

Welcome to TextAloud

Welcome to TextAloud, the world's most popular Text To Speech tool. It uses voice synthesis to create spoken audio from text. You can listen on your PC or save text to MP3 or wave files for listening later. Even better, if you have a portable audio device you can take your text as MP3 files to the gym, in your car, or anyplace you need to go.

Users range from lawyers listening to proofread contracts, to busy students getting through their assigned reading without the eye strain, to commuters listening to news or making their own audiobooks from ebooks. We get business people, educators, writers, speakers, and all kinds of people who soon find TextAloud to be an indispensable utility. TextAloud is a great tool for learning English. We also have many **other languages** plus a **variety of natural sounding voices** available to give your computer some real personality. Can your computer really sound like a human being without costing a fortune? **Listen to samples** of some of the premium voices we offer and you'll be surprised at the quality and value you can get with TextAloud.

Do you or does someone you know need help using their computer because of a disability? TextAloud is popular for many Assistive Technology uses like low vision as well as dyslexia and other learning disabilities, etc. Anyone can try TextAloud for free and **we often hear from people** who tell us it's genuinely changed their lives. We also have a great **site license program** for schools and organizations interested in multiple copies.

Maybe you're trying a Text To Speech product for the first time or just wondering what TextAloud can do for you? Check out the **Getting Started** section, or just **send us an email now** with your questions and watch how quickly we respond. We are truly dedicated to supporting our products and staying in tune with our customers so you'll be amazed at the personal service we provide.

Features at a glance

- Listen to articles one at a time, or build a playlist to listen to later.
- Load articles using the Clipboard, Document Import, Hot Keys and Drag and Drop.
- Support for Microsoft Word, Rich Text, WordPerfect, Open Office, PDF, HTML and XML documents.
- Support for multiple Text-To-Speech engines, including international voices.
- Support for WAV, MP3 and WMA audio files.
- Proofread tool for listening to documents as you proofread.
- Plugin toolbars for Microsoft Word, Internet Explorer, Outlook, Outlook Express, Windows Mail, and Firefox.

Thanks for trying TextAloud, and don't forget to visit us at <http://www.nextup.com>

Using TextAloud for the First Time

After installing TextAloud, you can start speaking like this:

- Type some text into the large area beneath the toolbars
- Press the **Speak** button on the toolbar

That's all there is to it. You can go on now to the other "Getting Started" pages and see what TextAloud can do for you. If you run into problems or have any questions at all, please contact us at support@nextup.com and we'll get back to you right away !

Listening to Selected Text

TextAloud can speak text from any application on your computer that can write to the Windows Clipboard. Follow these steps:

- Use your mouse to select/highlight an area of text you want to listen to.
- Press Ctrl+C. (Press both keys at the same time)
- You will be prompted by a Clipboard Prompt dialog, displayed at the bottom right of your screen.
- On the prompt dialog, click the **New** button as the action.
- You should now see an article in TextAloud containing the text you selected.

To listen to the text, press the **Speak** button on the toolbar.

Listening to Documents

You can use TextAloud to listen to your documents. To listen to a document, follow these steps:

- Select File -> Open from the menu, or press the **Open** button on the toolbar.
- Select a directory
- Optionally select a file type from the bottom of the Open Dialog.
- Select a file.
- Press the **Open** button on the Open Dialog. TextAloud will load the selected document as a new article.
- To listen to the document, press the **Speak** button on the toolbar

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Importing Documents

Creating Audio Files

TextAloud can generate audio files from articles you've loaded. Available output formats include WAV, MP3, WMA and others. To generate an audio file, follow these steps:

- Load one or more articles into TextAloud.
- From the menu, select **Tools -> Audio File Options**
- Select the File Options panel
- Choose an audio file format
- Choose a Bit / Sample Rate setting.
- Choose an output file directory
- Press the **OK** button
- From the main window, press the **To File** button in the toolbar.

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Loading Articles

File Options

Loading Articles

The following methods are available to create articles in TextAloud:

- Watch Clipboard
- Watch Mouse
- Document Import (File -> Open)
- Import Hotkey
- Drag And Drop
- Windows Explorer "Open With TextAloud"
- TextAloud Plugins

To Create Articles Using the Windows Clipboard

By default, TextAloud will monitor your Windows Clipboard and display a prompt whenever the clipboard is updated. See Clipboard Options for information on how you can control the display of the clipboard prompt, and disable the prompt if necessary.

- On the TextAloud Tools menu, enable Watch Clipboard if it is not already checked.
- Use your mouse to select / highlight an area of text.
- Press Ctrl+C
- The TextAloud Clipboard Prompt will be displayed.
- On the clipboard prompt, click the **New** button to create a new article, or the **Append** button to append the selected text to the current article.

To Create Articles by selecting text with your mouse

In addition to monitoring your system clipboard, TextAloud can monitor your mouse as you move it around the window, and detect when you have highlighted some text. When you release your mouse button after making a text selection, TextAloud will display a prompt, and allow you to pick an action to perform with the selected text.

- On the Textaloud Tools menu, enable Watch Mouse if it is not already checked.
- Use your mouse to select / highlight an area of text.
- The TextAloud Mouse Speak Prompt will be displayed.
- On the mouse prompt, click the **New** button to create a new article, or the **Append** button to append the selected text to the current article.

To Create Articles Using Document Import (File -> Open)

- Press the **Open** button on the Standard Toolbar, or select File -> Open from the menu.
- Select a directory.
- Optionally select a file type from the bottom of the Open Dialog.
- Select one or more files to open in TextAloud.
- Press the **Open** button on the Open Dialog

To Create Articles using an Import Hotkey

- From the TextAloud Tools menu select Hotkey Setup.
- Click **Edit -> New Hotkey**, or click the **New Hotkey** button on the toolbar.

- In the New Hotkey dialog, select "Import Text" as the hotkey Action.
- Choose the hotkey combination to assign, using the Hotkey field.
- In the Text Source dropdown list select "Highlighted Text"
- In the Copy Text To dropdown list select "New Article"
- In the Voice dropdown list select a voice you would like to assign to the imported article, or select "Use TextAloud Voice" to have TextAloud select a voice for you.
- Click the **OK** button.
- Now that the hotkey has been created, use you mouse to select / highlight an area of text
- Press your import hotkey.

To Create Articles using Drag and Drop

TextAloud articles can be created by dragging either selected text or a list of selected files and dropping the selection on the TextAloud main window.

- Make sure the TextAloud main window is currently visible (not minimized).
- Using your mouse, select / highlight an area of text in another application, or select one or more files in Windows Explorer.
- Using your mouse, drag the selected text / selected files anywhere over the TextAloud window.
- Release the mouse button.

To Create Articles using the Windows Explorer Context Menu ("Open With TextAloud")

- In Windows Explorer, select one or more document files supported by TextAloud. See Importing Documents for the list of supported document formats.
- Right click the selected file(s) to display the Windows Explorer popup menu.
- Select "Open With TextAloud" from the popup menu.

To Create Articles using TextAloud Plugins

TextAloud currently has toolbar plugins for Internet Explorer, Firefox, Microsoft Word, Microsoft Outlook, and Outlook Express / Windows Mail. Each toolbar has a button to import the document (or text selection) to a new TextAloud Article. On any of the toolbars, click the **Add Article** button. A new article will be created in the TextAloud window, and loaded with either the selected text (if a text selection has been made) or the entire document.

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Clipboard Prompt
 Mouse Speak Prompt
 Hotkey Setup
 Importing Documents

Configuring the User Interface

There are several options available for configuring both appearance and how your keyboard is used. This page describes how to configure the following:

- Main Menu and Toolbars
- Floating Toolbar
- Article Font, Text Size and Colors

- Article Tabs
- Skins
- Hotkeys
- Keyboard Shortcuts

Configuring the Main Menu and Toolbars

Use the View menu to configure the main menu and toolbars. Menu configuration options include whether to hide unused menu entries and whether icons should be displayed in the menus. Toolbar configuration options include selecting which toolbars to display, toolbar styles, and button size.

See TextAloud Toolbars for more advanced menu and toolbar customization.

Configuring the Floating Toolbar

The Floating Toolbar gives you access to convenient buttons on the main window toolbars while hiding the main window. To configure the Floating Toolbar, click **Tools -> TextAloud Options** from the menu, and click the Miscellaneous Options tab. On this tab you can configure when the Floating Toolbar should be displayed, the Floating Toolbar button size, whether button captions should be displayed, and if the Floating Toolbar should be forced to remain on top of other windows.

Configuring Article Font, Text Size and Colors

From the main menu, select **Tools -> TextAloud Options** and click the Font tab. The Font tab allows you to select the font, text colors, background color and text size for articles displayed in the TextAloud window.

Configuring Article Tabs

From the main menu, select **Tools -> TextAloud Options** and click the Font tab. In the Font dropdown list, select "Article Tabs". You can then configure the font, text colors, background color and text size for article titles displayed in the article tabs.

To help distinguish between adjacent tabs, TextAloud will automatically shade alternating tabs. The alternate shading is calculated as a percentage (either lighter or darker) than the selected tab color. To control the shading, select **Tools -> TextAloud Options**, and click the Article Options tab. Set the field labeled Alternate Tab Shading to the desired shading percentage.

Changing TextAloud Appearance using Skins

Skins allow you to completely change the look and feel of the TextAloud user interface. Predefined skins can change everything from color the look and feel of window controls like radio buttons and checkboxes. To configure skins, select Skins from the View menu, and choose from the list of displayed skins. Use the **Test** button on the Skins dialog to get an idea of what each skin looks like.

Configuring Hotkeys

Hotkeys allow access to TextAloud functions from other applications. There are two different kinds of hotkeys in TextAloud. The Hotkey Setup window is used to set up hotkeys for speaking, proofreading, and importing text from external applications. In addition, hotkeys can be configured to quickly change the default voice, and the default language. The Advanced Toolbar Customization window can be used to assign system wide hotkeys to TextAloud menu entries. Note that since Pause/Resume and Stop are

items in the TextAloud menus, hotkeys are assigned to Pause/Resume and Stop using Advanced Toolbar Customization instead of Hotkey Setup.

Configuring Keyboard Shortcuts

Keyboard Shortcuts are assigned using Advanced Toolbar Customization. The process of assigning keyboard shortcuts to hotkeys is similar to assigning system wide hotkeys to menu entries.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Textaloud Main Window
TextAloud Main Menu
TextAloud Toolbars
Font Options
Miscellaneous Options
Advanced Toolbar Customization
Floating Toolbar

Archiving and Unarchiving Articles

TextAloud can optionally archive articles when they are deleted. If archiving is enabled, whenever one or more articles are deleted from TextAloud, the articles are removed from the TextAloud window moved to an archive. Articles in the archive can be reloaded into the TextAloud window at any time. An option is also available to specify the maximum number of days articles should be retained in the archive, at which point they are automatically purged from the archive.

Configuring Archiving Options

To control the archiving feature in TextAloud, click **TextAloud Options** on the TextAloud Tools menu, and click the Article Options tab. Use the checkbox labeled "Archive Deleted Articles" to turn archiving on and off. To automatically purge old articles from the archive, select the checkbox labeled "Delete articles from archive older than", and specify the number of days articles should remain in the archive.

Unarchiving Articles

To move previously archived articles back into the TextAloud window, select **Unarchive** from the File menu. Select one or more articles from the list of archived articles, and press **OK** to unarchive the articles.

Emptying the Archive

If you wish to remove all currently archived articles, click **Empty Archive** from the File menu. Note that this will permanently delete all articles from the archive.

Importing Documents

Use File -> Open, or the **Open** button on the toolbar to import documents into TextAloud.

TextAloud currently supports the following document types:

Document Type	File Extension
Text File	.txt
Word Document	.doc and .docx
WordPerfect Document	.wpd
OpenOffice.org OpenDocument	.odt
PDF Document	.pdf
Rich Text Format	.rtf
HTML Document	.html
XML Document	.xml

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When importing a very large document into TextAloud, you can use the File Splitter utility to split the document into many small articles. The File Splitter utility allows you to split the document using criteria you specify, and optionally load each 'split' into a TextAloud article automatically.

Proofreading Documents

Using Vocal Proofreading

Vocal Proofreading is a function in TextAloud that allows you to select text in any application, popup a proofreader window containing the selected text, and proofread the text by listening to the text as it is spoken aloud. The proofreader window can be launched with TextAloud hotkeys, or from the Clipboard and Mouse Speak Prompt dialogs.

Configuring TextAloud Hotkeys to launch Vocal Proofreading

- From the TextAloud Tools menu select Hotkey Setup.
- Click **Edit -> New Hotkey**, or click the **New Hotkey** button on the toolbar.
- In the New Hotkey dialog, select "Vocal Proofread" as the hotkey Action.
- Choose the hotkey combination to assign, using the Hotkey field.
- In the Hotkey Options box at the bottom of the dialog, set Text Source to "Highlighted Text", and select the voice you would like to use for Vocal Proofreading.
- Click the **OK** button.

To proofread text using your hotkey, highlight text in any application and press the key combination assigned as the hotkey.

Launching Vocal Proofreading from the Clipboard Prompt

- Beneath the TextAloud Tools menu, enable the menu entry labeled "Watch Clipboard".
- Highlight text in any application.
- Press Ctrl+C to copy the text to the Windows Clipboard.
- When the TextAloud Clipboard Prompt is displayed, select Vocal Proofread in the Action dropdown list, and click the **Perform** button.

Launching Vocal Proofreading from the Mouse Speak Prompt

- Beneath the TextAloud Tools menu, enable the menu entry labeled "Watch Mouse".

- Select text in any application, and release the left mouse button
- When the TextAloud Mouse Speak Prompt is displayed, select Vocal Proofread in the Action dropdown list, and click the **Perform** button.

Vocal Proofreading is defined in TextAloud as a speaking Profile, meaning that some speaking configuration options can be tailored specifically when TextAloud is speaking text from the Vocal Proofreader window.

To configure Character Speaking and Filtering for Vocal Proofreading

- From the TextAloud Tools menu, select Character Speaking And Filtering.
- Click **Edit -> Add**, or click the **Add** button on the toolbar.
- In the Profile dropdown list, select Vocal Proofreading.
- Select an option from the Option dropdown list (Filter Character, Speak Character, Play Sound).
- Make sure the "Active" checkbox is selected
- In the Characters field, enter a list of characters
- If the Play Sound option is being used, you will also need to supply the name of a sound file (mp3, wma or wav file) to be played when the character is encountered in the text.
- Press the **OK** button to close the dialog.
- You may add multiple Character Speaking and Filtering entries for the Vocal Proofreading profile. So one entry may be used to filter characters, another entry may be created to speak certain characters, and another entry may specify a sound file to be played for some characters.

To configure Automatic Text Insertions for Vocal Proofreading

- From the TextAloud Tools menu, select Automatic Text Insertions.
- Click **Edit -> Add** or click the **Add** button on the toolbar.
- In the Profile dropdown list, select Vocal Proofreading.
- in the Type of Insertion dropdown list, select what you would like to have inserted automatically. Options include Pauses, Audio Clips and free form text.
- In the Insert At dropdown list, select where you would like the text automatically inserted.
- Depending on the type of insertion, you will then need to indicate the pause value, and audio clip, or free form text you want inserted.
- Press the **OK** button to close the dialog.
- You may add as many entries as you like.

Using Step Proofreading

Step Proofreading is another form of proofreading available in TextAloud. Unlike Vocal Proofreading, which has its own window, Step Proofreading takes place in a TextAloud article. Step Proofreading involves loading an article into TextAloud, and using the Step Navigations beneath the Navigations menu.

When a Step Navigation is selected from the Navigations menu, TextAloud switches from its normal speaking Profile to the Step Proofreading profile. This means that some TextAloud speaking options can be configured specifically for the Step Proofreading mode. Once the selected Step Navigation has completed, TextAloud enters a Pause state. When speaking is paused your options are to either select another Step Navigation, and step again, or click **Resume**. Clicking Resume causes TextAloud to exit Step Navigation mode, and switch back to normal speaking.

Using Step Proofreading in TextAloud

- Load an article into TextAloud.

- Begin speaking the article.
- When ready to begin Step Proofreading, select any Step Navigation from the Navigations menu.
- TextAloud will skip forward or backward, depending on the step navigation selected, switch to the Step Navigation profile, speak the desired text, and Pause

To configure Character Speaking and Filtering for Step Proofreading

- From the TextAloud Tools menu, select Character Speaking And Filtering.
- Click **Edit -> Add**, or click the **Add** button on the toolbar.
- In the Profile dropdown list, select Step Proofreading.
- Select an option from the Option dropdown list (Filter Character, Speak Character, Play Sound).
- Make sure the "Active" checkbox is selected
- In the Characters field, enter a list of characters
- If the Play Sound option is being used, you will also need to supply the name of a sound file (mp3, wma or wav file) to be played when the character is encountered in the text.
- Press the **OK** button to close the dialog.
- You may add multiple Character Speaking and Filtering entries for the Step Proofreading profile. So one entry may be used to filter characters, another entry may be created to speak certain characters, and another entry may specify a sound file to be played for some characters.

