BILL'S HOME TECH

Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

AN EXTENDED GUIDE · NO. 2231

Updated November 2026

Make Your Phone Read Articles & Emails Out Loud

Rest your eyes and let your phone read the news, your mail, and more

Plain-English tech help from:
Bill's Home Tech
Portage County, Ohio

Tech Made Simple. Service Made Personal.

Bill Davis — Bill's Home Tech
(330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com · Atwater, Ohio

Book a visit · billshometech.com/book

What's Inside

Everything in this guide, with page numbers. Skip to whichever chapter answers your question right now.

The 60-Second Version 3

The Short Version 3

What This Is Good For 4

iPhone: Turn On Speak Screen 4

iPhone: Read Just a Selection 5

iPhone: Choose a Nicer Voice 5

Android: Turn On Select to Speak 6

Android: The Read-Aloud Button in Apps 6

Changing the Voice and Speed on Android 7

Have Email Read to You 7

Listen to Articles and the News 8

Reading Books Aloud 8

Fixing Common Hiccups 9

Listening Hands-Free Around the House 10

A Word About Versions 10

When to Call Bill 11

Everyday Cheat Sheet 12

A Note From Bill 13

Your Visit — and My Promise 14

SUMMARY

The 60-Second Version

Your phone can read almost anything aloud. On iPhone, turn on Speak Screen under Settings, Accessibility, Spoken Content, then swipe down with two fingers from the top of the screen to have it read the page; turn on Speak Selection to read just a highlighted paragraph. On Android, turn on Select to Speak under Accessibility, then tap its button and tap the text; many news apps and browsers also have their own Listen button.

You can pick a warmer voice and slow it down in the voice settings. It is free, built in, and a gentle way to rest your eyes.

1 The Short Version

Both iPhones and Android phones can read text aloud to you. You turn the feature on once in Settings, then a simple gesture or button reads whatever is on the screen — an article, an email, a message. You can change the voice, slow it down, and pause whenever you like. It is a gentle way to rest your eyes, follow along, or simply enjoy the news while your hands are busy.

- iPhone calls it Spoken Content (Speak Screen and Speak Selection).
- Android calls it Select to Speak, and many apps have their own "read aloud" button.
- You can adjust the voice and the speed to whatever is comfortable.
- It is free and already on your phone — nothing to buy.

> **TIP**
>
> Start with the whole-screen reader (Speak Screen on iPhone, Select to Speak on Android). Once you are comfortable, the "read just this paragraph" options are nice for picking out one part.

2 What This Is Good For

Having the phone read to you is not just for people who cannot see well. It is wonderful for resting tired eyes at the end of the day, for following a long article while you cook or fold laundry, or for catching every word of an important email by hearing it as well as seeing it.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
> Many people find they understand and remember a dense letter — from a doctor, an insurer, or the bank — better when they both read it and hear it. Listening a second time often catches something the eye skated past.

3 iPhone: Turn On Speak Screen

Speak Screen reads everything on the current screen from top to bottom. You switch it on once, then summon it with a two-finger swipe.

1. Open Settings, then Accessibility, then Spoken Content.
2. Turn on Speak Screen.
3. Open an article or email, then swipe DOWN with two fingers from the very top of the screen.
4. A small control bar appears — use it to pause, skip, or change the speed.

> **TIP**
> The two-finger swipe takes a little practice. Start both fingers right at the top edge of the screen and swipe down together. If one finger lands late, it may not trigger — just try again.

4 iPhone: Read Just a Selection

If you only want one paragraph read — not the whole screen — Speak Selection is the gentler tool. You highlight the part you want and a Speak button appears.

1. In the same Spoken Content menu, turn on Speak Selection.
2. In any app, press and hold on a word, then drag the handles to select the text you want.
3. Tap Speak in the little menu that pops up.
4. Tap Pause in that menu to stop.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> Speak Selection is ideal for a single tricky sentence, a phone number, or a foreign phrase — anywhere you want just a piece read rather than the entire page.

5 iPhone: Choose a Nicer Voice

The default voice is fine, but you can pick a different one — often a warmer, more natural voice — and set how fast it talks.

1. In Settings, Accessibility, Spoken Content, tap Voices.
2. Choose English, then pick a voice; tap one to hear a sample.
3. Some voices offer an "Enhanced" or higher-quality download for a more natural sound — tap to download it.
4. Back in Spoken Content, drag the Speaking Rate slider to a comfortable pace.

