Note: This list was adapted from <https://www.controlaltachieve.com/2016/10/special-needs-extensions.html?m=1>, a technology blog by Eric Curts (2016).