To configure Automatic Text Insertions for Vocal Proofreading

- From the TextAloud Tools menu, select Automatic Text Insertions.
- Click **Edit -> Add** or click the **Add** button on the toolbar.
- In the Profile dropdown list, select Step Proofreading.
- in the Type of Insertion dropdown list, select what you would like to have inserted automatically. Options include Pauses, Audio Clips and free form text.
- In the Insert At dropdown list, select where you would like the text automatically inserted.
- Depending on the type of insertion, you will then need to indicate the pause value, and audio clip, or free form text you want inserted.
- Press the **OK** button to close the dialog.
- You may add as many entries as you like.

Editing Pronunciations

When listening to text, it is fairly common to notice that voices will sometimes mispronounce words. Some voices will perform better than others as far as handling pronunciations, but no voice is perfect. Very specialized vocabularies, such as legal, financial and medical terminology, can be particularly troublesome.

In addition to dealing with mispronunciations when listening to text, it is also common to run across conditions where you would like some text to be ignored. For example, a document may contain header and/or footer information, including elements such as dates, page numbers, and so on. When listening to the document, it may be preferable to suppress speaking this information.

The way to handle these kinds of problems is with Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance, located under the TextAloud Tools menu. This utility allows you to create pronunciation Dictionaries, which are simply groups of pronunciation corrections.

Dictionaries and Dictionary Entries

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance works by allowing you to create one or more *Dictionaries*, where each dictionary contains one or more *Dictionary Entries*. There is no limit on the number of Dictionaries you can create, or the number of Dictionary Entries in each Dictionary.

A *Dictionary Entry* represents a single pronunciation correction. The Dictionary Entry contains a word or pattern to search for in the text, and indicates a substitution that should be performed for each match. The Dictionary Entry also specifies whether the text / pattern match should be case sensitive, and whether word boundaries are required for a match.

A *Dictionary* is a collection of Dictionary Entries. It is up to you whether you want to have one dictionary or many dictionaries; there are two main reasons for grouping Dictionary Entries into multiple Dictionaries:

1. It is possible to activate and deactivate Dictionaries. This makes it possible to group Dictionary Entries by some context, such as medical, legal and technical terminology. You have the option of activating and deactivating dictionaries based on the text being spoken.

2. Dictionaries can be associated with specific languages, speech engine vendors, and even specific voices. If you're having pronunciation problems with a specific voice, you can create a dictionary and associate it with the voice you're having trouble with. Any dictionary entries added to this dictionary will be applied only when this specific voice is used; the dictionary entries will not interfere with other voices that are handling problem pronunciations correctly. Similarly, if a dictionary is associated with a specific language, pronunciations will be applied only when a voice for the specified language is speaking.

Searching Text and Substituting Corrections

Dictionary Entries can be configured to scan text using simple text strings, masks, and regular expressions. Masks and Regular Expressions allow you to search for complex patterns in the text, and substitute a correction at each occurrence of the pattern.

Dictionary Entries provide several options for the substitution to be performed at each simple text string or pattern. The most common type of substitution is 'Respell'; this option simply replaces a word that is not being pronounced correctly with an alternate spelling. For example, if a speech engine is having trouble pronouncing the word "laugh", a dictionary entry can be used to respell each occurrence of "laugh" as "laf".

Another common type of Dictionary Entry correction is to actually skip text. When Skip Text is used, the dictionary entry will scan text for the simple text string or pattern associated with the entry, and remove any matching text. Skip Text can be used if there is a character or set of characters that are not being pronounced correctly, or if the text contains information such as header information or page numbers that you do not want to hear spoken.

Other substitution options include "Spell Text" and "Phonemes". Occasionally you'll find acronyms that cause pronunciation problems, because the speech engine will treat the acronym as a word, pronouncing it rather than spelling it out. This is a perfect example of when you would want to use Spell Text as a pronunciation correction.

Phonemes can be thought of as the smallest units of sound that a speech engine is capable of making. When you use a Dictionary Entry to correct a pronunciation using phoneme substitutions, you'll use a Phoneme Helper dialog to specify the exact pronunciation of word, using sets of phonemes. Each language has its own set of phonemes, so in order to use Phoneme corrections, a language and dialect must be associated with either the Dictionary Entry or owning Dictionary.

Phoneme pronunciation support from Dictionary Maintenance is limited to SAPI5 voices only. SAPI4 voices will ignore dictionary entries that use Phoneme pronunciation corrections.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp **Related Topics**

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Main Window
Pattern Matching with Masks and Regular Expressions
Add/Edit Dictionary
Add/Edit Dictionary Entry
Phoneme Helper Dialog

Using Bookmarks

Bookmarks are special tags recognized by TextAloud used for marking positions in an article. Bookmarks can be used to help with editing long articles, and also for skipping portions of text when speaking the article aloud.

Bookmarks have the following format:

```
{{Bookmark=My Bookmark}}
```

To Create A Bookmark in an Article

- Position the cursor to the location where the bookmark should be inserted, and click the left mouse button.
- Click the right mouse button to display the article's popup menu
- Select "Add Bookmark" from the menu.
- In the prompt displayed, enter a name to identify the bookmark. You will receive an error if the name has already been used for a different bookmark in the article.

To Skip to a Bookmark

- Click the right mouse button to display the article's popup menu
- Select "Skip to Bookmark" from the menu. The bookmarks created for the article will appear as a submenu.
- Select a bookmark from the submenu.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp **Note**

The Skip To Bookmark menu entry is disabled when writing text to audio files. The entry is available only when TextAloud is not currently speaking, and when speaking text aloud.

Using Comments

Comments are sections of text in an article that are ignored when speaking an article aloud or to an audio file. You can use comment tags for any purpose; for example, you may include comments in an article to indicate where the article text was obtained, the date the article was created, and so on.

Comment tags have the following format:

```
{{//this is a comment}}
```

To Insert a Comment in an Article

- Position the cursor to the location where the bookmark should be inserted, and click the left mouse button.
- From the TextAloud main menu, select **Insert Tags -> Comment**
- When prompted for the comment text, enter your comment and press the **OK** button.

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When removing tags from selected text in an article using **Insert Tags -> Remove Tags**, the text in any comment tags will be uncommented instead of removed.

Inserting Pauses

Pause tags may be inserted into TextAloud articles, causing voices to pause for an interval you specify. In addition, TextAloud can be configured to automatically generate pauses at the end of each sentence and/or paragraph.

Pause tags have the following format:

```
{{Pause=2}}
```

The pause tag above represents a 2 second pause.

To Insert a Pause Manually

- Using your mouse, position the cursor to a location in the article where a pause should be inserted, and press the left mouse button.
- Press the right button on your mouse to display the article's popup menu.
- From the popup menu, select "Pause".
- In the dialog displayed, enter the number of seconds you would like to pause. You may use decimal values, such as .5 and 0.5.

To Generate Pauses Automatically

To have TextAloud automatically insert pauses at the end of sentences and/or paragraphs, use the Automatic Text Insertions dialog. See the help on using this dialog.

Using Voice Change Tags

Voice change tags are used to cause TextAloud to change voices while speaking an article. These tags may be used when speaking article text aloud or to an audio file, and are commonly used to create a "dialog" effect as text is spoken. Alternating between a male and female voice can make a long passage of text easier to listen to.

Voice change tags are supported only for SAPI5 voices. SAPI4 voice engines will ignore these tags.

Using Voice Change Tags

- Position your mouse cursor to the location in the article where you would like to change voices, and click the left mouse button.
- Right click to display the article's popup menu.
- Select "Voice Change". Available SAPI5 voices will appear as a submenu.
- Select a voice from the submenu.

Using Dynamic Voice Change Tags

Dynamic voice change tags allow you to change voices when speaking without requesting a specific voice. When inserting the tag, instead of indicating a specific voice you would like to use, you instead indicate how TextAloud should dynamically select the voice for you. Available Dynamic Voice Change tags are:

- Random
- Random Male
- Random Female
- Round Robin
- Round Robin Male
- Round Robin Female

The actual voice selected for a Dynamic Voice Change tag is determined when the article is actually spoken. So Dynamic Voice Change tags for an article will more than likely choose different voices each time an article is spoken, giving the article a different sound each time you listen.

To insert a Dynamic Voice Change tag in an article:

- Position your mouse cursor to the location in the article where you would like to change voices, and click the left mouse button.
- Right click to display the article's popup menu.
- Select "Dynamic Voice Change".
- Select a Dynamic Voice Change tag from the submenu.

Speed, Pitch and Volume settings when changing voices

When using the voice change tags described on this page, there is currently no relationship between the voice selected and the speed, pitch and volume settings on the Voice Options panel. This means that the *current* speed, pitch and volume settings remain in effect when a voice change tag is encountered. If you need speed, pitch or volume to change along with the voice change, you will need to insert these as separate tags; see Using Speed, Pitch and Volume Tags.

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If you have voices for multiple languages installed, Random and Round Robin voices in Dynamic Voice Change tags will be selected based on the current Default Language setting on the Voice Options panel.

Using Speed, Pitch and Volume Tags

For voices that support SAPI5, xml tags may be inserted in the text to control Speed, Pitch and

Volume. This gives you the ability to have Speed, Pitch and Volume vary as text is spoken. For Speed and Pitch, tags are available to control either absolute or relative values. For example, setting the 'absolute' speed sets the speed to a specific value, while setting the 'relative' speed will increase or decrease the current speed by the value specified.

Volume change tags in the text are always 'absolute' values; there is no tag for relative volume changes.

Absolute values for Speed and Pitch range from -30 to 30, where 0 is the default.

Values for Volume tags range from 0 to 100, where 100 is the maximum volume for the voice. Note that Volume tags have no effect on your system volume. Each SAPI5 voice has a volume setting which can be controlled independently of your system volume.

The default Speed, Pitch and Volume settings can be controlled for each voice on the Voice Options panel. Using Speed, Pitch and Volume tags in an article will temporarily override settings on the Voice Options panel, but does not change the settings. In other words, using Speed, Pitch and Volume tags in an article has no effect on the default settings for a voice.

End Tags

End tags can be used to mark the end of a speed, pitch, or volume change. For example, using an End Tag for a speed change causes the speed to return to whatever speed was in use before the change occurred.

The Insert Tags menu contains entries for inserting Absolute Speed, Relative Speed, Absolute Pitch, Relative Pitch, and Volume tags. When any of these menu entries are selected, a change tag is inserted at the current cursor position. If text is selected in the article when the tag is inserted, a trailing End Tag will be inserted at the end of the selected text.

If an End Tag is not used, the change remains in effect for the remainder of the article, unless another change is encountered.

The following examples illustrate how multiple absolute speed changes can occur in an article, with and without end tags.

Example 1 - In this example, the article contains multiple absolute speed changes tags. No end tags are used.

*This text is spoken at the default speed. **<rate absspeed="3">**This text is spoken at speed 3. **<rate absspeed="4">**This text is spoken at speed 4.*

Example 2 - In this example, an End Tag is used with speed change tag, making the speed change temporary.

*This text is spoken at the default speed. **<rate absspeed="3">**This text is spoken at speed 3. **</rate>** This text is spoken at the default speed.*

The table below gives examples of using each of the available speed, pitch and volume tags, along with associated End Tags.

Sample Tag	Description
<code><rate absspeed="3"></code>	Set absolute speed to 3

<rate speed="1">	Set relative speed to 1 (adds 1 to current speed)
</rate>	Speed End Tag. Resets speed to value in use before last speed change.
<pitch absmiddle="3">	Set absolute pitch to 3
<pitch middle="1">	Set relative pitch to 1 (adds 1 to current pitch)
</pitch>	Pitch End Tag. Resets pitch to value in use before last pitch change.
<volume level="100">	Set voice volume to 100 (maximum volume)
</volume>	Volume End Tag. Resets volume to value in use before last volume change.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpNote

Pitch change tags work only for voices that support pitch adjustments. Pitch change tags are typically ignored by a voice if pitch adjustment is not supported.

Using Spell Tags

SAPI5 voices support a tag which forces words to be spelled out, instead of pronounced as individual words. Spell tags are ignored by SAPI4 voices.

The Insert Tags menu contains a **Spell** entry for inserting spell tags in an article. If text is selected in the article when the tag is inserted, a trailing End Tag will be inserted at the end of the selected text. All text between the spell tag and its associated end tag will be spelled out.

Here is an example illustrating how the spell tag is used:

This text will be read normally. <spell>This text will be spelled out.</spell> This text will be read normally.

Inserting Audio Clips

It is possible to embed audio clips in TextAloud articles by selecting **Audio Clip** from the Insert Tags menu. An audio clip can be any mp3, wma or wav file.

When speaking text aloud, TextAloud will suspend speaking when the audio clip tag is reached, play the audio clip, and resume speaking. When writing audio files, the audio specified by the clip tag will be embedded in the audio file created by TextAloud.

Audio clip tags have the following format:

```
{{Audio=C:\My Sounds\My Audio Clip.mp3}}
```

Using Split Tags

Split tags allow you to specify that when writing audio files, the audio should be split into multiple files. When writing text to an audio file and a split tag is encountered, the current audio file is closed, and a new audio file started. An article may contain any number of split tags. Split tags are ignored when speaking an article aloud.

There are two split tags formats available:

Automatically generated split names

{{Split}}

In this form, TextAloud automatically generates a new file name for the split. Split file names are generated by appending a sequence number to the article title. So if the title of the article is "MyTitle", audio file names created by multiple {{Split}} tags would be MyTitle_001.mp3, MyTitle_002.mp3, MyTitle_003.mp3, and so on.

User specified split names

{{Split=MySplitName}}

In this form, you specify your own split name instead of using automatically generated names. For the split tag {{Split=MySplitName}}, audio will be split at the tag, and the name of new audio file will be MySplitName.mp3.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpNote

Split audio files are always created in the Audio Output Directory, specified on the File Options tab. There is not a way to split audio files into different directories.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpNote

Valid characters for user specified split names include alphanumeric characters and the underscore character.

To insert a split tag in an article, select **Split Audio File** from the Insert Tags menu. A prompt will appear asking if you want TextAloud to generate a split file name automatically, or specify your own split name.

TextAloud Main Window

The TextAloud main window is depicted below:

Missing image: ta main window.png

Numbered areas on the picture above indicate key areas, and are described below.

1. Main Menu

Provides menu items to all functions available in TextAloud. Most menu items have shortcut keys defined, and using **Tools -> Advanced Toolbar Customization** allows you to customize keyboard shortcuts. The main menu is described in detail here.

2. Toolbars

Toolbars provide quick access to commonly used menu items. Pause your mouse over an icon and a popup hint will provide a description of the icon's function. There are several different toolbars available in TextAloud, and the toolbars are completely configurable. Under the **View** menu, click **Toolbar Options** to customize which toolbars are displayed (including predefined toolbar groups), toolbar styles, button size, and choose whether or not to display button captions. You can also change button icons by using **Tools -> Advanced Toolbar Customization**. The toolbars are described in detail here.

3. Current Article Toolbar

This is a special toolbar that contains controls associated with the current article. The fields on the toolbar include the article title, the voice assigned to the article, and slider controls for speed, pitch and volume.

4. Article List Dropdown

Click this dropdown list to see the full list of all articles currently in TextAloud, then select an article title to load it into the main window. Since articles are displayed in individual tabs, the display of this dropdown is completely optional. The dropdown can be hidden by toggling the menu entry **Display Article List Dropdown**, under the **View** menu.

5. Article Tabs

Each article in TextAloud is displayed in a separate tab. Tabs can be reordered by left clicking a tab, holding the left mouse button down, and dragging the tab to a new position. Also, you can quickly edit article titles by double clicking the article tab. The font, size, foreground color and background color for the tabs can be configured on the Font Options dialog. Click **Tools -> TextAloud Options**, and click the **Font** tab.

6. TextAloud Text Area

This area is where text of the current article is displayed. When manually creating an article, type or paste in this area. You may edit text in this area, and several actions are available on a popup menu when you right-click in this area. The font, size, foreground color and background color for the text area can be configured on the Font Options dialog. Click **Tools -> TextAloud Options**, and click the **Font** tab.

7. Status Bar

The status bar at the bottom of the window will often provide helpful status information such as the number of current articles or progress indicators during speaking.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

TextAloud Main Menu

TextAloud Toolbars

Font Dialog

Advanced Toolbar Customization

Screen Reader Compatibility Mode

The default main menu and toolbar system used by TextAloud is not compatible with screen readers. If you are using screen reader software, switch to Screen Reader Compatibility Mode (from the TextAloud View menu). In Screen Reader Compatibility Mode, TextAloud uses an alternate main menu / toolbar system that is compliant with screen reader software.

The following features are not available when running TextAloud in Screen Reader Compatibility Mode.

- Automatic Hiding of unused menu items.

- Popup menu customization
- Toolbar Styles
- Predefined Toolbar Groups
- Configurable Toolbar Button sizes

Menu items under the View menu related to these functions will not be visible when running TextAloud in Screen Reader Compatibility Mode.

TextAloud Main Menu

All actions in TextAloud are available from the main menu. Each TextAloud menu entry is described below.

