Narrator Cheat Sheet: Turn On, Set Up, and Keystrokes

For web accessibility testing. Last checked November 2026.

Get it

- Narrator is built into Windows 10 and 11. There is nothing to download or license.
- It works in a Windows 11 ARM virtual machine on a Mac with no extra setup.
- **Microsoft's guide:** Complete guide to Narrator

Turn it on

1. Press WINDOWS+CTRL+ENTER to turn Narrator on or off.
2. Or go to Settings, then Accessibility, then Narrator.
3. Open Narrator settings directly with WINDOWS+CTRL+N.
4. In settings, under Keyboard settings, choose the Standard layout and check which Narrator key is active.

The Narrator key

Most commands use the Narrator key, written as **NARRATOR** below.

- By default, both CAPS LOCK and INSERT work as the Narrator key. On a Mac keyboard, use CAPS LOCK.
- To type a real Caps Lock, press NARRATOR+CAPS LOCK.

Essential keystrokes

Action	**Keystroke**
Turn Narrator on or off	WINDOWS+CTRL+ENTER
Stop reading	CTRL
Read from here to the end	NARRATOR+DOWN ARROW or NARRATOR+CTRL+R
Read current line	NARRATOR+I
Say the focused item	NARRATOR+TAB
Read the window title	NARRATOR+T

Action	Keystroke
More or less detail (verbosity)	NARRATOR+V or NARRATOR+SHIFT+V
Repeat the last phrase	NARRATOR+X
Open Narrator settings	WINDOWS+CTRL+N
Keyboard help (say what a key does)	NARRATOR+1, press keys, then NARRATOR+1 again
Quit Narrator	NARRATOR+ESC

Web page navigation

On web pages, turn on Scan Mode with NARRATOR+SPACEBAR. Single letters then jump between elements. Add SHIFT to move backward.

Move to next	Key
Heading	H
Heading at level 1 through 6	1 to 6
Landmark	D
Link	K
Form field	F
Button	B
Edit box	E
Combo box	C
Checkbox	X
Radio button	R
Table	T
List	L

Move to next	Key
List item	I
Graphic	G

Lists, forms and tables

Action	Keystroke
Turn Scan Mode on or off	NARRATOR+SPACEBAR
List of landmarks	NARRATOR+F5
List of headings	NARRATOR+F6
List of links	NARRATOR+F7
Type into a form field	Turn Scan Mode off with NARRATOR+SPACEBAR, type, then turn it back on
Move between table cells	CTRL+ALT+ARROW KEYS
Read the current row	CTRL+ALT+SHIFT+RIGHT ARROW
Read the current column	CTRL+ALT+SHIFT+DOWN ARROW

Testing tools built into Narrator

- **Speech recap:** NARRATOR+ALT+X opens a list of recent announcements as text.
- **Copy last phrase:** NARRATOR+CTRL+X copies the last thing Narrator said, ready to paste into findings.

Testing tips

- Pair Narrator with Microsoft Edge. That is the combination Microsoft builds and tests for.
- Narrator has a smaller share of daily screen reader users than JAWS or NVDA, so treat it as a secondary check unless a client's users rely on it.
- Record the Windows build, Edge version and Narrator settings with every finding.