VoiceOver for iPhone and iPad Cheat Sheet: Turn On, Set Up, and Gestures

For web accessibility testing. Last checked November 2026.

Get it

- VoiceOver is built into iOS and iPadOS. There is nothing to download or license.
- **Apple's guide:** Turn on and practice VoiceOver on iPhone
- Test on the current iOS release, plus the previous one if the client's analytics show many users on it.

Set up a shortcut before you start

VoiceOver changes how every touch works. Set up a quick way out before you turn it on.

1. Go to Settings, then Accessibility, then Accessibility Shortcut, and choose VoiceOver.
2. Now triple-click the side button (or the Home button on older devices) to turn VoiceOver on or off.
3. You can also ask Siri to turn VoiceOver on or off.
4. To practice, go to Settings, then Accessibility, then VoiceOver, then VoiceOver Practice.

Essential gestures

Action	Gesture
Turn VoiceOver on or off	Triple-click the side button
Explore the screen	Drag one finger
Next or previous item	Swipe right or swipe left
Activate the selected item	Double-tap
Read from the top	Two-finger swipe up
Read from the current item	Two-finger swipe down
Pause or resume speech	Two-finger tap
Scroll one page	Three-finger swipe up, down, left or right

Action	Gesture
Go back	Two-finger scrub (move two fingers in a Z shape)
Speak page or scroll position	Three-finger tap
Item Chooser (search all items on screen)	Two-finger triple-tap
Magic Tap (main action, such as play or answer)	Two-finger double-tap

The Rotor and web navigation

The Rotor picks what a swipe up or down moves by: headings, links, form controls, landmarks and more.

Action	Gesture
Open the Rotor and change setting	Rotate two fingers on the screen like turning a dial
Move to next item of the Rotor type	Swipe down
Move to previous item of the Rotor type	Swipe up
Jump to first or last item on screen	Four-finger tap near the top or bottom

Add Headings, Links, Form Controls, Landmarks and Tables to the Rotor in Settings, Accessibility, VoiceOver, Rotor if they are missing.

Testing tools built into VoiceOver

- **Caption Panel:** shows VoiceOver speech as text at the bottom of the screen. Turn it on in Settings, Accessibility, VoiceOver. Screenshots then capture what was announced.
- **Copy last phrase:** three-finger quadruple-tap copies the last announcement to the clipboard.
- **Screen Curtain:** three-finger triple-tap turns the screen off so you test by ear. Repeat to turn it back on.
- **Screen recording:** Control Center screen recording captures VoiceOver audio, which makes clear evidence for developers.

Testing tips

- Pair VoiceOver with Safari for websites. Also test inside the client's native app if they have one.

- Check both portrait and landscape, and zoom text to the largest size in Settings, Accessibility, Display and Text Size.
- Pair a Bluetooth keyboard to test keyboard access on iPad.
- Record the device model, iOS version and browser with every finding.