File Menu

Open - Loads a document into the TextAloud window. See Importing Documents.

New Article - Creates a new, blank article.

Save Article As Text File - Prompts you for the name and location of a text file, and saves the current article to this text file.

Save All Articles As Text Files - Prompts you for a directory, and saves all currently loaded TextAloud articles as text files in the directory. Article titles are used to generate filenames.

Unarchive - Displays a list of currently archived articles, and allows you to unarchive one or more articles. Any unarchived articles are moved from the archive to the TextAloud main window. See Archiving and Unarchiving Articles.

Empty Archive - Deletes all articles from the archive. See Archiving and Unarchiving Articles.

Exit - Exits the TextAloud application

Edit Menu

Undo - When editing a TextAloud article, the Undo action removes the last change made, and restores the document to its previous state.

Redo - Redo is the opposite of Undo. Redo restores an edit that was removed with Undo.

Cut - Removes selected text from the current TextAloud article and places it on the Windows Clipboard.

Copy - Copies selected text from the current TextAloud article and places it on the Windows Clipboard.

Paste - Replaces text currently selected in TextAloud with the contents of the Windows Clipboard. If there is no text selection, the contents of the Clipboard are inserted at the current cursor position.

Select All - Selects all text in the current TextAloud article.

Search - Displays a dialog that allows you to search for text. The search dialog gives you the option of searching all articles, or limiting the search to the current article.

Repeat Search - Repeats the last search, starting at the current cursor position.

Replace - Displays a dialog that allows you to search for text and replace it.

Edit Article Title - Displays a dialog that allows you to change the title for the current article.

Delete Current Article - Deletes the current TextAloud article. If archiving is enabled, a copy of the article will be kept in the archive. See Archiving and Unarchiving Articles.

Delete All Articles - Deletes all articles from TextAloud. If archiving is enabled, a copy of each article will be kept in the archive. See Archiving and Unarchiving Articles.

View Menu

Hide Unused Menu Items - When this option is selected, only recently used items will be displayed when a menu is displayed. An arrow will be displayed at the bottom of the menu when items are hidden, and hidden items can be displayed by clicking the arrow.

Reset Menu Usage - Clicking this menu item removes all previously collected menu usage data. If the option to Hide Unused Menu Items is selected, any menu items currently hidden will be displayed, and records of menu item usage are reset.

Display Icons in Menus - Select this option to display icons in TextAloud menus.

Display Article List Dropdown - Select this option to display the Article List dropdown in the TextAloud main window. See TextAloud Main Window.

Skins - Displays a dialog that allows you to 'skin' the TextAloud window. See Changing TextAloud Appearance Using Skins.

Screen Reader Compatibility Mode - By default, the TextAloud main menu and toolbars are not currently compatible with screen readers. Clicking Screen Reader Compatibility Mode causes TextAloud to use an alternate main menu / toolbar system that is screen reader compatible. See Screen Reader Compatibility Mode.

Toolbars - Allows you to configure which TextAloud toolbars are displayed in the window. See TextAloud Toolbars.

Predefined Toolbar Groups - Allows you pick different configurations of toolbars to display. The choices available are Classic, Pro, and Advanced; we generally recommend using the Classic setting. See TextAloud Toolbars for more details on predefined groups.

Toolbar Style - Allows you to apply different styles to the toolbars. Each style gives a different look to the TextAloud toolbars and menus.

Toolbar Button Size - Allows you to select between small, medium, and large toolbar buttons.

Show Toolbar Button Captions - This option controls whether not button captions should be displayed on TextAloud toolbars. Note that if captions are not displayed, you can hover your mouse over each button to display a button hint.

Reset Toolbars - Allows you to undo all toolbar customizations, and restore toolbars in the main window to their initial state. See Customizing Toolbars and Menus.

Reset Popup Menus - Allows you to undo all Popup Menu customizations. This will restore both the Main Window and Tray Icon popup menus to their initial state. See Customizing Toolbars and Menus.

Insert Tags Menu

Each menu item beneath the Insert Tags menu is used to place a tag at the current cursor position. The items under the Insert Tags menu are summarized here, but see Using Tags for more detailed information.

Pause - Prompts for the number of seconds to pause, and inserts a tag in the text that causes speaking to pause when the tag is reached.

Dynamic Voice Change - Inserts a tag in the text that causes the voice to change when the tag is reached. TextAloud will automatically choose the new voice to use based on the tag selection.

Voice Change - Inserts a tag in the text that causes TextAloud to switch to a voice you select when the tag is reached.

Absolute Speed - Specify a new speed value to use when the tag is reached.

Relative Speed - Increase or decrease the current speed by the value indicated when the tag is reached.

Absolute Pitch - Specify a new pitch value to use when the tag is reached.

Relative Pitch - Increase or decrease the current pitch by the value specified when the tag is reached.

Volume - Specify a new volume value to use. Use this tag when passages of text should be read louder than others.

Audio Clip - Inserts the name of an audio file that is played when the tag is reached.

Split Audio File - When writing audio files, split tags allow you indicate spots in the text where audio files should be split. Split tags allow you to split the content of a large article into several audio files.

Spell - Any text enclosed in a Spell tag will be spelled out, letter by letter.

Bookmark - Places a bookmark tag in the text. Use **Skip To Bookmark**, under the Navigation menu, to skip to any of the bookmarks defined for the current article.

Comment - Places a comment tag in the text. Any text in the comment tag is not spoken.

Remove Tags - Removes any tags found in the current in the current text selection. Any text contained in Comment tags is uncommented instead of removed.

Speak Menu

Items under the Speak Menu are used to initiate speaking, pause and stop, and adjust speed and pitch for the voice assigned to the current article. The Speak Menu is divided into four, collapsible sections, allowing you to easily hide and display groups of items as needed.

Current Article

The items beneath the Current Article menu are used to initiate speak requests for the current article. Use **Speak Current Article Aloud** or **Speak Current Article To File** to listen to the current article, or generate an audio file for the current article. **Speak From Cursor** can be used to start speaking at the current cursor location instead of from the start. So if you want to skip some portion of text, click to the spot where you want to start speaking and select either **Speak From Cursor Aloud** or **Speak From Cursor To File**. You may also speak only a portion of an article. Highlight a portion of text within the current article and select either **Speak Selected Text Aloud** or **Speak Selected Text to File**.

In addition, the entries **Loop Speak Current Article** and **Loop Speak Selected Text** can be used to speak all or part of the current article, where speaking 'loops' each time the end of text is reached.

All Articles

The items beneath the All Articles menu are used to initiate speak requests for all articles currently loaded in the TextAloud window. Use **Speak All Articles Aloud** or **Speak All Articles To File** to listen to all articles, or generate an audio file for each article. You can optionally have speaking begin with any article, at any position in the article. Select the article where you would like speaking to begin, position the cursor, and select either **Speak All Articles From Cursor Aloud** or **Speak All Articles From Cursor To File**.

Control Speaking

Items beneath the Control Speaking menu are available to Pause and Resume speaking, or Stop speaking.

Control Voice

Items beneath the Control Voice menu are available to Increment and Decrement Speed and/or Pitch. Menu entries related to changing pitch are enabled only if the voice supports pitch control.

Navigation Menu

Items beneath the Navigation menu allow you to skip positions within articles and move between articles. The items are divided into three, collapsible sections, allowing you to easily hide and display groups of items as needed.

Within Article Navigations

Within article navigations allow you to skip forward and backward within an article. If TextAloud is speaking when these navigations are used, speaking will stop and resume at the new position. Within article navigations allow you to skip to the next/previous line, paragraph, or screen. You can also skip forward or backward in the current article in groups of 25, 50 or 100 lines.

If the article contains bookmarks, there is an additional within article navigation called **Skip To Bookmark** that allows you to skip to any bookmark in the current article. Use **Bookmark** under the Insert Tags menu to create bookmarks in an article.

Between Article Navigations

Between article navigations allow you to skip between articles. If TextAloud is speaking when these navigations are used, speaking will stop and resume at the new position. Between article navigations allow you to skip the First, Next, Previous or Last article.

Step Navigations

Step Navigations are used to enable a special proofreading mode in TextAloud called Step Proofreading. For a detailed description of Step Proofreading, see Using Step Proofreading. Whenever a Step Navigation is used, TextAloud will enter Step Proofreading mode, speak the desired text, and pause. From the Pause state, you can either step again, or Resume to resume normal speaking. Step Navigations allow you to step both forward and backwards. The text spoken in a single step can be a full screen of text, a paragraph, line, word or a single letter.

Tools Menu

Items beneath the Tools menu are used for controlling TextAloud configuration settings and launching TextAloud utilities.

TextAloud Options - Displays a tab panel providing access to Article Options, Font Options, Highlighting Options and Miscellaneous Options.

Voice Options - Displays the Voice Options dialog.

Audio File Options - Displays a tab panel providing access to File Encoding Options, Custom Encoders, Audio File Tags and Background Audio.

Hotkey Setup - Displays the Hotkey Setup Dialog.

Clipboard and Mouse Speak Options - Displays a tab panel providing access to Clipboard Options and Mouse Speak Options.

Character Speaking and Filtering - Displays the Character Speaking and Filtering dialog.

Automatic Text Insertions - Displays the Automatic Text Insertions dialog.

Event Setup - Displays the Event Setup dialog.

Configure Spell Check - Displays the Configure Spell Check dialog.

Perform Spell Check - Performs a spell check on the currently selected text. If no text is selected, a spell check is performed on the entire article.

Watch Clipboard - Toggles the option to watch the Windows Clipboard. See Clipboard Options.

Watch Mouse - Toggles the option to watch your mouse. See Mouse Speak Options.

Advanced Toolbar Customization - Displays the Advanced Toolbar Customization dialog.

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Displays the Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance dialog.

File Splitter Utility - Displays the File Splitter Utility dialog.

Batch File Converter - Displays the Batch File Converter dialog.

TextAloud Setup Wizard

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Notes

- When sight impaired users are using TextAloud in combination with a screen reader, some items under the View menu can interfere with screen readers. The **Skins** setting should be set to None, and the option **Display Icons in Menus** should not be selected.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

TextAloud Toolbars

TextAloud Toolbars

Items in the TextAloud menus are organized into several toolbars. The toolbars are organized by function, and a default set of buttons is configured to display on each toolbar. You can configure both the toolbars displayed, as well as the individual buttons displayed on each toolbar.

The following toolbars are available in the TextAloud main window:

Standard - Contains Buttons for 'Standard' TextAloud actions. Standard actions include actions like Cut, Copy, Paste, File Open, and other actions commonly used in Windows applications. The buttons on the

toolbar correspond to items on the File and Edit menus.

Speak - The Speak toolbar contains buttons related to speaking the currently displayed article in the TextAloud window. The buttons on this toolbar correspond to items in the Current Article section of the Speak Menu.

Control Voice - The Control Voice toolbar contains buttons for the menu entries in the Control Voice section of the Speak Menu. The buttons on this toolbar allow you to easily increment and/or decrement speed and pitch for the current voice.

Multi Article Speak - The buttons on the Multi Article Speak toolbar correspond the menu items available in the All Articles section of the Speak Menu. The buttons on this toolbar are used when you want to speak multiple articles loaded in the TextAloud window, either aloud or to audio files.

Within Article Navigations - This buttons on this toolbar correspond to the Within Article Navigations section of the Navigations Menu. Within Article Navigations allow you to skip forward and backward within a TextAloud article.

Between Article Navigations - The buttons on this toolbar correspond to the Between Article Navigations section of the Navigations Menu. Between Article Navigations allow you to skip between articles.

Step Navigations - Buttons on the Step Navigations toolbar correspond to items in the Step Navigations section of the Navigations Menu. Step Navigations initiate a special proofreading mode in TextAloud called Step Proofreading.

Tags - Buttons on the Tags toolbar correspond to items under the Insert Tags menu. Tag buttons allow you to create various kinds of tags in the text, including Pauses, Bookmarks, Voice attribute adjustments, and others.

Current Article - The Current Article toolbar is a toolbar containing several window controls related to the current article. The fields available on the Current Article toolbar include the Article Title, the Voice currently assigned to the article, and slider controls for adjusting Speed, Pitch and Volume for the current voice.

To change which toolbars are displayed in the TextAloud window, click the View menu, expand the **Toolbar Options** section, and click **Toolbars** to display and change the toolbars currently visible in the window.

Predefined Toolbar Groups

TextAloud includes some predefined toolbar groupings. To switch to different toolbar groups, click the View menu, expand the **Toolbar Options** section, and click **Predefined Toolbar Groups**. Predefined Toolbar Groups are configured as follows:

Toolbar Group	Toolbars
Classic	Standard Speak Current Article
Pro	Standard Speak Multi Article Speak Within Article Navigations

	Between Article Navigations Tags Current Article
Advanced	Standard Speak Control Voice Multi Article Speak Within Article Navigations Between Article Navigations Step Navigations Tags Current Article

Customizing Toolbars and Menus

As mentioned above, you can select which toolbars are visible in the TextAloud window by selecting **Toolbars** from the **Toolbar Options** section of the View menu.

Additional toolbar customizations are available by right clicking any toolbar, or clicking the small dropdown arrow at the far right of each toolbar. This will display a popup menu that allows you to perform the following:

Add or Remove Buttons - To add or remove buttons from a toolbar, just check / uncheck the buttons displayed beneath the **Add or Remove Buttons** menu.

Reset Toolbar - Resets the toolbar to its initial, default state.

Customizing Mode - Click the menu entry labeled "Customizing ..." to enter a special toolbar customizing mode. You will be in customizing mode for as long as the Customizing dialog is displayed. While in Customizing mode, you can perform the following:

- Drag buttons between toolbars
- Right click any button, and from the popup menu displayed, delete the button, change the button caption, or change the button image.
- From the Customize Dialog, click the Commands tab, and drag any TextAloud action to any existing toolbar.
- Use the Customize Dialog to create your own, custom toolbars. Click the "New" button on the Toolbars tab, enter a name for your toolbar and press OK. Then, click the Commands tab, and drag any TextAloud actions to your custom toolbar. You can also drag buttons that already appear on other toolbars, moving them to your custom toolbar.
- Customize the main menu by expanding any main menu entry, and drag items off the menu, drag items between menus, or drag TextAloud actions from the Customizing Dialog Commands tab to any menu.

To exit Customizing Mode, simply close the Customize dialog.

It is also possible to customize the popup menu displayed by right clicking in the TextAloud article area, as well as the popup menu displayed by right clicking the TextAloud tray icon. From the article popup menu, click **Customize Popup Menu** and you will enter the same Customizing Mode described above. Similarly, you can enter Customizing Mode for the tray icon popup menu by right clicking the tray icon and selecting **Customize Tray Icon Menu**. While in Customizing mode for either popup menu, you

can remove menu entries from the popup menu, drag menu entries or toolbar buttons between the TextAloud main window and the popup menu, and drag actions from the Customizing Dialog Commands tab to the popup menu.

Resetting Toolbars and Menus

Customizations performed to the TextAloud Toolbars and Popup menus can be undone at any time, and the toolbars / popup menus returned to their default settings. There are two actions beneath the View menu available for this: **Reset Toolbars** and **Reset Popup Menu**. The Reset Toolbars action will reset the toolbars and main menu to their default state. The Reset Popup Menu action will reset both the article popup menu and tray icon popup menu to their initial, default state.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

TextAloud Main Menu

Vocal Proofreader Window

Missing image: vocal proofreading.png

The Vocal Proofreader window allows you to proofread text by letting you listen to small sections of text at a time. The Vocal Proofreader window can be launched from a system wide hotkey, or from either the Clipboard or Mouse Speak Prompt dialogs. See Proofreading Documents for instructions on how to configure launching the Vocal Proofreader window.

There are several controls available in the panel beneath the text area in the proofreader window that allow you to configure proofreader window options.

To change the voice used for vocal proofreading, change the voice in the voice dropdown list.

Use the Speed slider to change the proofreading speed.

If the checkbox labeled "Close Window When Speaking Finished" is selected, the proofreader window will close automatically when proofreading is finished.

Use the dropdown list labeled "When Window is Clicked" to control what happens when the proofreader window is clicked. Available options are to either close the proofreader window, or to Pause / Resume speaking.

Click the Options button to display options to control Font, Text Size, and Colors in the proofreader window, and to configure Word Highlighting.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Proofreading Documents

Clipboard Prompt

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The Clipboard Prompt is displayed when the option Watch Clipboard is enabled, and you copy text from

an application to the Windows Clipboard. When the prompt is displayed, you can select an action from a dropdown list of available actions, or click the Ignore button to ignore the clipboard update.

Actions available from the Clipboard Prompt

The following actions may be selected from the Clipboard Prompt:

Add New Article - Use this action to add a new TextAloud article and load it with the text currently on the Windows Clipboard

Insert Text At Top of Article - Inserts the text currently on the windows clipboard at the top of the current TextAloud article

Insert Text At Current Cursor Position - Inserts the text currently on the windows clipboard at the current cursor position in the current TextAloud Article.

