BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Low-Vision Tech

Bigger text, magnifiers, reading voices and seeing apps — explained in plain English, one step at a time

A plain-English guide for tired eyes and the families who help

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For iPhone, Android, Windows 11 & Mac · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your low-vision tech manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace — there is no test, and you can't fall behind. Start with Part 1 for the quick wins, then jump to the part for your own phone or computer. Every feature comes with what it actually does *for you*, and slow step-by-step directions anyone can follow. It's written for iPhones on iOS 26 and 27, Android 16 and Samsung One UI 8, Windows 11 and recent Macs; if a screen looks a little different on yours, the idea is still the same.

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PART 1

Start Here

What low-vision technology can do, the five kinds of help it offers, and the quick wins worth setting up in your first few minutes. Start here.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you're reading this, chances are the print has been getting smaller lately — or at least it feels that way. Maybe the labels on pill bottles have become a guessing game, the phone screen looks like a blur of tiny letters, or the newspaper has quietly moved to the bottom of the pile. Or maybe you're here for someone you love whose eyes are changing. Either way, this guide is for **you**.

I'm Bill. Helping folks feel at home with their technology is what I do every day, and I wrote this guide the same way I'd sit beside you at the kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, with no rushing and no fancy words. When I use a term you might not know, I'll stop and explain it right then.

The good news first

The phone, tablet or computer you already own is very likely one of the best vision aids in your house. Every iPhone, Android phone, Windows computer and Mac comes with free, built-in tools that make text bigger and bolder, magnify anything on the screen, turn the camera into a lighted magnifying glass, and even read words out loud. Most people simply never find them, because they're tucked away in a menu called **Accessibility**. This guide walks you straight to them.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Reading your own mail. Checking a medicine label without hunting for a magnifying glass. Seeing the grandkids' photos clearly. Staying independent a good deal longer, with tools you may already own. That's what this guide is really about.

You can't break anything

Every setting in this guide can be switched off just as easily as it's switched on. Try a feature, and if you don't care for it, turn it back off. Exploring is how everyone learns. The one or two settings that change how the whole device behaves — like the screen readers in Chapter 9 and Chapter 12 — come with clear directions for getting back out, and I'll point those out before you try them.

STAY SAFE

Technology helps your eyes — it doesn't replace your eye doctor

This guide is about tools, not treatment. If your vision has changed, especially suddenly, see an eye doctor first. Only an eye-care professional can tell you what's going on and what may help. Many people with low vision are also helped by a **low-vision specialist**, who can suggest the right magnifiers and lighting for your particular eyes. Chapter 22 explains how to find one.

And I'm only a phone call away

This guide will carry you a long way on your own. But if you ever get stuck, call me at **(330) 200-8042**. Setting up these comfort features is one of my favorite things to do, and there's no such thing as a silly question.

So let's make your screens, your mail and your reading easier on your eyes — one step at a time.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Low-Vision Tech Can Do

"Low vision" is the everyday term for eyesight that glasses, contacts or surgery can't fully correct — when reading, recognizing faces, or getting around has become harder even with your glasses on. It comes in many forms. Some people lose the center of their vision, some the edges, some see everything as if through a haze, and many simply find that small print and glare have become a real struggle.

Because every pair of eyes is different, there's no single gadget that fixes everything. Instead, think of technology as a toolbox with five drawers. Most people end up using two or three of them.

The five kinds of help

Kind of help	What it means
1. Bigger	Larger, bolder text and buttons across the whole device. The first thing to try, and often enough by itself. (Chapters 4, 10, 14 and 15.)
2. Clearer	Stronger contrast, darker letters, dark mode, less glare and color filters, so words stand out from the background. (Chapters 5 and 11.)
3. Magnified	Zooming in on part of the screen, or using the camera as a lighted magnifying glass for paper, labels and dials. (Chapters 6, 7, 11, 13 and 19.)
4. Spoken	Letting the device read aloud — a page, a selected paragraph, or everything on the screen — and talking instead of typing. (Chapters 8, 9 and 12.)
5. Described	Apps that use the camera to read printed text and describe what's in front of you, or connect you by video with a sighted volunteer. (Chapters 16, 17 and 18.)

TIP

Start with "bigger," then add as needed

Most people do best by starting simple: make the text larger and bolder, and learn one magnifier. Live with that for a week. Then add a reading voice or a describing app if you need more. Turning on everything at once can make a phone feel strange and crowded.

Things that aren't technology but help a lot

- **Good light** pointed at what you're reading, from the side or behind you, rather than glare from the front. Chapter 21 has lighting tips.
- **Bold, high-contrast print** — a black felt-tip pen on white paper is far easier to read than a ballpoint.
- **Fewer, bigger things** — a large-button phone, a big-display clock, or a tablet instead of a small phone.
- **Sitting closer to the TV** or the screen. It won't hurt your eyes.

