



Reading Printed Text Aloud

QuickTake

Did you know that you can snap a picture of text and have it read back to you? Well, you can if you own a newer smartphone or tablet. No phone? Don't worry this capability is not exclusive to mobile devices although you will have to pay for similar products.



Options for Reading Print

Traditionally, reading printed text required some expensive gear including a scanner, optical character recognition (OCR) software and a good text-to-speech software program. Advances in artificial intelligence have opened the door to near instant access at much lower cost.

There are generally two categories of devices that can be used to read printed text aloud: devices with cameras built-in and scanning pens.

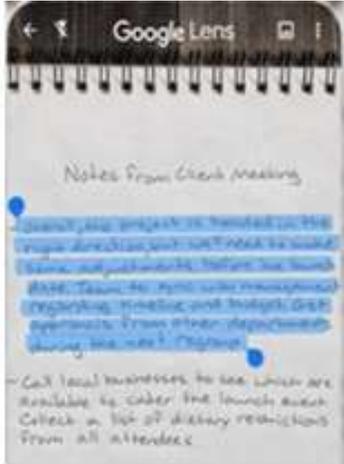
Capabilities

Consider the following features when looking at options:

- read print or handwriting
- full versus partial page capture
- visual guide for selecting text to be read
- audio guide for aligning the image (for people with low or no vision)
- copy text to a computer or mobile device
- text translation
- recognize email addresses and phone numbers
- works off-line



Mobile Device Features and Apps



Google Search (Lens)

Google has leveraged their expertise in artificial intelligence to build text recognition directly into their primary search tool on mobile. Sometimes referred to as Google Lens, this capability uses the camera on a mobile device (iPhone/iPad or Android) to detect text and handwriting in images allowing the user to copy, read, translate and share the results.



Live Text - iOS/iPadOS

Introduced in iOS 15, Live Text provides most of the same capabilities as Google's offering and is similarly built into the search and camera experiences on the iPhone and iPad.



Microsoft Lens (Android)

The Lens app from Microsoft works much in the same way as the offerings from Apple and Google. The app integrates nicely with Microsoft's Immersive Reader tool to read text or handwriting captured by the camera. Lens can also export to PDF.



Third Party Apps



Several apps are available available that can read text from the printed page using the mobile devices camera. Here are a few. As always, a web search will turn up many more.

- [Voice Dream Scanner](#): (iOS only)
- [Claro ScanPen](#): (Andorid/iOS)
- [KNFB Reader](#): (Android/iOS) designed for use by individuals with limited or no vision but can be used by anyone.

Dedicated Devices



Orcam Read

The Orcam Read is a handheld device designed to help people with reading difficulties read text from any printed surface. The device uses its own integrated smart camera and artificial intelligence quickly capture and read aloud even large volumes of text

[Orcam Read Website](#)



C-Pen Reader Pen

The Reader Pen is a portable device that uses a built-in scanner rather than a camera. The pen can quickly scan words, phrases or lines of text and then read the content back.

[C-Pen Website](#)



Google Lens How-To (Using the Google App)

1. Open the Google App.

If the app is not already on your phone or tablet, you can download it.

[Get the Google App](https://lens.google/#cta-section)
(<https://lens.google/#cta-section>)



2. Tap the lens icon in the search bar

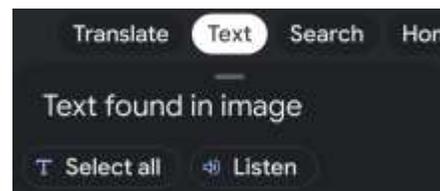


3. Select the Text option, then:

- Frame the text you want read and,
- Tap the round Text icon



4. Tap Listen





Apple Live Text How-To

1. First turn on Live Text:

- Open the Settings app.
- Tap General.
- Tap Language & Region, then turn on Live Text



2. Open the Camera App.

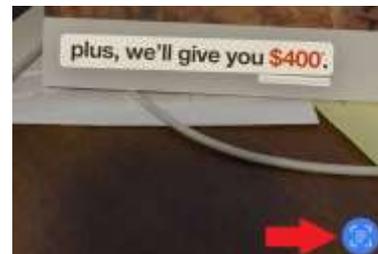
Frame the text you want read and **take a picture**.



3. Open the photo using the preview button

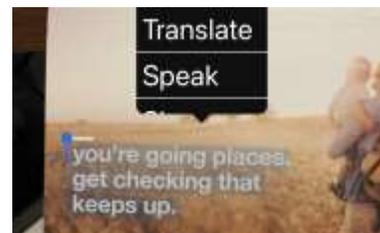


4. Tap the Live Text button



5. Tap on the Text in the image

- a. Choose **Select All**.
- b. Tap on the text again and choose **Speak**





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