Append Text to Bottom of Article - Appends the text currently on the windows clipboard to the bottom of the current TextAloud article.

Speak Text - Speaks the text currently on the Windows Clipboard

Vocal Proofread - Opens the Vocal Proofread window, loads the window with the current clipboard text, and begins proofreading.

Configuring the Clipboard Prompt

The Clipboard Prompt can be configured from the Clipboard Options dialog, available under the TextAloud Tools menu. Some configuration options may also be set by clicking the Show Details link on the prompt.

The following configuration options are available when Show Details is clicked:

Field	Description
Display Prompt For	Specifies the number of seconds the clipboard prompt will display before automatically closing.
Set Last Action As Default Action	When this option is selected, when an action is selected from the clipboard prompt, that action becomes the default action.
Perform Action Automatically On Timeout	Specifies whether or not the Default Action should be performed automatically when the clipboard prompt times out and closes.
Turn Off Clipboard Monitoring for Now	Disables the Watch Clipboard option. Watch Clipboard can be re-enabled directly from the TextAloud Tools menu, or from the Clipboard Options dialog.
Always Ignore Clipboard Updates From	Allows you to specify that future clipboard updates from the application that triggered the Clipboard Prompt will be ignored. The list of applications to ignore is available on the Clipboard Options dialog.

Selecting An Action

To select an action from the clipboard prompt, you can click do either of the following:

1. Click one of the three action buttons at the bottom of the prompt.
2. Select an action from the Action Dropdown list and click the "Perform" button.

By default the action buttons displayed on the prompt are New, Append and Ignore. The actions assigned to the New and Append buttons can be configured by right clicking either button, and choosing the action to assign to the button from the popup menu displayed.

Missing image: tip.bmpTips

- If you want to ignore clipboard updates from one or more specific applications, click the Show Details button when the prompt is displayed, and select the option to Always Ignore Clipboard Updates from the application.
- The "Watch Clipboard" setting can be accessed directly from the Tools menu, as well as the popup menu displayed by right clicking the TextAloud tray icon.
- You can assign a TextAloud Hotkey to the Watch Clipboard menu entry, and toggle clipboard watching on and off with the Hotkey.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpRelated Topics

Clipboard Options

Advanced Toolbar Customization

Mouse Speak Prompt

Mouse Speak Prompt

Missing image: mouse speak prompt.png

The Mouse Speak Prompt is displayed when the option Watch Mouse is enabled, and you use your mouse to select text in any application. When the prompt is displayed, you can select an action from a dropdown list of available actions, or click the Ignore button to ignore the text selection.

Actions available from the Mouse Prompt

The following actions may be selected from the Mouse Prompt:

Add New Article - Use this action to add a new TextAloud article and load it with the current text selection.

Insert Text At Top of Article - Inserts the selected text at the top of the current TextAloud article

Insert Text At Current Cursor Position - Inserts the selected text at the current cursor position in the current TextAloud Article.

Append Text to Bottom of Article - Appends the selected text to the bottom of the current TextAloud article.

Speak Text - Speaks the currently selected text.

Vocal Proofread - Opens the Vocal Proofread window, loads the window with the selected text, and

begins proofreading.

Configuring the Mouse Prompt

The Mouse Prompt can be configured from the Mouse Options dialog, available under the TextAloud Tools menu. Some configuration options may also be set by clicking the Show Details link on the prompt.

The following configuration options are available when Show Details is clicked:

Field	Description
Display Prompt For	Specifies the number of seconds the mouse prompt will display before automatically closing.
Set Last Action As Default Action	When this option is selected, when an action is selected from the mouse prompt, that action becomes the default action.
Perform Action Automatically On Timeout	Specifies whether or not the Default Action should be performed automatically when the mouse prompt times out and closes.
Turn Off Mouse Monitoring for Now	Disables the Watch Mouse option. Watch Mouse can be re-enabled directly from the TextAloud Tools menu, or from the Clipboard Options dialog.
Always Ignore Mouse Messages From	Allows you to specify that future mouse messages from the application that triggered the Mouse Prompt will be ignored. The list of applications to ignore is available on the Mouse Options dialog.

Selecting An Action

To select an action from the mouse prompt, you can click do either of the following:

1. Click one of the three action buttons at the bottom of the prompt.
2. Select an action from the Action Dropdown list and click the "Perform" button.

By default the action buttons displayed on the prompt are New, Append and Ignore. The actions assigned to the New and Append buttons can be configured by right clicking either button, and choosing the action to assign to the button from the popup menu displayed.

Missing image: tip.bmpTips

- If you want to ignore mouse messages from one or more specific applications, click the Show Details button when the prompt is displayed, and select the option to Always Ignore Mouse Messages from the application.
- The "Watch Mouse" setting can be accessed directly from the Tools menu, as well as the popup menu displayed by right clicking the TextAloud tray icon.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpRelated Topics

Mouse Options
Clipboard Prompt

Floating Toolbar

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The Floating Toolbar provides access to some functions in the TextAloud main window. Buttons on the toolbar are:

Button	Description
Speak All	Speak all articles currently loaded in the TextAloud window
All To File	Speak all articles currently loaded in the TextAloud window to audio files.
Pause/Resume	Used to pause and resume speaking.
Stop	Used to stop speaking.
Main	Hides the floating toolbar and displays the TextAloud main window.

Configuring the Floating Toolbar

To configure the Floating Toolbar, click **TextAloud Options** on the TextAloud Tools menu, and click the Miscellaneous tab. The option labeled "Show Floating Toolbar" controls when the Floating Toolbar is displayed. If set to "On Request Only", the toolbar is never displayed automatically. You must first minimize the TextAloud main window, then right click the TextAloud tray icon, and click **Show Toolbar** in the popup menu. To have TextAloud display the Floating Toolbar automatically, set the Show Floating Toolbar option to either "When Minimized", or "When Minimized and Speaking".

Other options available on the Miscellaneous tab for configuring the Floating Toolbar include the toolbar button size, whether button captions should be displayed, and if the Floating Toolbar should be forced to remain on top of other windows.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Miscellaneous Options

Article Options

The Article Options panel lets you set up options for assigning article titles, archiving articles and other display related options.

The following fields are available in the Article Options panel

Field	Description
Article Title Option	The Article Title Option is a dropdown list that lets you configure how how article titles are generated. The following four selections are available: <i>End on nearest word boundary</i> Reads article text up to the number of characters specified

	<p>by Maximum Title Length. This string is truncated to the nearest word boundary and assigned as the article title.</p> <p><i>End on first newline character</i> Reads article text up to the first newline character for the title. If the title length exceeds the value specified in Maximum Title Length, the title is truncated to the nearest word boundary.</p> <p><i>Use first full sentence</i> Reads article text up to the first sentence for the title. If the title length exceeds the value specified in Maximum Title Length, the title is truncated to the nearest word boundary.</p> <p><i>Use custom article title</i> The text specified in the Custom Article Title field is used as the article title.</p>
Maximum Title Length	Used together with the Article Title Option to limit automatically generated article titles to a maximum length. The Maximum Article Title length field is disabled when the "Use custom article title" option is used.
Use document name as article title when loading text from documents	If this option is checked, the document name is used as the article title when articles are loaded via File -> Open. The directory path and file extension are not included in the title.
Archive Deleted Articles	When this option is checked, articles will be written to an archive whenever they are deleted. Deleted articles can be retrieved from the archive and restored as TextAloud articles.
Delete articles from the archive older than	Specifies that TextAloud should automatically delete articles from the archive older than the number of specified days.
Limit number of articles loaded to 1	Limits the number of articles that can be loaded into TextAloud at any time to a single article. Any time an article is added to TextAloud, the existing article is deleted.
Smooth Scrolling	When this option is checked, any vertical scrolling in the article is smooth. Text in the display slides up and down smoothly, instead of jumping. Some users find word highlighting in TextAloud easier to follow when smooth scrolling is performed.
Alternate Tab Shading by	When this option is checked the percentage value specified is used to lighten/darken adjacent tabs in the TextAloud main window. This prevents the tabs from appearing to run together, making it easier to distinguish one tab from another.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Archiving and Unarchiving Articles

Font Options

Highlighting Options

Font Options

The Font panel allows you to configure the fonts and colors used to display articles, as well as the fonts and colors used in the article tabs. The following fields are available on the Font Options panel:

Field	Description
Font	A dropdown list that determines which font is being configured. Select "Article Text" to configure the article display font, and "Article Tabs" to configure the font used in article tabs.
Font Name	The name of the font.
Bold	If this option is checked, a bold font style will be used.
Italic	If this option is checked, an italic font style will be used.
Font Size	Specifies the height of the font in points.
Script	Specifies the character set of the font.
Foreground Text Color	Click this button to assign a color to the font.
Background Color	Click this button to assign a background color.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Notes

When setting the background color for Article Tabs, there is an option on the Article Options panel to alternate shading between adjacent tabs. If the shading option is used, the background color selected on this tab will appear slightly lighter (or darker) on alternating tabs.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Article Options
Highlighting Options

Font Options (Vocal Proofreading)

The Font panel allows you to configure the fonts and colors used in the Vocal Proofreader window. The following fields are available on the Font Options panel:

Field	Description
Font Name	The name of the font.
Bold	If this option is checked, a bold font style will be used.
Italic	If this option is checked, an italic font style will be used.
Font Size	Specifies the height of the font in points.
Script	Specifies the character set of the font.
Foreground Text Color	Click this button to assign a color to the font.
Background Color	Click this button to assign a background color.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics
Highlighting Options

Highlighting Options

Options on the Highlighting Options panel control how text displayed in TextAloud Articles is highlighted as text in the article is read aloud. Highlighting options are grouped into three sections on the panel: Primary Highlighting, Secondary Highlighting, and Masking.

Primary and Secondary Highlighting

To configure highlighting, the first step is to select the checkbox labeled "Primary Highlighting Enabled", along with a unit of text you would like to highlight. Primary Highlighting can be configured to highlight the current Word, Line, Sentence or Paragraph. Bold, Italic, and Underline font styles may be applied to the highlighted text, along with foreground and background colors.

Once Primary Highlighting is configured, you may optionally configure Secondary Highlighting as well. Secondary Highlighting can only be enabled if Primary Highlighting is enabled. Secondary highlighting allows you to apply highlighting to a section of text that contains the Primary Highlighting text unit. For example, one highlighting style may be applied to the Current Word as Primary Highlighting, and another highlighting style may be applied the Current Paragraph as Secondary Highlighting.

Masking

Masking is basically the opposite of highlighting. Primary and Secondary highlighting are used to draw your attention to the text currently being read. The idea of masking is to have text that is not being read blend into the background color of the display. So when masking is enabled, the mask is applied to any text that is not highlighted by Primary or Secondary highlighting. The slider control to the right of the "Masking Enabled" checkbox lets you select the degree of masking to use. If you position the slider control all the way to extreme left, any text not highlighted will be completely invisible.

The sample text at the bottom of the Highlighting tab will give you an idea how your combined Primary Highlighting, Secondary Highlighting and Masking selections will display.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics
Article Options
Font Options

Miscellaneous Options

The following fields are available on the Miscellaneous Options panel:

Field	Description
Show Floating Toolbar	Controls display of the floating toolbar.

	<p><i>On Request Only</i> The Floating Toolbar is only displayed from the TextAloud icon in the system tray. Right click the icon and select "Show Toolbar".</p> <p><i>When Minimized</i> The Floating Toolbar is displayed whenever TextAloud is minimized. The toolbar is also automatically hidden when the main window is redisplayed.</p> <p><i>When Minimized and Speaking</i> The Floating Toolbar is displayed only when TextAloud is minimized and currently speaking.</p>
Floating Toolbar Button Size	Allows you to choose Small, Medium or Large buttons in the Floating Toolbar.
Show Floating Toolbar Button Captions	Select this option to display captions on the Floating Toolbar buttons. You can also hover your mouse over any button on the toolbar to display a button hint.
Floating Toolbar Always On Top	Select this option to keep the Floating Toolbar on top of your other windows. This prevents other windows from hiding the toolbar.
Show TextAloud on Windows Taskbar when minimized	Use this option to control whether or not TextAloud appears on the windows Taskbar when minimized.
Show TextAloud in System Tray when closed	<p>This setting controls the behavior of the "X" button in the TextAloud title bar. The default setting is to hide the window, and leave TextAloud running in your system tray. To exit the TextAloud application, you must select "Exit TextAloud" from the File Menu.</p> <p>If you uncheck this setting, clicking the "X" button will cause TextAloud to exit instead of minimizing to the system tray</p>
Start TextAloud on Windows Login	Select this option if you want TextAloud to start automatically whenever you login to Windows.
Show Splash Screen at Startup	Uncheck this option to suppress the splash screen normally displayed by TextAloud during startup.

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The standard Windows keyboard shortcut Alt+Tab to tab between windows only works for applications on the Windows Taskbar. If you want to use this shortcut to find TextAloud when the TextAloud window is minimized, you should select the option 'Show TextAloud on Windows Taskbar when minimized'.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Floating Toolbar

Voice Options

The Voice Options panel is used for configuring voice assignment for new articles, the version(s) of SAPI used by TextAloud, and preferences for individual voices.

Voice Assignment for New Articles

The following fields are available for configuring voice assignment to new articles:

Field	Description
Voice Assignment Option	<p>Voice Assignment Option is a dropdown list containing the following selections:</p> <p><i>Default Voice</i> If Default Voice is selected as the Voice Assignment Options, one voice is chosen as the default voice to be assigned to all TextAloud articles. The default voice is configured in the Voice Preferences section at the bottom of the panel.</p> <p><i>Random Voice for Default Language</i> As articles are created in TextAloud, a random voice for the default language will be assigned to each article. Only voices that are enabled will be assigned to new articles.</p> <p><i>Round Robin for Default Language</i> Voices for new articles are assigned sequentially based on the default language. Only voices that are enabled will be assigned to new articles.</p>
Default Language	The language used when Random or Round Robin voice assignment is performed.
Dialect	The dialect is used together with the Default Language when Random or Round Robin voice assignment is performed.

The purpose of the Default Language and Dialect fields in the Voice Assignment section is to allow Random or Round Robin voice selection to be used when voices for multiple languages are installed. By setting the Default Language and Dialect, Random and Round Robin voice assignments will always choose a voice for the selected language and dialect.

The term 'Dialect' is used basically to mean any difference in voice accent based on region or geography. For example, voices treat the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia as different dialects of English.

Voice Preferences

The following fields are available in the Voice Preferences section of the panel:

Field	Description
SAPI Version	Use this dropdown list to restrict which speech engines are loaded by TextAloud.
Tree view	The tree view contains a list of Engines and Voices loaded into TextAloud.

Slider Controls	Speed, Pitch and Volume slider controls are enabled if you select a voice from the tree view.
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Setting SAPI Version

SAPI is Microsoft's Speech Application Interface, and is an interface for application programs like TextAloud to interact with speech engines. There are currently two versions of SAPI available, SAPI4 and SAPI5. Both interfaces are supported by TextAloud, but there are some differences in available / implemented features. There are several features available in SAPI5 that are not supported in SAPI4, such as Voice Tags and Direct Encoding.

In general you will want to leave the SAPI Version dropdown set to "Use Both", which causes TextAloud to load voice engines for both speech interfaces. If you're having a problem with either SAPI4 or SAPI5 on your system, changing the SAPI Version dropdown can sometimes be used to work around the problem.

Setting Speed, Pitch and Volume

All voices support Speed and Volume control. Pitch support depends on the voice, several voices do not support Pitch control. When Pitch control for a selected voice is not available, the Pitch slider will be replaced by a note stating that Pitch control is not available for the voice.

Like Speed and Pitch, Volume is also a voice attribute. The volume slider on this panel is useful for adjusting the volume of a voice relative to other voices. If you're using several voices, and run into problems with the volume varying between voices, you can correct it for by adjusting voice volumes on this panel. Note that adjusting voice volumes on this panel has no effect on your system audio volume.

Missing image: tip.bmp Tips

System-wide hotkeys can be configured for changing both the Default Voice and the Default Language.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Hotkey Setup

File Options

The following fields are available on the File Options panel:

Field	Description
Audio File Format	Select an audio format from one of the available encoders on your machine. The most commonly used audio formats are MP3 and WMA.
Bit / Sample Rate	This setting is used to determine the quality of audio files generated by TextAloud. The setting "Default for Voice" can be used to have TextAloud automatically choose a Bit/Sample rate setting based on the type of audio produced by the voice.
Silence at end of Audio File	Specifies a period of silent time to include at the end of audio files. The silent time is specified in seconds.
Audio Output Directory	The directory where audio files are written.

Confirm Output Directory when writing Audio Files	Specifies whether or not TextAloud will prompt you to confirm the Audio Output Directory before writing audio files. The confirmation prompt will allow you to use the default Audio Output Directory or change it.
Prompt Before Overwriting Audio Files	Specifies whether or not TextAloud will prompt you before overwriting existing audio files. If this option is not selected, TextAloud will always overwrite existing audio files without prompting you.
Add Audio to iTunes Playlist	Specifies whether audio files created by TextAloud will be automatically added to iTunes in the specified Playlist. This option is available only if iTunes is installed, and the Audio File Format is an MP3 format.
Split Audio Files Every	Specified whether TextAloud should automatically split audio files to limit the audio in each file to the number of specified minutes.