GOOD TO KNOW

Low vision is common — and these tools were built for it

Apple, Google and Microsoft all build vision features into their products for free, alongside the features for hearing and movement. You're not asking for anything unusual by using them. They're there for exactly this.

CHAPTER 3

Your First Five Minutes: The Quick Wins

If you only do one thing after reading this page, make it this short list. Each item takes a minute or two and makes a real difference every day. The full directions are in the chapters named, and you can do them in any order.

On an iPhone or iPad

1. Make the text bigger and bold: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size** > **Larger Text**, then turn on **Bold Text** (Chapter 4).
2. Put the **Magnifier** one triple-click away: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Accessibility Shortcut** > **Magnifier** (Chapter 7).
3. Turn on **Speak Screen** so a two-finger swipe down from the top reads the page aloud: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Read & Speak** (Chapter 8).

On an Android phone (Pixel, Samsung and others)

1. Make text bigger: open **Settings**, search for **Font size**, and drag the slider. Then search for **Display size** to enlarge buttons too (Chapter 10).
2. Turn on the **Magnification shortcut**: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Magnification** (Chapter 11).
3. Turn on **Select to Speak** so the phone reads what you tap: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Select to Speak** (Chapter 12).

On a computer

1. **Windows 11: Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Text size**, drag the slider, click **Apply**. Learn **Windows key + plus sign** for the Magnifier (Chapter 14).
2. **Mac: Apple menu** > **System Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display** > **Text size**. Turn on **Hover Text** (Chapter 15).

For everyone

- Install one free "seeing" app — **Be My Eyes** (iPhone and Android) is a fine first choice (Chapter 16).
- Ask your family to send texts and photos rather than tiny-print emails, if that's easier for you.

- Write your settings choices on the cheat-sheet in Chapter 24 so a helper can put them back if they're ever changed.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Small changes, every single day

These few minutes of setup pay you back every time you pick up your phone. Bigger, bolder text alone often turns "I can't read this" into "oh, that's much better."

FROM BILL

Happy to do these with you

If you'd rather not fiddle with settings, this is exactly the kind of visit I enjoy: we'll sit down together, try each one, and keep only what suits your eyes.

PART 2

Your iPhone & iPad

Bigger and bolder text, stronger contrast, zooming the screen, the camera Magnifier, having the phone read to you, and VoiceOver. Written for iOS 26 and iOS 27; an iPad works almost exactly the same way.

CHAPTER 4

Bigger, Bolder Text on iPhone

The single most helpful change for most eyes is also the simplest: make the letters bigger and darker. Your iPhone has an ordinary text-size slider, plus a hidden extra-large range that's turned off until you ask for it. Here's how to get all of it.

Turn on the extra-large text sizes

1. Open **Settings** (the gray gear) and tap **Accessibility**.
2. Tap **Display & Text Size**.
3. Tap **Larger Text**.
4. Turn on **Larger Accessibility Sizes**. This unlocks the really big sizes.
5. Drag the **slider** at the bottom to the right. The sample sentence grows as you go. Stop when it reads comfortably at your normal holding distance.

GOOD TO KNOW

Which apps follow this setting

Apple's own apps — Messages, Mail, Phone, Contacts, Notes, Settings and others — follow your text size. Many App Store apps do too, but not all. If one app stays small, look in that app's own settings for a text-size choice, or use Zoom (Chapter 6).

Bold Text: darker, thicker letters

Size is half the story. Thin, light-gray letters are hard on tired eyes even when they're big. **Bold Text** makes every letter heavier across the whole phone.

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size**.
2. Turn on **Bold Text**.

Make the whole screen bigger: Display Zoom

Larger Text enlarges words. **Display Zoom** enlarges everything — icons, buttons and the keyboard too — by showing a little less on the screen at once. Many people like the two together.

1. Open **Settings** > **Display & Brightness**.
2. Tap **Display Zoom** (you may need to scroll down).

3. Choose **Larger Text** instead of Default, then tap **Done**. The phone restarts its screen to apply the change.

TIP

A quick text-size button in Control Center

You can add a **Text Size** control to Control Center (swipe down from the top-right corner). Then you can make text bigger or smaller in one app at a time — handy for an app that's especially small.

Other comfort switches on the same screen

- **Button Shapes** — puts outlines under tappable words so you can tell buttons from plain text.
- **On/Off Labels** — adds a small line or circle to switches, so "on" doesn't depend on seeing green.
- **Increase Contrast** — darkens colors and sharpens edges (more in Chapter 5).