> **TIP**
>
> The enhanced voices sound markedly more human than the basic one and are well worth the quick download. Try a couple and keep whichever is easiest on your ear.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

6 Android: Turn On Select to Speak

Android's Select to Speak puts a small button on your screen; tap it, then tap what you want read.

1. Open Settings, then Accessibility, then Select to Speak, and turn it on.
2. A little person-in-a-box button appears, usually in a corner.
3. Tap that button, then tap a paragraph — or drag a box around the part you want.
4. Use the play, pause, and speed controls that appear.

GOOD TO KNOW

You can also tap the Select to Speak button and then tap the play arrow to have it read the entire screen from the top, not just one paragraph.

7 Android: The Read-Aloud Button in Apps

Beyond the system feature, many Android apps have their own read-aloud button that is even simpler — look for it in your news app, your browser, and Google's apps.

- In the Google app or Chrome, open an article and look for a "Listen" or headphones icon near the top.
- In Google News, articles often have a "Listen" option.
- In the Books or a reading app, look for a play or speaker button to have the book read aloud.

TIP

These in-app buttons usually give the cleanest result for a long article because the app knows exactly which words are the story and skips the clutter around it.

8 Changing the Voice and Speed on Android

Android's reading voice comes from a setting called Text-to-speech, which you can improve and adjust once for every app that reads aloud.

1. Open Settings, then Accessibility, then Text-to-speech output (you may need to tap into a submenu).
2. Tap the gear to pick the Google voice and download a higher-quality one if offered.
3. Choose your language and a preferred voice.
4. Adjust the speech rate slider to a comfortable speed.

GOOD TO KNOW

This one setting controls the voice for Select to Speak and most read-aloud buttons, so improving it here makes everything that reads to you sound better.

9 Have Email Read to You

A long email is a perfect candidate for listening — especially an important one you want to be sure you caught every word of.

1. Open the email in your Mail app.
2. iPhone: swipe down with two fingers from the top to have Speak Screen read it.
3. Android: tap the Select to Speak button, then tap the body of the email.
4. Pause any time to re-read a line with your eyes.

WATCH OUT

If an email is reading you a message that asks for a password, a payment, or urgent action, treat it with the same caution whether you read or hear it. Scammers write urgent-sounding emails on purpose. When in doubt, do not click anything and call me.

10 Listen to Articles and the News

Following the news by ear is one of the most pleasant uses — you can keep up with a long story while you move around the house.

1. Open the article in your browser or news app.
2. Start the reader: two-finger swipe down (iPhone) or the Select to Speak button (Android), or an in-app Listen button.
3. Set the phone down nearby and go about your task.
4. Pause when you want to look at a photo or re-read a line.

TIP

A cheap pair of earbuds or a small Bluetooth speaker makes listening far more comfortable than the phone's own speaker, especially for a longer article.

Rather not do this yourself? I'll come to your home and set it up for you — a flat $99 first visit across Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities. Outside the area? I also help remotely by phone or screen-share. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042.

11 Reading Books Aloud

If you enjoy books, your phone can read many of them to you, which is a free alternative to buying separate audiobooks for titles you already own.

- In Apple Books or Google Play Books, open a book and look for a read-aloud or "Read to me" option.
- For a plain e-book, the system reader (Speak Screen or Select to Speak) will read the page, and you turn pages as it goes.
- True audiobooks, read by professional narrators, are a separate purchase — nice, but not necessary just to listen.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> The computer voice is not quite a professional narrator, but for news, mail, and casual reading it is clear and perfectly pleasant, and it reads anything on the screen — not just books.

12 Fixing Common Hiccups

A few small snags trip people up at first; each has an easy fix.

- Nothing happens on the two-finger swipe (iPhone): start both fingers right at the top edge and swipe together; practice a few times.
- It reads too fast: lower the Speaking Rate in Spoken Content (iPhone) or the speech rate in Text-to-speech (Android).
- The voice sounds robotic: download an enhanced or higher-quality voice.
- It reads menus and clutter: use an in-app Listen button or select just the paragraph you want.

> **TIP**
>
> If the reader keeps reading on to the next thing you did not want, just tap Pause or do the start gesture again to stop it. You are always in control.

13 Listening Hands-Free Around the House

The real joy of this feature is listening while your hands and eyes are busy — cooking, gardening, resting with your eyes closed. A little setup makes that effortless.