The contents of the Audio File Format dropdown list are machine dependent. The list includes encoders available on your machine, and different machines may have different encoders installed.

A typical list of installed encoders includes:

Encoder	Description
IMA ADPCM	An ADPCM algorithm developed by Interactive Media Association (IMA). ADPCM is a variation of PCM audio, and produces wav files. ADPCM use an algorithm to predict samples based on previous samples, saving the differences between predictions and actual values, and in this way produces smaller wav files.
MS-ADPCM	Microsoft's variation of ADPCM (see IMA ADPCM above).
CCITT A-Law	An algorithm developed by an international committee in Geneva to compress 16 bit PCM audio to 8 bit.
CCITT u-Law	Like A-Law (see above), u-Law also compresses 16 bit PCM audio to 8 bit. The actual differences between A-Law and u-Law are very technical.
GSM 6.10	A speech compression algorithm developed for use on digital cellular networks. GSM stands for Global System for Mobile communications.
DSP Group TrueSpeech(TM)	An encoder developed by the DSP Group
PCM	Pulse Code Modulation (PCM) is a digital representation of analog data. PCM wav files are not compressed, and will typically be much larger than other formats which use some compression technique.
Windows Media Audio(WMA)	An audio compression technology developed by Microsoft.
Lame MP3	Lame MP3 encoder.

If you have defined any Custom Encoders, the Custom Encoder captions will be available as Audio Formats. If you select a Custom Encoder as the Audio Format, the Bit/Sample Rate drop down list will be

disabled. See the Custom Encoders tab for details.

Choosing a Bit / Sample Rate

You will notice that different combinations of Bit Rate and Sample Rate effect the quality of your audio files. A general rule is to choose a Bit Rate or Sample Rate that gives you the best quality, but try to keep the Bit Rate as small as possible. Smaller Bit Rates equate to smaller audio files and faster encoding time.

When choosing a sample rate it is important to remember that high quality digital speech can be produced at much smaller sample rates than digital music.

If you're planning to copy audio files to a hand-held device (like an MP3 Player), you may also need to check if your device requires a particular audio format. Some players, designed for digital music, only support sample rates in the 44kHz range, and may also require Stereo instead of Mono audio files.

Encoding in Stereo will significantly increase your audio file sizes and encoding times. It is best to use stereo encoding only if required by the portable device you're using.

Missing image: tip.bmp Tips

- If you are not sure which Audio Format to use, we recommend using either an MP3 or WMA format.
- If you are not sure which Bit / Sample rate to use, try using the "Default For Voice" selection.
- If you notice that audio at the very end of your audio files is being clipped, try using the 'Silence at end of Audio File' option to add a few seconds to the end of your files.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Custom Encoders
Audio File Tags
Background Audio

Custom Encoders

The Audio File Formats dropdown list on the File Options panel is typically loaded with audio codecs that are 'registered' on your system. The Windows multimedia system allows codecs to be registered and made available to audio applications such as TextAloud.

Custom Encoders is a TextAloud feature that allows you use audio encoders that are not registered in the Windows multimedia system. If you have an audio encoder that runs as a standalone program, TextAloud can use the encoder if you configure it as a Custom Encoder.

When you create a Custom Encoder, you will assign a unique name that identifies the encoder. This name will then appear in the Audio File Formats dropdown list, on the File Options panel. From then on, you use the Custom Encoder in TextAloud just as using any other audio file format. If a Custom Encoder is specified as the Audio File Format, TextAloud will run the encoder, using the command line specified, and pass wav data directly from a speech engine to the encoder.

In order for an encoder program to be set up as a TextAloud Custom Encoder, the program must meet the following criteria:

- The program must run from the command line, either by running the program directly, or running from a .bat file or script.

- The program should use command line arguments for specifying encoding options such as Bit Rate and Sample Rate.
- The command line should also indicate the directory / filename where the encoder should write its output.
- The program must be able to receive WAV input from STDIN. STDIN is a standard way of streaming input data to a program.
- No user interaction with the encoder is possible while TextAloud is running the encoder. The encoder cannot display any prompts; all user options need to be passed as command line arguments.
- The program should run 'silently'. Any error messages, progress messages, etc. should be suppressed.

You will need to check the documentation for your encoder program to verify that it can be configured like this.

Adding and Editing Custom Encoders

The following fields are available on the Add/Edit panel:

Field	Description
Custom Encoder Name	A name that uniquely identifies the Custom Encoder. This name will appear in the Audio File Format dropdown list, on the File Options panel.
Sample Rate	Specifies the Sample Rate that the encoder expects in the input wav data. TextAloud will resample wav data if necessary.
Number of channels	The number of audio channels that the encoder expects in the input wav data. TextAloud will adjust the wav input stream to 1 or 2 channels, depending on this setting.
Command Line	The command line to run the encoder.

Replaceable Parameters

Normally when audio files are generated from TextAloud, TextAloud will write audio files to a default directory, and generate file names based on the article title. Since this information needs to be passed as command line arguments to the encoder, there are replaceable parameters you can use for the directory and file name. TextAloud will replace these parameters before launching the encoder.

Replaceable parameters you can use are:

Replaceable Parameter	Description
%AudioDirectory%	The default audio file directory specified on the File Options panel.
%Title%	The Title to use as the file name.

Using replaceable parameters, instead of hard coding a filename in your command line string, you can specify a filename like this:

%AudioDirectory%\%Title%.mp3

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp **Related Topics**
File Options

Audio File Tags

Use the Audio File Tags panel to configure audio tags written to your audio files. Tag information is then displayed in player software you run on your PC, such as Windows Media Player, as well as on your portable audio player.

The "Lyrics" tag for an audio file is normally used to store the lyrics for a song. If you select the checkbox "Save Text as Audio File Lyrics", TextAloud will write the text for an audio file into the file's Lyrics tag. You can then display the text for an audio file on your portable player as you listen to it, provided your player supports the Lyrics tag.

Most player software will recognize and display some subset of tags available on the Audio File Tags panel. There may be tags on this panel that do not display on your player. If this happens, you can use one of the other tags, such as the Comments tag, to store the data.

Replaceable Parameters

The Audio File Tags panel supports several replaceable parameters. TextAloud determines the values for the following parameters and substitutes them as the tags are written:

Replaceable Parameter	Description
%AudioFileName%	The name of the audio file, including the file extension. The name does not include the directory path.
%Title%	The article title associated with the file.
%Voice%	The name of the voice used to speak the text.
%ShortVoice%	Short version of %Voice%. The substituted text excludes Vendor and Language information associated with the voice.
%VoiceSpeed%	The speed setting for the voice used to speak the text.
%VoicePitch%	The pitch setting for the voice used to speak the text.
%DateTime%	The date and time the audio file was written.
%Date%	The date the audio file was written
%Time%	The time the audio file was written
%Year%	The current year. Mainly exists for use with the Year tag.
%EncoderName%	The name of the encoder used to write the audio file. The encoder name is the current Audio File Format setting.
%QualitySettings%	The quality settings used to write the audio file. The Bit / Sample Rate setting from the File Options panel is stored in this tag.
%VoiceLanguage%	The language for the voice used to generate the audio file.

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File Options

Background Audio

The Background Audio panel allows you to specify the name of an audio file that will be merged with Text-To-Speech output. TextAloud will write a single audio file, containing both spoken text and background audio. This can be used to specify a music file that plays in the background of your spoken text.

The background audio file will loop. So if you specify a music file that is not as long as the audio for your spoken text, the music file will restart each time it finishes.

The following fields are available on the Background Audio panel:

Field	Description
Play Background Audio	Use this checkbox to enable or disable the background audio feature. Background audio is created for your TextAloud audio files when this option is checked.
Background Audio	The name of an existing MP3, WMA, or WAV file to use as background audio.
Background Audio Volume	Use this slider control to adjust the volume of the background audio relative to the spoken text volume.

Use the Test button on the Background Audio panel to help with getting the right background audio volume. You will want to set the background audio to a volume where the background audio is audible, but you can still hear the spoken text clearly. The test will speak some sample text, using the default voice, and continue looping until you click Stop. Adjust the slider control while the test is in progress until you find an appropriate volume setting.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

File Options

Hotkey Setup - Main Window

The Hotkey Setup window allows you to associate system-wide hotkeys with TextAloud actions.

Each hotkey is associated with a TextAloud Action, along with one or more options. Hotkeys can be configured for the following actions:

- **Import Text:** Copies text from an external application to a TextAloud article.
- **Read Text Aloud:** Speak text from an external application aloud.
- **Vocal Proofread:** Speak text from an external application aloud, using the Vocal Proofread window.
- **Change Default Voice:** Changes the Default Voice setting on your Voice Options panel.
- **Change Default Language:** Changes the Default Language and Default Dialect settings on your Voice Options panel.
- **Pause/Resume:** Pauses or Resumes speaking when speaking text aloud.

- **Stop:** Stop speaking and return TextAloud to idle state.

Hotkeys defined on the Hotkey Setup Dialog have the following properties:

Property	Description
Enabled Checkbox	Indicates whether or not the hotkey is currently enabled.
Action	One of several predefined actions associated with the hotkey, and is the action that will be performed when the hotkey keystroke sequence is pressed. The action itself is not displayed in the main window. Instead, a user specified Caption is associated with each hotkey definition, and is displayed in the main window.
Caption	A name that identifies the hotkey. The name is important because multiple hotkeys can be defined to perform the same action. For example, multiple hotkeys can be defined perform the action "Read Text Aloud", where each hotkey uses a different voice.
Hotkey	The hotkey keystroke sequence.
Hotkey Options	Options associated with the hotkey that are specific to the hotkey action. For example, several hotkey actions allow you to specify a TextAloud Voice associated with the action.

To create a new hotkey:

- Click Edit -> New Hotkey on the menu, or click the New Hotkey button on the toolbar.
- Fill in the Add Hokey dialog.

To edit an existing hotkey

- Select an existing hotkey to modify.
- Click Edit -> Edit Hotkey on the menu, or click the Edit Hotkey button on the toolbar.
- Update the Edit Hotkey dialog with your changes.

To delete an existing hotkey

- Select an existing hotkey to delete
- Click Edit -> Delete Hotkey on the menu, or click the Delete Hotkey button on the toolbar.

To change whether or not a hotkey is enabled:

- Toggle the checkbox for the row. Or select the row and tap the spacebar.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Add/Edit Hotkey
Voice Options

Add/Edit Hotkey

The following fields are available in the dialog to Add/Edit Hotkeys:

Field	Description
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Action	One of several predefined actions associated with the hotkey. This is the action that will be performed when the hotkey keystroke sequence is pressed.
Caption	A user specified name associated with the hotkey.
Hotkey	The actual hotkey keystroke sequence. To enter the keystroke sequence, tab into the Hotkey field, and press the keystrokes you would like to assign.
Hotkey Enabled	Checkbox that indicates whether or not the hotkey is currently enabled. You can temporarily disable the hotkey by unchecking this field.
Hotkey Options	One or more dropdown lists that allow you to assign options to the hotkey. The options available to be assigned to a hotkey are action specific. See below for a description of hotkey actions and associated options.

Hotkey Action Descriptions

Import Text: Copies text specified by the Text Source into a TextAloud article

Hotkey Options: Text Source, Copy Text To, Voice

Read Text Aloud: Speaks text specified by the Text Source aloud, using the specified Voice.

Hotkey Options: Text Source, Voice

Vocal Proofread: Speaks text specified by the Text Source aloud, using the Vocal Proofread window.

Hotkey Options: Text Source, Voice

Change Default Voice: Changes the Default Voice setting on your Voice Options panel.

Hotkey Options: Default Voice

Change Default Language: Changes the Default Language and Default Dialect settings on your Voice Options panel.

Hotkey Options: Default Language, Default Dialect

Pause/Resume: Pauses or resumes speaking when speaking text aloud.

Hotkey Options: None

Stop: Stops speaking and returns TextAloud to an idle state.

Hotkey Options: None

Hotkey Option Descriptions

Text Source: Specifies the text source for a hotkey. Selections include "Highlighted Text" and "Windows Clipboard". The Text Source option allows you to pick whether a hotkey selects highlighted text from an application, or processes text already on the Windows Clipboard.

Copy Text To: Used with the Import Text action to specify where text should be copied. Selections include "New Article", "Top of Current Article", and "Bottom of Current Article".

Voice: Allows you to assign a TextAloud voice to a hotkey action. The selection "Use TextAloud Voice" can be used to allow TextAloud to pick a voice automatically, based on your Voice Options configuration.

Default Voice: This option is only available with the Change Default Voice hotkey, and specifies the new default voice when the hotkey is pressed.

Default Language: This option is only available with the Change Default Language hotkey, and specifies the new default language when the hotkey is pressed.

Default Dialect: This option is only available with the Change Default Language hotkey, and specifies the new default dialect when the hotkey is pressed.

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There some keystroke sequences that do not work as hotkeys. Use the Test Hokey button on this window to verify that the keystroke sequence you're trying to assign is recognized by TextAloud as a valid hotkey.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Notes

When defining hotkeys, be sure to use key combinations that are not already used by Windows or any applications you use. For example, do not assign Ctrl+C as a hotkey, since this key combination is used by Windows for writing to the clipboard.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Hotkey Setup - Main Window
Voice Options

Clipboard Options

TextAloud can be configured to watch your Windows Clipboard for changes, and perform actions on the clipboard text. Clipboard text can be inserted into existing articles, added as new articles, spoken aloud, or spoken using the Vocal Proofreading window. The Clipboard Options panel is used to configure the clipboard watching feature.

The following fields are available on the Clipboard Options panel:

Field	Description
Watch Clipboard	This option determines whether or not TextAloud will watch the Windows Clipboard for updates. All options on this panel are effective only if Watch Clipboard is checked.
Ignore Clipboard Text less than	Sets the minimum amount of text on the Windows Clipboard that TextAloud will recognize. Set this to a value high enough so that TextAloud will ignore routine copy and paste operations between windows.
Ignore Clipboard Updates if text has not changed	Select this checkbox to prevent TextAloud from acting on the same text multiple times. TextAloud will recognize clipboard updates only if the clipboard text actually changes.
Prompt to copy text from clipboard	Select this option to have TextAloud prompt you before acting on text from the Windows Clipboard. If this option is not selected, TextAloud will retrieve text from the clipboard and perform the Default Action without prompting you.
Display Prompt for	Specifies the number of seconds the clipboard prompt will display before automatically closing.

Default Action	Specifies the action that will be selected by default in the clipboard prompt. If the prompt dialog is disabled, this action will be performed automatically on each clipboard update.
Perform Action Automatically on Timeout	Specifies whether or not the Default Action should be performed automatically when the clipboard prompt times out and closes.
Set Last Action as Default Action	When this option is selected, any time an action is selected from the clipboard prompt, that action becomes the default action.

At the bottom of the Clipboard Options panel, there is a list labeled "Ignore clipboard updates from these applications:". Applications are added to this list from the Clipboard Prompt; when the Clipboard Prompt is displayed, an option is available on the prompt to ignore clipboard updates from the application that triggered the prompt.

Use the "Remove From List" button on this panel if you decide later that you want to receive clipboard updates from an application that was previously ignored.

Missing image: tip.bmp Tips

- Occasionally applications will send Windows Clipboard notifications when in fact, the clipboard was not updated. You may also see this happen if you are using Clipboard Manager software. Try using the option "Ignore Clipboard Updates if text has not changed" to work around this problem.
- The "Watch Clipboard" setting can be accessed directly from the Tools menu, as well as the popup menu displayed by right clicking the TextAloud tray icon.
- You can assign a TextAloud Hotkey to the Watch Clipboard menu entry, and toggle clipboard watching on and off with the Hotkey.

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Clipboard Prompt

Advanced Toolbar Customization

Mouse Speak Options

Mouse Speak Options

TextAloud can be configured to watch your mouse when highlighting text in applications. When you make a text selection using your mouse, TextAloud can recognize when you release the left mouse button and perform actions on the selected text. Selected text can be inserted into existing articles, added as new articles, spoken aloud, or spoken using the Vocal Proofreading window. The Mouse Speak Options panel is used to configure the mouse watching feature.

The following fields are available on the Mouse Speak Options panel:

Field	Description
Watch Mouse	This option determines whether or not TextAloud will watch your mouse for text selections. All options on this panel are effective only if Watch Mouse is checked.
Ignore Highlighted Text less than	Sets the minimum text selection length that TextAloud will recognize. Set this to a value high enough so that TextAloud

	will ignore text you routinely highlight for other purposes, such as copy and paste between applications.
Ignore Highlighted Text if text has not changed	Select this checkbox to prevent TextAloud from acting on the same text selection multiple times. TextAloud will recognize text selections only if the current text selection is different than the previous text selection.
Prompt to copy highlighted text	Select this option to have TextAloud prompt you before acting on highlighted text. If this option is not selected, TextAloud will retrieve highlighted text and perform the Default Action without prompting you.
Display Prompt for	Specifies the number of seconds the mouse prompt will display before automatically closing.
Default Action	Specifies the action that will be selected by default in the mouse prompt. If the prompt dialog is disabled, this action will be performed automatically each time you select text with your mouse.
Perform Action Automatically on Timeout	Specifies whether or not the Default Action should be performed automatically when the mouse prompt times out and closes.
Set Last Action as Default Action	When this option is selected, any time an action is selected from the mouse prompt, that action becomes the default action.