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Text messages, contacts, email and the clock become readable at a glance, without squinting or reaching for reading glasses. It's the five-minute change that helps the most people.

CHAPTER 5

Contrast, Colors & Dark Mode on iPhone

For many eyes, the problem isn't only size — it's that pale letters fade into a bright white background, or the screen's glare washes everything out. These settings change how the screen's colors and brightness behave. Try them one at a time and keep what helps.

Increase Contrast and Reduce Transparency

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size**.
2. Turn on **Increase Contrast** to darken colors and make edges crisper.
3. Turn on **Reduce Transparency** to make see-through, frosted panels solid, so the words on them stand out.

Dark Mode: light letters on a dark background

Some people with glare sensitivity find white text on black far more comfortable, especially in the evening. Others find it harder. It's worth a try.

1. Open **Settings** > **Display & Brightness**.
2. Under Appearance, tap **Dark**. Tap **Light** to go back.

Invert colors and Color Filters

These live in **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size**:

- **Smart Invert** — flips the screen's colors, but leaves photos and videos looking normal.
- **Classic Invert** — flips everything, photos included.
- **Color Filters** — tints the screen or turns it grayscale. Helpful for some kinds of color blindness, or if a colored tint makes reading easier.
- **Reduce White Point** — tones down the brightest whites without dimming the whole screen. A gentle fix for glare.

TIP

Brightness matters too

Swipe down from the top-right corner to open Control Center, then drag the brightness slider (the sun). In a bright room, brighter is easier; at night, dimmer is kinder. If the brightness keeps changing on its own and you don't like it, turn off **Auto-Brightness** in **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size**.

HEADS UP

If the colors suddenly look strange

If your screen ever turns gray, negative-looking or tinted and you didn't mean it to, one of these filters was switched on — often by a stray triple-click. Go back to **Display & Text Size** and turn off Smart Invert, Classic Invert or Color Filters. Nothing is broken.

CHAPTER 6

Zoom: Magnify the iPhone Screen

Zoom works like a magnifying glass for the screen itself. Unlike Larger Text, it enlarges *everything* — photos, maps, buttons, and apps that ignore your text size. Once it's on, you control it with three fingers.

Turn on Zoom

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Zoom**.
2. Turn on **Zoom**.
3. Choose a **Zoom Region**: **Full Screen Zoom** (the whole screen gets bigger) or **Window Zoom** (a movable lens over one part of the screen).
4. Drag **Maximum Zoom Level** to set how far it can zoom.

Using it

To do this	Do this
Zoom in or out	Double-tap the screen with **three fingers**.
Move around	Drag with **three fingers**.
Change how much	Double-tap with three fingers, but keep them down on the second tap and slide up or down.
Open the Zoom menu	Tap the small zoom controller, or triple-tap with three fingers.

HEADS UP

"My screen is stuck huge!"

If everything is suddenly enormous and won't scroll normally, Zoom has been switched on, maybe by accident. Double-tap with three fingers to zoom back out. To turn it off for good, go to **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Zoom** and switch it off.

TIP

Zoom and Larger Text work well together

Use Larger Text for everyday reading and keep Zoom for the moments you need more — a tiny photo caption, a map, or a website that won't get bigger. Zoom can also go on the Accessibility Shortcut (Chapter 7).

CHAPTER 7

The Magnifier App & Detection Mode

The **Magnifier** turns your iPhone's camera into a lighted magnifying glass. Point it at a pill bottle, a restaurant menu, a thermostat or the fine print on a bill, and it blows the words up bright and clear. It's free and already on your phone.

Open the Magnifier

1. Swipe down in the middle of the Home Screen to open Search, type **Magnifier**, and tap it. Or say, "Siri, open Magnifier."
2. Point the camera at what you want to read.
3. Drag the **zoom** control to make it bigger.
4. Tap the **flashlight** button if it's dim.
5. To hold the picture still, tap the round **capture** button. Now you can lower the phone and read the frozen image comfortably, zooming in on any part. Tap again to go back to the live view.

Make text easier to read

Magnifier has controls for **brightness**, **contrast** and color **filters** — for example white text on black, or yellow on blue. Filters can make faint print on glossy paper much easier to read. You can choose which controls appear in Magnifier's settings.

Put the Magnifier one triple-click away

The **Accessibility Shortcut** lets you open one favorite tool by pressing the side button three times quickly (the Home button on iPhones that have one).

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility**, scroll to the bottom, and tap **Accessibility Shortcut**.
2. Tap **Magnifier** so it has a checkmark. You can check more than one; then a triple-click shows a short menu to choose from.
3. Now triple-click the side button from anywhere to open it.