- Pair a small Bluetooth speaker or earbuds so you can hear clearly from across the room.
- Start the reader, then set the phone down and go about your task.
- Keep the control bar in reach (or learn the pause gesture) so you can stop to answer the door.
- For a recipe, have it read the ingredients once, then the steps, pausing as you work.

TIP

If you use a hearing aid that connects to the phone, the read-aloud voice can often play straight through it — ask me and I can help pair them so the reading comes through clearly.

14 A Word About Versions

Both iPhone and Android update yearly, and a menu name can shift now and then. Spoken Content, Speak Screen, and Select to Speak have all been standard for years, so if a setting is not exactly where described, it has only moved a little.

GOOD TO KNOW

The dependable way to find it on any version is to search Settings — type "Spoken" or "Speak" on an iPhone, or "Select to Speak" or "Text-to-speech" on Android — and the phone takes you straight there.

15 When to Call Bill

None of this is a test, and there is no prize for struggling. Most of these tricks take a minute once you know where to look, and this guide gets you there. But if a setting hides somewhere new on your version, or you would simply rather have someone set it up with you and show you once, that is exactly the kind of visit I make.

I come to you here in Portage County, sit down beside you, and set these up on your own phone or tablet so they work the way you want. I will show you each one slowly, write down the few steps that matter, and make sure you can do it yourself afterward. No rush, no jargon, and no question is too small.

- You cannot get the two-finger swipe or the Select to Speak button to work.
- You want a warmer, more natural voice set up at a comfortable speed.
- You would like it set up with earbuds or a speaker so listening is truly comfortable.
- You would simply rather have it set up correctly the first time, with someone showing you how.

CHEAT SHEET

Everyday Cheat Sheet

Keep this handy. Let your phone do the reading.

I want to...	Do this...
Turn it on (iPhone)	Settings Accessibility Spoken Content Speak Screen
Start reading (iPhone)	Swipe down with two fingers from the top of the screen
Read one paragraph (iPhone)	Turn on Speak Selection; select text Speak
Turn it on (Android)	Settings Accessibility Select to Speak
Start reading (Android)	Tap the Select to Speak button tap the text
Nicer voice / slower	iPhone: Spoken Content Voices & rate. Android: Text-to-speech
Read an article	Open it, then start the reader, or tap an in-app Listen button
Get help	Call Bill: (330) 200-8042

BEFORE YOU GO

A Note From Bill

A quick note from Bill. I write these guides to make home tech a little less frustrating, and I do my best to keep every step accurate and up to date. Still, every home, device, and setup is a bit different, so I can't promise a guide will match yours exactly or fix your particular problem. These guides are for general information only — they're not professional, legal, or financial advice, and they don't replace your device's own manual or the manufacturer's instructions. Please go slow, use your own good judgment, and use everything here at your own risk. If a step involves electrical wiring, a gas appliance, a water heater, plumbing, or climbing a ladder — or if anything just doesn't feel safe — please stop and call a licensed professional (or give me a call at 330-200-8042). Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results.

HOW I CAN HELP

Your Visit — and My Promise

You don't have to remember all of it — just that a friendly, patient person is one call away, whenever you'd rather have a hand.

KEY SPECS

In your home — $99 flat for the first visit, no contracts and no surprises, with a 30-day come-back-free follow-up. In-home visits cover Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities.
Outside the area? Remotely — $49 for a screen-share session (free for Support Plan members, $39/mo), refundable if I can't fix it — and credited toward a visit if you'd rather have me in person. Book either at billshometech.com/book.

GOOD TO KNOW

My promise — If you're not 100% satisfied with your visit, I'll come back at no charge, or refund the full $99. No questions, no awkwardness. That's how I'd want to be treated.

Whenever you're ready, I'll come to your home anywhere in Portage County, Ohio and nearby communities, at your pace. Too far for a house call? I also help remotely. Book at billshometech.com/book or call (330) 200-8042. — Bill

Call or text (330) 200-8042 · bill@billshometech.com

This free guide is for general information only — not professional advice, and no substitute for your device's own manual. Any prices or outside products mentioned can change; please confirm current details before you buy. Please use your own good judgment and follow it at your own risk — for anything involving electricity, gas, water, or heights, stop and call a licensed professional. Bill's Home Tech and Bill Davis can't be responsible for any damage, data loss, or injury that results. © 2026 Bill's Home Tech, LLC.