At the bottom of the Mouse Speak Options panel, there is a list labeled "Ignore highlighted text from these applications:". Applications are added to this list from the Mouse Speak Prompt; when the Mouse Speak Prompt is displayed, an option is available on the prompt to ignore text selections from the application that triggered the prompt.

Use the "Remove From List" button on this panel if you decide later that you want to highlighted text notifications from an application that was previously ignored.

Missing image: tip.bmpTips

- The "Watch Mouse" setting can be accessed directly from the Tools menu, as well as the popup menu displayed by right clicking the TextAloud tray icon.
- You can assign a TextAloud Hotkey to the Watch Mouse menu entry, and toggle mouse watching on and off with the Hotkey.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmpRelated Topics

Advanced Toolbar Customization
Clipboard Options

Character Speaking and Filtering - Main Window

The Character Speaking and Filtering dialog lets you configure special handling for individual characters that appear in the text. The following options can be specified for individual characters or sets of characters:

- Filter the specified character(s) from the text
- Pronounce the characters

- Trigger a sound file to be played
- Cause speech to pause for a specified interval.

The option to speak characters aloud or trigger a sound file to be played is typically used during proofreading. Using the option to speak characters, you can have punctuation in the text pronounced as the characters are processed. For example, a comma will be actually be pronounced as "comma". Alternatively, groups of characters may have different sound files played as the characters are encountered.

Automatic Text Insertions provides several 'hook' points for inserting pauses, including between sentences and between paragraphs. The Automatic Text Insertions dialog should normally be used for inserting these types of pauses. The Character Speaking and Filtering dialog extends this automatic pause capability by allowing you to specify other characters where you would like pauses to be inserted. For example, if you would like to pause at every semi-colon, the Character Speaking and Filtering dialog is the place to configure that.

One of the attributes associated with an entry is a Profile, which allows you fine tune when the Character Speaking and Filtering entry will be applied. In order for an entry to be applied when speaking, the following two conditions must hold:

1. The Character Speaking and Filtering entry must be active
2. The Profile assigned to the entry must match the profile in use when text is spoken.

Character Speaking and Filtering entries have the following properties:

Property	Description
Enabled Checkbox	Indicates whether or not the entry is currently enabled
Profile	Identifies which speaking profile the entry is associated with. If Profile is set to '*' (asterisk), the entry is associated with all speaking profiles.
Character Option	Identifies how the characters associated with the entry will be handled. Options include Filter Character, Speak Character, and Play Sound.
Characters	Identifies one or more characters associated with the entry.

To create a new character speaking and filtering entry:

- Click Edit -> Add on the menu, or click the Add button on the toolbar.
- Fill in the Add Character Speaking and Filtering dialog.

To edit an existing character speaking and filtering entry

- Select an existing automatic text insertion to modify.
- Click Edit -> Edit on the menu, or click the Edit button on the toolbar.
- Update the Edit Character Speaking and Filtering dialog with your changes.

Note that the Profile for an entry cannot be edited. To change the profile for a character speaking and filtering entry, you must delete the entry and recreate it.

To delete an existing character speaking and filtering entry

- Select an entry to delete
- Click Edit -> Delete on the menu, or click the Delete button on the toolbar.

To change whether or not an entry is enabled:

- Toggle the checkbox for the row. Or select the row and tap the spacebar.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Add/Edit Character Speaking and Filtering
Automatic Text Insertions

Add/Edit Character Speaking and Filtering

The following fields are available in the dialog to Add/Edit Character Speaking and Filtering entries:

Field	Description
Profile	The TextAloud speaking profile assigned to the entry. Either select "All Profiles" to make the entry active for all profiles, or select a specific profile.
Option	Select Filter Character, Speak Character, Play Sound or Pause
Enabled	Specifies whether or not the entry is currently enabled
Characters	Specify one or more characters to associate with the entry.
Sound File	This field is enabled only if the Option for the entry is 'Play Sound'. The sound file must specify an existing MP3, WMA or WAV file.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Character Speaking and Filtering - Main Window

Pauses and Text Insertions - Main Window

The Automatic Text Insertions dialog allows you to configure various text strings to be inserted in spoken text at predefined text insertion points. An example of a frequently used Automatic Text Insertion is the pause tag, often placed at 'Between Sentence' and/or 'Between Paragraph' insertion points.

In addition to pauses, you can also define text insertions for audio clips, as well as free form text.

One of the attributes associated with an Automatic Text Insertion is a Profile, which allows you fine tune when the text insertion will be applied. In order for an Automatic Text Insertion to be used when speaking, the following two conditions must hold:

1. The Automatic Text Insertion entry must be active
2. The Profile assigned to the insertion must match the profile in use when text is spoken.

Automatic Text Insertions have the following properties:

Property	Description
----------	-------------

Enabled Checkbox	Indicates whether or not the text insertion is currently enabled.
Profile	Identifies which speaking profile the insertion is associated with. If Profile is set to '*' (asterisk), the text insertion is associated with all speaking profiles.
Insertion Type	Identifies whether the text insertion is a pause tag, audio clip, or free form text.
Insertion Point	Identifies places in the text where insertions will occur.
Text To Insert	The actual text that will be inserted at each insertion point.

To create a new automatic text insertion:

- Click Edit -> Add on the menu, or click the Add button on the toolbar.
- Fill in the Add Automatic Text Insertion dialog.

To edit an existing automatic text insertion

- Select an existing automatic text insertion to modify.
- Click Edit -> Edit on the menu, or click the Edit button on the toolbar.
- Update the Edit Automatic Text Insertion dialog with your changes.

Note that the Profile for an Automatic Text Insertion cannot be edited. To change the profile for an insertion, you must delete the entry and recreate it.

To delete an existing automatic text insertion

- Select an existing automatic text insertion to delete
- Click Edit -> Delete on the menu, or click the Delete button on the toolbar.

To change whether or not an automatic text insertion is enabled:

- Toggle the checkbox for the row. Or select the row and tap the spacebar.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Add/Edit Automatic Text Insertion

Automatic Text Insertion Replaceable Parameters

Add/Edit Automatic Text Insertion

The following fields are available in the dialog to Add/Edit Automatic Text Insertions:

Field	Description
Profile	The TextAloud speaking profile assigned to the text insertion. Either select "All Profiles" to make the text insertion active for all profiles, or select a specific profile.
Type of Insertion	Select Insert Pause, Insert Audio Clip, or Insert Text
Insert At	Specifies where in the text the insertions will occur.
Enabled	Specifies whether or not the text insertion entry is currently enabled.

The remaining field displayed on the Add/Edit dialog depends on the type of insertion.

For Insertion Type	Enter this text
Insert Pause	The number of seconds you would like to pause.
Insert Audio Clip	The name of an existing MP3, WMA, or WAV file you would like to embed in the text. Use the Browse button to locate valid sound files.
Insert Text:	Free form text. You can enter any text you want, including replaceable parameters. See Tip below.

Missing image: tip.bmp Tip

When the "Insert Text" insertion type is used, the free form text may contain replaceable parameters. For example, the current article title can be spoken using the replaceable parameter %Title%.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Automatic Text Insertions - Main Window

Automatic Text Insertion Replaceable Parameters

Automatic Text Insertion Replaceable Parameters

For Automatic Text Insertions with Insertion Type set to "Insert Text", the following replaceable parameters may be used in the free form text string.

Replaceable Parameter	Description
%Title%	The article title for the article being spoken. This parameter is ignored when speaking non-article text.
%Voice%	The name of the voice that is currently speaking. When speaking articles, this will be the voice assigned to the article that is currently being spoken.
%Time%	The current time.
%DateTime%	The current date and time.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Automatic Text Insertions Main Window

Add/Edit Automatic Text Insertions

Automatic Actions - Main Window

The Automatic Actions dialog allows you hook actions to activities that occur in TextAloud. A typical example of TextAloud activity is a visual or audio notification that an article has been imported into

TextAloud.

Events defined in Event Setup have the following properties:

Property	Description
Enabled Checkbox	Indicates whether or not the automatic action is currently enabled.
Caption	A name that uniquely identifies the automatic action.
TextAloud Activity	The TextAloud activity that will trigger the automatic action.
Automatic Action	An action that should be triggered whenever the specified TextAloud activity occurs.

Automatic actions can be associated with the following list of TextAloud activities:

Text imported to TextAloud
Display TextAloud Article
Before speaking article aloud
After speaking article aloud
Before speaking article to audio file
After speaking article to audio file
Before speaking all articles aloud
After speaking all articles aloud
Before speaking all articles to file
After speaking all articles to file
Before speaking non-article text aloud
After speaking non-article text aloud
Before batch file conversion
After batch file conversion
Clipboard Monitor Enabled
Clipboard Monitor Disabled
Article Deleted
Before speaking article
After speaking article

Each trigger has one or more actions that may be assigned to it. An Audio/Visual Notification action is available for all triggers, but other actions are available based on the trigger. Multiple events can be assigned to a single trigger, so it is possible for a single event trigger to be associated with multiple Event Actions.

Available automatic actions include:

Automatic Action	Available for these TextAloud activities
Visual/Audio Notification	All TextAloud activities
Delete Article	After an article has finished speaking
Speak Article	After a new article has been imported to TextAloud
Open Audio Folder	After an audio file has been created

To create a new automatic action:

- On the Automatic Actions window, click Edit -> Add Action from the menu, or click the Add Action button on the toolbar
- You will be prompted for a TextAloud Activity and an Automatic Action. Click OK to continue.
- An options screen will then be displayed, allowing you to enter a Caption, and specify if the Automatic Action is active. If you are configuring an Audio/Visual Notification Event Action, the Notification Event Options dialog will be displayed.

To edit an existing automatic action:

- On the Automatic Actions window, select the entry you would like to edit.
- Click Edit -> Edit Action from the menu, or click the Edit Action button on the toolbar.
- If the automatic action is an Audio/Visual Notification, the Notification Event Options dialog will be displayed. Otherwise, you will be prompted to enter a new caption for the Automatic Action, as well as enable or disable the automatic action.

Note that the TextAloud Activity and Automatic Action fields cannot be edited. In order to change either of these fields, you must delete the automatic action and recreate it.

To delete an existing automatic action:

- On the Automatic Actions window, select the entry you would like to delete.
- Click Edit -> Delete Action from the menu, or click the Delete Action button on the toolbar.

To disable or enable an automatic action

- Toggle the checkbox for the row. Or select the row and tap the spacebar.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Notification Event Options

Notification Options

The Notification Options dialog is displayed when adding or editing an automatic action with the Automatic Action set to "Audio/Visual Notification". The dialog allows you to configure the notification.

At the top of the Notification Options dialog, you can specify a name for the notification action, as well as specify whether or not the automatic action is active.

The dialog has separate sections for visual notifications and audio notifications; one or both can be specified.

To configure a Display Notification:

- The **Automatic Action Enabled** checkbox should be checked
- The **Display Event Notification above System Tray** checkbox should be checked.

You can optionally specify that the notification should be displayed only when TextAloud is minimized. Use the **Display Text** field to configure the notification text.

To configure an Audio Notification:

- The **Automatic Action Enabled** checkbox should be checked.

- From the dropdown list, select the type of audio notification you would like to hear. Options include playing a default system sound, playing a sound file, and speaking text.
- The checkbox to the left of the dropdown should be checked.

Depending on the type of audio notification selected, the following options are available:

Audio Notification	Options
Default System Sound	None
Play Sound File	A filename specifying an existing mp3, wma or wav file.
Speak Text	A voice used to speak the notification, and the notification text

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Event Setup - Main Window

Custom Document Imports - Main Window

Custom Imports are used to add TextAloud document support for file extensions that TextAloud does not recognize. Custom Imports make use of programs installed on your machine, external to TextAloud, that perform the job of converting documents for a given file format / file extension to text files. When a Custom Import is performed, the external program is started from a command line and passed the name of a document to convert, along with the name of a text file to create. TextAloud then processes the output file created by the converter and deletes it.

The following requirements must be met in order to create a Custom Import for a given file extension:

1. You must have a converter program installed on your machine that can convert documents with the specified file extension to text files.
2. The converter program must be able to run from a command line prompt, accepting input and output filenames on the command line.

A Custom Import simply consists of a file extension, a brief description (displayed in the File Open dialog) and a command line. The command line contains a string to run the external conversion program, see New Custom Import for help with setting up the command line.

To create a new Custom Document Import:

- Click Edit -> New Import on the menu, or click the New Import button on the toolbar.
- Fill in the New Custom Import dialog.

To edit an existing Custom Document Import

- Select an existing Custom Import to modify
- Click Edit -> Edit Import on the menu, or click the Edit Import button on the toolbar
- Update the Edit Custom Import dialog with your changes.

To delete an existing Custom Document Import

- Select an existing Custom Import to delete
- Click Edit -> Delete Import on the menu, or click the Edit

Add/Edit Custom Import

The following fields are available on the dialog to Add and Edit Custom Imports:

Field	Description
File Extension	The file extension for this custom import. When editing an import, the file extension field is read-only; to change a file extension you must delete the custom import and add it again.
Brief Description	A short description that indicates the type of files to be processed by the import, for example, "Text Files". The Brief Description will appear in TextAloud File Open dialogs in the File Type dropdown list.
Command Line	The command line to run when a file for this file extension is imported to TextAloud. Details on setting up the command line are described below.

Command Line Requirements

In order for the Custom Import to work, the command line should specify the name of the converter program to run. The full path for the program should be specified, unless you are sure the program is in your system path. If you are not sure about this, just specify the full path. File Input and File Output are handled as follows:

1. The command line must use the string %InputFile% as a placeholder for the actual file to be converted.
2. The command line must use the string %OutputFile% as a placeholder for the name of a text file to be created.

When the Custom Import is performed, TextAloud will replace the placeholders %InputFile% and %OutputFile% with actual file names and run the converter. Note that the output file created by the converter must be a text file. The text may be plain ASCII, UTF8, or UTF16LE.

Example

The following example will set up a custom import for loading Braille files (.brf files) into TextAloud articles. The example makes use of a utility called NFBTRANS, a utility that converts Braille files to text, available from the National Federation of the Blind (<http://www.nfb.org/nfb/nfbtrans.asp>).

The New Custom Import dialog should be created like this:

File Extension: **.brf**

By specifying **.brf** as the file extension, the custom import is now associated with **.brf** Braille files.

Brief Description: **Braille Files**

The Brief Description associated with the Custom Import appears in TextAloud File Open dialogs. The File Type field can be set to "Braille files" to display only **.brf** files in the File Open dialog.

Command Line: **c:\MyUtilities\nfbtrans.exe %InputFile% > %OutputFile%**

nfbtrans.exe is the name of the file converter program. A full path to the program is specified in this

example, and is required unless nfbtrans.exe is in the system path. %InputFile% is the placeholder in the command line string which will be replaced with an actual file name when the Custom Import runs. Also note that the command line is directing text output to %OutputFile%. This placeholder will be replaced with the name of a text file to create.

Note that this sample command line is specific to the nfbtrans utility. Other converter programs will handle the input and output filenames on the command line differently. You will need to consult documentation for your converter program to find out how it handles input and output file names on the command line.

Audio Device Selection

Advanced Settings

The Advanced Settings dialog is available for some settings that should be changed only under special circumstances. Normally these settings should be left at their default values.

The following settings can be changed on the Advanced Settings dialog:

Use Direct Encoding when writing audio files

Direct Encoding is a feature used with SAPI5 voices that allows TextAloud to write audio files without creating intermediate wav files. The Direct Encoding option defaults to Enabled, and should be disabled only if you are having problems with it.

Raise processing priority when speaking aloud

This setting controls whether the Windows processing priority of TextAloud is raised when speaking text aloud. When the option is enabled, your system will give TextAloud priority over other processes on your system, and allow the CPU to be used for longer intervals than normal priority processes. The setting defaults to enabled, and prevents some stuttering that can occur when the setting is not used on slower systems.

Raise processing priority when writing audio files

This setting is identical to the previous setting, except that it applies when writing audio files rather than speaking text aloud. Increased processing priority is normally not needed when writing audio files, and defaults to disabled.

Configure Spell Check

The Spelling Options dialog is used to configure spell checking in TextAloud.

Missing image: spelling options.png

Numbered areas on the picture above indicate key areas, and are described below.

1. Options

The options in this section of the window control whether or not TextAloud will perform spell checking and/or make corrections as you type. Also, you can configure various options, such as ignoring words containing numbers and ignoring words that are all uppercase.

The option "Suggest from main dictionaries only" refers to items 2 and 3 below. Selecting this checkbox limits suggestions from your main dictionaries only; your custom dictionary will not be used to generate suggestions.

2. Main Dictionaries

The dictionaries indicated here are your main dictionaries. By default, TextAloud ships with the dictionary named american.adm, for US English. Other dictionaries are available for download.

3. Custom Dictionary

The dictionary indicated here is your custom dictionary, and includes the following entries:

- Words previously indicated as spelling errors that you Added to the spell checker
- Any words marked for automatic correction. The Custom Dictionary is updated with automatic corrections any time you click "Auto-Correct" on the Spelling dialog.

By default, your custom dictionary name will be your windows user name, with the file extension ".adu".

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Perform Spell Check

Perform Spell Check

Missing image: spelling.png

The Spelling dialog is displayed when you click Perform Spell Check from the TextAloud Tools menu, and the spell check finds a misspelled word. To correct the spelling, either select a spelling from the Suggestions list, or supply your own correction by typing it directly into the Replace With field. Use either the **Change** or **Change All** buttons to apply the correction, depending on if you want to correct only a single occurrence or all occurrences of the spelling.

The following buttons are available on the Spelling dialog:

Button	Description
Ignore	Ignore this occurrence of the misspelled word.
Ignore All	Ignore all occurrences of the misspelled word.
Change	Replace this occurrence of the misspelled word with the word in the Replace With field.
Change All	Replace all occurrences of the misspelled word with the word in the Replace With field.
Add	Adds the misspelled word to your custom dictionary. Future spell checks will no longer detect this word as an incorrect spelling.
Auto-Correct	The Auto-Correct button will add both the misspelled word along with the correct spelling to your custom dictionary. Future spell checks will correct the error automatically. If the option "Correct spelling errors as you type" is selected in Spelling Options, the misspelled word will be automatically corrected whenever you type it.

Undo	Undo the last change you made with either the Change or Change All button.
Options	Displays the Configure Spell Check dialog.
Cancel	Cancels the spell check.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Configure Spell Check

Shortcut Setup

The Shortcut Setup dialog is used to assign keyboard shortcuts to items in the TextAloud menu.

Use the "Categories" dropdown list at the top of the dialog for filtering the menu items displayed. The category "All Categories" will display all items in the TextAloud menu. You can alternatively limit the items displayed by selecting a category for a specific main menu entry.

Assigning a keyboard shortcut to a TextAloud menu item

Select a menu item from the list of displayed items, and select Edit -> Edit Shortcut from the menu, or click the "Edit Shortcut" button on the toolbar. On the prompt displayed, press the keystroke or combination of keystrokes you would like to assign as a shortcut, and click OK.

If you need to remove the keyboard shortcut from a menu item, use Edit -> Clear Shortcut from the Advanced Toolbar Customization menu. You can also use the "Clear" button on the Edit Shortcut dialog.

Printing your keyboard shortcut list

To print a list of your keyboard shortcuts, click File -> Print from the Shortcut Setup menu.

Toolbar Icon Customization

The Toolbar Icon Customization dialog is used for assigning your own icons to TextAloud toolbar buttons

Use the "Categories" dropdown list at the top of the dialog for filtering the menu items displayed. The category "All Categories" will display all items in the TextAloud menu. You can alternatively limit the items displayed by selecting a category for a specific main menu entry.

Assigning a custom icon to a TextAloud toolbar button

Select a menu item from the list of displayed items, and select Edit -> Edit Icon from the menu, or click the "Edit Icon" button on the toolbar. Use the File Open menu to pick an icon file (.ico) for the selected menu item.

If you need to remove the icon from a menu item, use Edit -> Clear Icon from the Advanced Toolbar Customization menu.

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Main Window

The Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance window is split into two sections. The left side of the window contains a list of Dictionaries. The right side of the window contains the Dictionary Entries that exist for a selected Dictionary.

The menu / toolbar on the main window allows you do perform the following functions:

- Add, Edit and Delete Dictionaries
- Change Dictionary processing order
- Filter Dictionary Entries displayed for a selected dictionary
- Add, Edit and Delete Dictionary Entries
- Change Dictionary Entry processing order
- Enable and Disable selected Dictionary Entries

Note that TextAloud will process Dictionaries and Dictionary Entries in the order specified in the Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance Window.

To Add a Dictionary

Click File -> New Dictionary on the menu or click the New Dictionary button on the toolbar. The Add Dictionary dialog will be displayed, allowing you to create the dictionary, and optionally associate a Language, Speech Engine Vendor, or a specific voice with the Dictionary.

To Edit a Dictionary

Select a Dictionary to edit, and click Edit -> Edit Dictionary on the menu, or click the Edit Dictionary button on the toolbar. The Edit Dictionary dialog will be displayed, allowing you to edit the Dictionary caption, or the Language, Speech Engine Vendor and/or Voice associated with the Dictionary.

To Delete a Dictionary

Select a Dictionary to delete, and click Edit -> Delete Dictionary on the menu, or click the Delete Dictionary button on the toolbar. This will permanently remove the Dictionary and all associated Dictionary Entries.

To Change the Dictionary processing order

Select a Dictionary and click Edit -> Move Dictionary Up or Edit -> Move Dictionary Down. You can also use the Move Dictionary Up and Move Dictionary Down buttons on the toolbar. TextAloud always processes dictionaries in the order they are displayed in the Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance window.

To Enable or Disable a Dictionary

Select a Dictionary and toggle the enabled checkbox for the row. Or select a Dictionary and tap the spacebar. When applying pronunciation corrections TextAloud will use only enabled Dictionary Entries for enabled Dictionaries.

To Filter Dictionary Entries displayed for a Dictionary

Dictionary entries are always processed in the order they appear in Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance, meaning TextAloud does not force the list to be sorted in any particular order. A Filter is available in Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance to limit the entries displayed to those that match a specified filter. This makes it easier to locate specific entries in large dictionaries, while maintaining the dictionary entry processing order. To display the Filter Panel, toggle the menu entry View -> Show Filter

Panel, or toggle the Show Filter panel on the Dictionary toolbar. The filter allows you to specify combinations of Caption, Text Matching and Pronounce Using, and allows you to specify whether full or partial matches are required. Click the Apply Filter button to apply a filter, and the Remove Filter button to remove the filter. When the filter is applied, the status bar at the bottom of the window is updated with the status "Filter Applied", and dictionary entries that do not match the filter are hidden.

The steps for creating and maintaining Dictionary Entries is very similar to the steps for creating and maintaining Dictionaries.

To Add a Dictionary Entry

First, select a Dictionary you would like to create an entry for. Click File -> New Entry on the menu or click the New Entry button on the toolbar. The Add Dictionary Entry dialog will be displayed, allowing you to create a new Dictionary Entry for the selected Dictionary.

To Edit a Dictionary

Select a Dictionary Entry to edit, and click Edit -> Edit Entry on the menu, or click the Edit Entry button on the toolbar. The Edit Dictionary Entry dialog will be displayed, allowing you to edit the Dictionary Entry.

To Delete a Dictionary Entry

Select a Dictionary Entry to delete, and click Edit -> Delete Entry on the menu, or click the Delete Entry button on the toolbar. This will permanently remove the Dictionary Entry.

To Change the Dictionary Entry processing order

Select a Dictionary Entry, and click Edit -> Move Entry Up or Edit -> Move Entry Down. You can also use the Move Entry Up and Move Entry Down buttons on the toolbar. TextAloud always processes Dictionary Entries in the order they are displayed in the Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance window.

To Enable or Disable a Dictionary Entry

Select a Dictionary Entry and toggle the enabled checkbox for the row. Or select a Dictionary Entry and tap the spacebar. You can also select multiple Dictionary Entries and enable/disable all entries at once using the Enable Entry and Disable Entry buttons on the toolbar. When applying pronunciation corrections TextAloud will use only enabled Dictionary Entries for enabled Dictionaries.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations

Add/Edit Dictionary

Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

Add/Edit Dictionary

This dialog is used for creating and editing Pronunciation Dictionaries.

The following fields are available on the Add/Edit Dictionary Dialog:

Field	Description
Dictionary Name	A unique name used to identify the Dictionary. This is the name that will appear in the Dictionary list displayed in the Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance main window.
Optional Description	A description of the Dictionary. This field may be left blank.

Dictionary is Enabled	A checkbox indicating whether or not the Dictionary is enabled. When applying pronunciations, TextAloud will only process enabled Dictionary Entries from enabled Dictionaries.
Language	The language that this dictionary is associated with. A wildcard character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary is associated with all languages.
Dialect	This field is enabled only if the Dictionary is associated with a specific language (see above). You have the option of associating the dictionary with a specific dialect for the selected language, or you may select "Use All Dialects" to associate the Dictionary with all dialects of the language.
Vendor	The speech engine vendor that this dictionary is associated with. A wildcard character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary is associated with all vendors.
Voice	The voice that this dictionary is associated with. A wildcard character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary is associated with all voices.
Allow Overrides on Dictionary Entries	This option controls whether or not the language, vendor, and voice associations for a Dictionary may be overridden on individual Dictionary Entries. If the Allow Overrides option is selected, you will have the option of setting language, vendor and voice associations when creating and editing Dictionary Entries. Associations specified for the Dictionary will be used as defaults for new Dictionary Entries.

We recommend that you leave the option "Allow Overrides on Dictionary Entries" unchecked, and create separate dictionaries as needed to handle problems with specific languages, vendors, and/or voices. Leaving the option unchecked simplifies the Dictionary Entry Edit dialog, since the Language, Vendor and Voice fields are not displayed on the dialog.

You may, however, find it more convenient to limit the number of Dictionaries, and specify Language, Vendor and Voice associations at the Dictionary Entry level.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Main Window

Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

This dialog is used for creating and maintaining Pronunciation Dictionary Entries. The top half of the dialog contains the main fields for the Dictionary Entry; a tab control near the bottom of the dialog is used for testing pronunciations, and saving a description of the of the Dictionary Entry.

Excluding the tab control for now, the fields on the Dictionary Entry dialog include:

Field	Description
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Text Matching	Specifies one of three different text matching methods, depending on the dropdown list selection. Text Matching methods include Simple Text, Mask, and Regular Expression.
Pronounce Using	Indicates whether matched text should be replaced by an alternate spelling, replaced by a string of SAPI5 phonemes, spelled out, or skipped.
Word Boundary Condition	For Simple Text matches, this field indicates whether word boundaries should be required for a match to be successful.
Case Sensitive	If this option is checked, text matching is case sensitive. Note that the checkbox is used for Simple Text as well as Masks and Regular Expression matching.
Caption	Specifies a name that uniquely identifies the Dictionary Entry in the current Dictionary. (The same caption may be used in different dictionaries). The caption will default based on the text entered in the Text Matching field.

If the Dictionary for the current Dictionary Entry allows association overrides on Dictionary Entries, the Dictionary Entry dialog will also contain Language, Dialect, Vendor and Voice fields. Associations specified for the Dictionary will be used as default values for Dictionary Entry Associations.

Field	Description
Language	The language that this dictionary entry is associated with. A wild card character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary entry is associated with all languages.
Dialect	This field is enabled only if the Dictionary Entry is associated with a specific language (see above). You have the option of associating the dictionary entry with a specific dialect for the selected language, or you may select "Use All Dialects" to associate the Dictionary Entry with all dialects of the language.
Vendor	The speech engine vendor that this dictionary entry is associated with. A wild card character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary entry is associated with all vendors.
Voice	The voice that this dictionary entry is associated with. A wild card character (asterisk) is used to indicate that the dictionary entry is associated with all voices.

The tab control near the bottom of the Dictionary Entry dialog has two tabs: Test Pronunciation and Description.

The Test Pronunciation tab is used for testing a pronunciation. Enter some text into the text box, choose a voice to test with, and press the Test button. The pronunciation correction specified by the Dictionary Entry will be applied to the test text, allowing you to hear what the result sounds like.

The Description tab is used to save a description of the Dictionary Entry. It is sometimes easy to forget why a pronunciation correction was made in the past; the description field allows you to save some information about the pronunciation correction for later reference.

Setting Text Matching for a Dictionary Entry

When setting the Text Matching fields for a Dictionary Entry, the general idea is to use Simple Text when a specific word, or specific string of text is causing pronunciation problems. You'll want to look at Masks or Regular Expressions when the pronunciation problem you're dealing with is not just one word, but rather a set of many words that have a common pattern. For example, if a voice was having a problem pronouncing year numbers that start with 19, you would want to use a pattern match that looks for 4 digit numbers starting with 19. You would use either a Regular Expression or Mask to handle this. Regular Expressions and Masks are described in more detail here.

Setting Pronounce Using for a Dictionary Entry

Pronounce Using lets you select one of four different methods for performing pronunciation corrections.

Respell - The Respell option is the most commonly used correction method, and allows you to replace matched text with an alternate spelling. In the text field, enter a word or phrase that sounds like the pronunciation you want. For example, if a speech engine is having trouble pronouncing the word "laugh", you could try using the alternate spelling "laf".

Respell also has some limited support for functions and replaceable parameters. See Respell Functions and Replaceable Parameters.

Phonemes- Phonemes can be thought of as the smallest units of sound that a speech engine is capable of making. Creating a phoneme pronunciation correction involves constructing the pronunciation you are trying to archive from these low level sounds. When applying the pronunciation to spoken text, TextAloud will instruct the voice engine to pronounce the word using the phonemes supplied, instead of the phonemes the voice would normally generate. In order to use phonemes as a pronunciation correction, the following conditions are required:

- Phoneme pronunciations are applied only for SAPI5 voices. SAPI4 voices will ignore Dictionary Entries that use phoneme pronunciation corrections.
- Each language has its own table of Phonemes, so Phoneme pronunciations can be defined only if a Language and Dialect are associated with the Dictionary Entry (or owning Dictionary).

Each phoneme is represented by a few characters, sometimes just one character. A valid phoneme string will consist of a set of phonemes for the associated language, separated by spaces.

When Phonemes is selected as the Pronounce Using option, the Helper button to the right of the text field will be enabled. Clicking the Helper button will display the Phoneme Helper dialog. This dialog will display a table of phonemes for the associated language, and assist you with constructing a phoneme string.

Spell Text - There are sometimes instances where a speech engine will pronounce an acronym or abbreviation as a word, instead of spelling it out. Use the Spell Text option to force matched text to be spelled out instead of pronounced as a word. When you select the Spell Text pronunciation option, there is no text to enter, so the text field will not be displayed.

Skip Text - The Skip Text pronunciation correction will cause any matched text to be skipped; the text will not be sent to the speech engine to be spoken. The Skip Text option can be used to suppress the pronunciation of text such as page numbers in documents, email header information, or any other text you do not wish to hear spoken.

Setting Word Boundary Condition for a Dictionary Entry

The Word Boundary Condition field is enabled for Simple Text matches only, and allows you to specify whether or not text matches are required to fall on word boundaries. The default setting, Word Boundary Required, prevents substitutions from being performed on any text that is a substring of another word. For example, entering an alternate pronunciation for the word "day" changes the pronunciation of "day" everywhere it appears as a word, but not in words like "today", "yesterday", etc.

To allow pronunciation changes on substrings, use one of the settings Word Boundary Required On Left, Word Boundary Required on Right, or No Word Boundary Required.

To illustrate how this works, the following table indicates how each setting of the Word Boundary Condition field effects a pronunciation change for the text "board". In each cell of the table below, a "Yes" indicates the pronunciation change will be applied.

Word In Text	Word Boundary Condition			
	Word Boundary Required	Word Boundary Required on Left	Word Boundary Required on Right	No Word Boundary Required
board	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
boarding		Yes		Yes
snowboard			Yes	Yes
snowboarding				Yes

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations

Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Main Window

Pattern Matching with Masks and Regular Expressions

Add/Edit Dictionary

Phoneme Helper Dialog

Respell Functions and Replaceable Parameters

Phoneme Helper Dialog

The Phoneme Helper dialog is used to build phoneme strings for pronunciation corrections. This dialog is available from the Add/Edit Dictionary Entry Dialog when Phonemes is selected as the Pronounce Using option.

The following fields are available on the Phoneme Helper Dialog:

Field	Description
Sounds Like	Enter any text in this field and press the Generate button to generate the phoneme string used to pronounce the text.
Phonemes	The phoneme string to be returned to the Dictionary Entry window
Voice	The voice to use when using the Test button on the window.

Using the Phoneme Helper Dialog

The Phoneme Helper Dialog is displayed by pressing the Helper button on the Add/Edit Dictionary Entry Dialog when the Pronounce Using option is set to Phonemes. When the dialog is initially displayed, the text in the Text Matching field will be displayed in the Sounds Like field. You can then use the Generate button to generate the phoneme string for this text, or any other text. This allows you to load a list of phonemes that may sound close to the pronunciation you are looking for.

SAPI5 Phoneme tables are language specific, and the Phoneme Helper dialog can be displayed only when a specific Language and Dialect have been assigned to either the Dictionary Entry, or the Dictionary that the Dictionary Entry belongs to. The phoneme set for this language/dialect are displayed on the left side of the Phoneme Helper dialog.

To insert phonemes from the table into the phoneme field, use your mouse to position the cursor in the phonemes field. Scroll through the list of phonemes for the language for the sound you're looking for, and double click the entry. As you double click phoneme entries in the table, the phoneme will be inserted at the current cursor position in the phonemes field.

Note that the phonemes entered in the phoneme field must be separated by spaces.

When you are satisfied with the phoneme pronunciation, click the OK button on the dialog. The phoneme string you have entered will be copied to the Add/Edit Dictionary Dialog, and displayed in the Pronounce Using field.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations
Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance - Main Window
Add/Edit Dictionary
Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

Respell Functions and Replaceable Parameters

When Respell is selected as the "Pronounce Using" option, some functions and replaceable parameters are supported in the pronunciation string.

Functions are primarily available to be used when the Text Matching option of a Dictionary Entry is set to either Mask or Regular Expression. Functions in the pronunciation string can be used to manipulate and/or convert the results of text matched by regular expressions.

Functions

##LowerCase(String) - Converts a string argument to lower case.

Example of using a function

If a passage of text is all upper case, some voices will spell the upper case text, instead of pronouncing as words. To solve this problem, a regular expression can be set up to search the text for upper case words of some minimum length, and convert these words to lower case. The dictionary entry could look something like this:

Missing image: lower case function.png

The regular expression will scan the text for uppercase words 3 characters or more in length. 'b' is used

in the regular expression to match only on word boundaries. Each match is passed to the ##LowerCase function via \$0, which corresponds to the text matched by the expression.

Replaceable Parameters

In addition to functions, the pronunciation string supports the following replaceable parameters:

Replaceable Parameter	Description
%Date%	The current date.
%Time%	The current time.
%DateTime%	The current date and time.
%Year%	The current year.

For example, if the pronunciation string contains the text %Year%, the current year will be substituted when the pronunciation is applied to any matched text.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations

Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

Pattern Matching with Masks and Regular Expressions

Pattern Matching with Masks and Regular Expressions

Masks and Regular Expressions can be specified in the Add/Edit Dictionary Entry Dialog by setting the Text Matching option to either Masks or Regular Expressions. Masks and Regular Expressions are used when the pronunciation change you are trying to make from Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance is not limited to a single word. Instead, the pronunciation change applies to many words (or phrases) that have a common pattern.

For example, if a voice was having a problem pronouncing year numbers that start with 19, you could set up a pattern match to scan text for 4 digit numbers starting with 19, and apply a pronunciation correction for any text that matches the pattern.

If you are not familiar with the term, Regular Expressions are a pattern matching language used for searching and parsing text. TextAloud help will not get into the detailed syntax of using Regular Expressions, but there is plenty of reference material available on the web. You can started by [clicking here](#).

Masks

Masks are not as powerful as Regular Expressions but provide similar capability. Masks allow you to use some predefined Mask Characters for matching text. For example, the mask 19## can be used to search for four digit year numbers starting with 19. Masks associate a special meaning to the following characters:

Mask Character	Description
#	Matches any digit (0 thru 9).
\$	Matches any alpha character (a thru z and A thru Z).
@	Matches any alpha-numeric character (a thru z, A thru Z, and 0 thru 9).
?	Matches any character (wildcard).
_ (underscore)	Matches any word boundary character (spaces and punctuation).

Subpatterns

Much of the power of using both Masks and Regular Expressions has to do with the ability of a matching pattern to contain subpatterns. Subpatterns are delimited by parentheses (which may be nested). Turning part of a pattern into a subpattern does two things:

1. Allows the pattern to specify a set of variations that the pattern should match. A vertical bar is used as a delimiter for the different choices. For example, the pattern

```
day(time|light|break)
```

will match the words "daytime", "daylight" and "daybreak".

2. Substitutions can reference the *actual* text matched by a subpattern. The reference is made by using a dollar sign (\$) followed by a number that identifies the subpattern. Subpatterns are counted, starting with the number 1, by counting open parentheses from left to right. So if text contains the year numbers 1985 and 1986, the following regular expression will match both year numbers:

```
(19) (\d\d)
```

In this case, the match pattern contains two subpatterns. For the matching year numbers 1985 and 1986, \$1 will be 19, since \$1 references the first subpattern (the first set of open parenthesis). However, \$2 will be 85 for the match on year 1985, and 86 for year 1986, since \$2 corresponds to the second subpattern. The second subpattern corresponds to the to the last two digits of a four digit year number.

The following Mask works exactly the same:

```
(19) (##)
```

Using subpatterns in your match pattern lets you specify which pieces of matched text should be included in your pronunciation correction.

Examples

The following examples will illustrate how to use a Mask or Regular Expression to adjust the pronunciation of year numbers. The sample problem is to ensure that year numbers starting with 19 (like 1987) are pronounced as "nineteen eighty-seven", and not "one thousand nine hundred and eighty-seven".

Example 1 - Year Number correction using a Mask

To solve this problem using a mask, you set the following fields in the Add/Edit Dictionary Entry Dialog:

- Set the Text Matching dropdown to "Mask".
- For the mask value, use the following:

```
(_)19(##)(_)
```

- Set the Pronounce Using dropdown to "Respell"
- For the Pronounce Using text, enter:

```
$1nineteen $2$3
```

The pattern specified by the mask is a leading word separator, followed by the string "19", two digits, and another word separator. Word separator characters are used to ensure that only four digit year numbers are adjusted. Any other text containing 4 digits, like a phone number, will not be effected. Also note that the word separator mask characters are subpatterns, where the actual word separator character matched is replaced in the pronunciation. This is important if the word separator character happens to be a punctuation character. So if the year number occurs at the end of a sentence, and is immediately followed by a period, the trailing period will be included in the pronunciation.

Example 2 - Year Number correction using a Regular Expression

To solve the same problem using a Regular Expression, do the following:

- Set the Text Matching dropdown to "Regular Expression".
- For the mask value, use the following:

```
(\b)19(\d\d)(\b)
```

- Set the Pronounce Using dropdown to "Respell"
- For the Pronounce Using text, enter:

```
$1nineteen $2$3
```

The use of a regular expression is very similar to a mask in this case. The "\b" strings in the Regular Expression match word separators, and the "\d" strings match the digits 0 thru 9.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Editing Pronunciations

Add/Edit Dictionary Entry

File Splitter Utility

The File Splitter Utility allows you to split very large documents. You have the option of splitting the document into multiple, smaller text files, or sending the split output directly into multiple TextAloud articles. You can use the File Splitter to split a file that is several megabytes in size to a size that is more easily handled by TextAloud articles. If you're creating MP3 or WMA files to download to a portable player, it is often useful to create multiple small audio files (for example, one audio file per chapter) instead of one very large MP3 / WMA file.

The following fields are available on the File Splitter Utility Window:

Field	Description
Input File Path	The name of the document to split. The entire path name must be specified.
Write Split Text To	Allows you to direct split output to text files or TextAloud articles.
Output File Directory	The directory to use when split output is directed to text files. An existing directory must be specified. This option is disabled when writing split text to TextAloud articles.
Base Output Name	The base name used for assigning names to split output. Each split name consists of a base name and sequence number. The base name should not contain a directory path or file extension.
Starting Output Sequence Number	The starting sequence number to be prefixed or appended to the base name. Each split name will be identified with a unique sequence number, starting with this initial number.
Output Naming	Specifies whether sequence numbers should be prefixed or appended to the base name.
Split Method	Allows you to select whether splitting will be performed by size, paragraph, or keyword.

The split options displayed in the window depend on the Split Method selected.

Split By Size Options

Field	Description
Target Split Size	The target split size in kilobytes. The split will actually occur at the nearest split boundary specified.
Split Boundary	The Split Boundary is used along with the Target Split Size to determine where splits will occur in the document.

Split By Paragraph Options

Field	Description
Split Every	Specifies the number of paragraphs to be contained in each split.
Paragraph Marker	Used to specify the number of newlines that indicate the start of a new paragraph.

Split By Keyword Options

When Split By Keyword is selected as the Split Method, an Add/Remove list is displayed on the File Splitter window, allowing you to create a list of keywords. The document will then be split at every occurrence of each keyword in the list. When adding a keyword to the list, a dialog containing the following fields is displayed:

Field	Description
Keyword	Specifies a keyword to split at.
Split Option	Specifies how the keyword should be handled when performing splits. You can specify that text should be split before or after the keyword, meaning that the keyword is left in the text at the end of a split, or at the beginning of the next split. You also have the option of excluding the keyword from splits.

Batch File Converter

The Batch File Converter is a tool that allows you to select many document files and convert them all to audio files. The utility supports all document formats supported by Document Import.

The following fields are available on the Batch File Converter dialog:

Field	Description
Output Directory	The directory where audio files will be written. An existing directory must be specified.
PDF Text Encoding	For PDF documents, this setting indicates whether or not the text extraction process should treat the PDF document as Unicode. The 'Default' setting will normally work for US English and European PDF documents.
Audio File Format	Select an audio format from one of the available encoders on your machine. The most commonly used audio formats are MP3 and WMA.
Bit / Sample Rate	This setting is used to determine the quality of audio files generated by TextAloud. The setting "Default for Voice" can be used to have TextAloud automatically choose a Bit/Sample rate setting based on the type of audio produced by the voice.
Voice Selection	Allows you to control how voices are selected for writing audio files: <i>Select</i> Allows you to choose a single voice used to generate all audio files. <i>Random</i> TextAloud will choose a random (enabled) voice for each audio file. <i>Round Robin</i> TextAloud will choose a voice for each audio file by sequentially stepping through your enabled voices.
Voice	This field is enabled only if Voice Selection is set to <i>Select</i> . Use this field to determine which voice will be used for writing audio files.
Add Audio to iTunes Playlist	Specifies whether audio files created by the Batch File Converter will be automatically added to iTunes in the specified Playlist. This option is available only if iTunes is installed, and the Audio File Format is an MP3 format.

To Build a list of files to convert

Use File -> Add Files and File -> Remove Selected to add and remove files from the Batch File Converter window. If you decide to start over, you can use File -> Clear to remove all files from the window and begin again.

To Start converting files

Once you have finished building a list of files to convert, select Tools -> Convert from the menu, or click the Convert button on the toolbar. This will disable the Add, Remove and Clear menu entries / toolbar buttons, and begin the audio file conversion process.

To Change Batch File Encoder Options

The fields Audio File Format and Bit / Sample Rate are located on Batch File Converter window, but other File Options are available by clicking Tools -> Batch Audio Options from the menu. File Options, Custom Encoders, Audio Tags and Background Audio options are available on the tab panels; the settings on these options panels apply only when using Batch File Conversion.

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- If you are not sure which Audio Format to use, we recommend using either an MP3 or WMA format.
- If you are not sure which Bit / Sample rate to use, try using the "Default For Voice" selection.

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If you have voices for multiple languages installed, the Random and Round Robin voice selection options will choose voices based on the Language and Dialog settings on the Voice Options panel.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

Voice Options
File Options
Custom Encoders
Audio File Tags
Background Audio

TextAloud Setup Wizard

The TextAloud Setup Wizard steps you through some basic TextAloud configuration options. The options configured by the setup wizard are all available under the TextAloud View menu.

If you are running TextAloud for the first time, and not sure about which settings to pick, just select all the defaults. You can always rerun the setup wizard later from the TextAloud Tools menu, or configure individual settings beneath the TextAloud View menu.

Options configured by the Setup Wizard include:

- Toolbars displayed in the main window
- Whether or not to display a dropdown list of articles loaded in TextAloud
- The size of buttons (small, medium, or large) used in the TextAloud toolbars

- Whether or not to display button captions in TextAloud toolbars.

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp Related Topics

TextAloud Toolbars

TextAloud View Menu

Article

An "Article" in TextAloud is the text area displayed in the main window, beneath the toolbars. As multiple articles are added to the TextAloud window, each article is displayed in a separate tab. The speaking functions of TextAloud speak the text loaded in an article.

There are several ways of loading text into an article. Articles can be loaded via:

- TextAloud watching the Windows Clipboard
- TextAloud watching your mouse for text selections
- Document Import (File -> Open)
- Import HotKeys
- Drag and Drop
- "Open With TextAloud" from the Windows Explorer context menu.

For more details on each of these methods, see Loading Articles.

Audio Tag

Data stored in an audio file that contains information about the contents of the audio file. Tags include information such as artist, album, track number, etc.

Bit Rate

Bit rate is measured in kbps, or kilobits per second. For audio files this rate corresponds directly to file size: larger bitrates mean larger audio files, and generally longer encoding times.

For suggestions on choosing Bit Rates and Sample Rates for your audio files, see the File Options panel help.

Direct Encoding

Direct Encoding is a TextAloud feature that generates audio files from text without relying on intermediate wav files. When Direct Encoding is used, spoken audio is encoded real time, as the audio is produced. When Direct Encoding is not used, spoken audio is written to intermediate wav files, and then converted to audio in a two step process. Direct encoding is generally much faster than generating audio files with intermediate wav files.

TextAloud supports Direct Encoding with SAPI5 voices only. When TextAloud creates audio files with SAPI4 voices, intermediate wav files are used, and the encoding is slower.

MP3

MP3 is short for **M**otion **P**icture Experts Group, Audio Layer **3**. MP3 produces CD-quality sound in a compressed file that can be transferred quickly, and played on any multimedia computer with MP3 player software.

Phoneme

A phoneme is one of the smallest units of sound that a speech engine is capable of making. Speech engines group phonemes into words and sentences, which we hear as speech. Each language has its own set of phonemes.

Profile

A profile in TextAloud is basically a name that identifies a specific way that TextAloud is being used. There are currently three profiles defined in TextAloud: Normal Speaking, Vocal Proofreading, and Step Proofreading.

Profiles are used to enable/activate features in TextAloud based on usage, or the text being spoken.

Sample Rate

When you listen to digital audio, you are actually listening to many discrete 'samples' of sound. Sample rate is a measure of the number of samples per second, and can be thought of as the resolution or accuracy of the audio. A high sample rate means that the resolution of the recording is high, thus very "accurate". Digital music is typically recorded at sample rates of 44.1kHz and higher. Digital speech can use much lower sample rates without loss of sound quality. High quality speech can be generated at 16kHz; telephony applications use a sample rate of 8kHz.

One kiloHertz (kHz) is one thousand cycles per second.

For suggestions on choosing Bit Rates and Sample Rates for your audio files, see the File Options panel help.

SAPI

SAPI is Microsoft's Speech Application Interface, and is an interface for application programs like TextAloud to interact with speech engines. There are currently two versions of SAPI available, SAPI4 and SAPI5. Both interfaces are supported by TextAloud, but there are some differences in available / implemented features.

The following table summarizes the main differences between using SAPI4 and SAPI5 speech engines in TextAloud:

Engine Feature	SAPI4 Support	SAPI5 Support
Pause Tags (manually inserted / automatically generated)	Most Voices	Yes
Phoneme support in Pronunciation Dictionary Maintenance	No	Most Voices
Support for Speed, Pitch, Volume, Spell and Voice switching tags in TextAloud articles	No	Yes

Missing image: tdoc4.bmp **Related Topics**

Voice Options
Editing Pronunciations

Step Proofreading

Step Proofreading is a proofreading mode in TextAloud that takes place within a TextAloud article instead of in a separate proofreader window. Step Proofreading is initiated by selecting one of the Step Navigations beneath the Navigations menu. When a single 'step' has finished speaking, TextAloud will then pause, allowing you to either step again, or resume normal speaking.

TextAloud remains in Step Proofreading mode until either the Resume button is pressed, or when the end of the article is reached.

See Proofreading Documents.

Vocal Proofreading

Vocal Proofreading is a way of proofreading documents in TextAloud, using a standalone proofreader window. Vocal Proofreading is initiated by selecting text in any application, and copying the text to the proofreader window using a Hotkey, the Clipboard Prompt, or the Mouse Speak Prompt.

See Proofreading Documents.

Windows Clipboard

The Windows Clipboard is a standard part of the Windows operating system, and is used as a short-term storage area for text and/or images. Whenever you "Cut" or "Copy" something from an application, the information is placed on the Windows Clipboard. Applications commonly offer a "Paste" function that allows information on the clipboard to be inserted into the application.

TextAloud monitors the Windows Clipboard for changes, allowing the clipboard to be used to transfer text from any application to a TextAloud article. The clipboard can contain both text and image data, but TextAloud extracts text only, ignoring any images. So copying text into TextAloud can be done just by highlighting an area of text in an application, and pressing Ctrl+C to "Copy" the text to the clipboard.

The Windows Clipboard is used for many purposes on your computer, such as copying and pasting text within a word processor application. TextAloud will be aware of these clipboard updates, and by default, an alert dialog will prompt you to copy clipboard changes into TextAloud. Use the Clipboard Options panel to control when TextAloud displays the alert. For example, you can configure the alert to display only if the amount of text on the clipboard exceeds a minimum size.

WMA

The Windows Media Audio format for digital sound, launched by Microsoft as an alternative to the MP3 format. You may hear better sound quality from MP3 files, but WMA compression is generally better, so WMA files tend to be smaller than MP3 files.