> **TIP**
>
> **Other quick ways in**
>
> You can also add Magnifier to Control Center, or set **Back Tap** so two taps on the back of the phone opens it: **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Touch** > **Back Tap**.

Detection Mode: when the phone describes what it sees

Magnifier also has a **Detection Mode**. Instead of only enlarging, it can speak what the camera sees. Apple describes several helpers here:

- **Text detection** — reads printed text in the camera view out loud. Apple says this works on all iPhone models that run current iOS.
- **Point and Speak** — point a finger at a button or a label (on a microwave, say), and the phone reads the words under your finger.
- **Descriptions** — live spoken descriptions of the scene in front of the camera.
- **Door, People and Furniture detection** — finds doors, people and chairs nearby, and can say how far away they are. These need a supported iPhone with the extra depth sensor found on Pro models (iPhone 12 Pro and later Pro models).

1. Open **Magnifier**.
2. Tap the **Detection Mode** button (if you don't see it, tap the settings or more button and add it).
3. Choose the kind of detection you want, then move the phone slowly. The phone speaks, plays sounds or vibrates as it finds things.
4. To stop, tap the Detection Mode button again.

STAY SAFE

A helper, not a guide dog

Apple itself says Detection Mode should not be relied on in situations where you could be hurt, in emergencies, or for navigation. Use it to find a door or read a sign — and keep using your cane, your usual caution and a trusted person for getting around.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

No more hunting for a magnifying glass or asking someone to read a label. The Magnifier is with you wherever your phone is — at the pharmacy, the grocery store, or a dim restaurant.

CHAPTER 8

Have Your iPhone Read to You

When your eyes are tired, let your ears take a turn. Your iPhone can read a whole page aloud, read just the words you select, read your new text messages, and take down what you say instead of typing.

Speak Screen: a two-finger swipe reads the page

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility**.
2. Tap **Read & Speak**. (On older software this is called **Spoken Content** — same place, same idea.)
3. Turn on **Speak Screen**.
4. Now open an email, a web page or a news article, and swipe down with **two fingers** from the very top of the screen. Your iPhone reads everything on the page.
5. A small control panel appears so you can pause, skip, or change the speed.

Speak Selection: read just this part

1. In the same **Read & Speak** screen, turn on **Speak Selection**.
2. In any app, press and hold on a word to select it, drag the handles to cover the text you want, then tap **Speak** in the little menu.

> **TIP**
>
> **Choose a voice you like and slow it down**
>
> In **Read & Speak**, tap **Voices** to pick a voice and accent that's pleasant to your ear, and drag the **Speaking Rate** slider toward the turtle to slow it down. Turn on **Highlight Content** if you'd like each word lit up as it's read.

Let Siri do the reading

- "Siri, read my messages."
- "Siri, what's on my calendar today?"
- "Siri, call my daughter." (Siri uses the names in your Contacts.)
- "Siri, what time is it?" — or the weather, or a timer for the oven.

Talk instead of type: Dictation

Whenever the keyboard is on the screen, tap the small **microphone** key and simply speak. Say "period" or "question mark" for punctuation. Tap the microphone again when you're done. It's much easier than hunting for tiny letters.

GOOD TO KNOW

Reading tools in Safari

On a cluttered web page, tap the **page menu** button at the left of Safari's address bar and choose the reader option to strip away ads and show only the article in larger, plainer text. The same menu has big and small **A** buttons to resize that one website.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Long emails, church newsletters and news stories don't have to wait until someone visits. Your phone reads them to you, at your speed, whenever you like.

CHAPTER 9

VoiceOver: When the Screen Is Hard to See at All

VoiceOver is Apple's screen reader. A screen reader speaks everything on the screen — every button, menu and message — and changes the touch gestures so you can use the phone without seeing it. People who are blind run their whole lives on VoiceOver. For someone with some remaining sight, the magnifiers and Speak Screen are usually easier, but it's good to know VoiceOver is there.

HEADS UP

Read this before you try it

With VoiceOver on, **one tap only selects and announces** something; you **double-tap** to open it, and you scroll with **three fingers**. If you turn it on without knowing that, the phone will seem not to respond. The easy way out: say "Siri, turn off VoiceOver."

Turn VoiceOver on and off

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **VoiceOver**, and turn on **VoiceOver**. Or say, "Siri, turn on VoiceOver."
2. To turn it off, say "Siri, turn off VoiceOver," or (with VoiceOver on) tap the switch once to select it and double-tap to change it.
3. Tip: add VoiceOver to the **Accessibility Shortcut** (Chapter 7) so a triple-click turns it on and off.

The basic VoiceOver gestures

To do this	Do this
Hear what's under your finger	Touch or drag one finger around the screen.
Open the selected item	Double-tap anywhere.
Move to the next or previous item	Swipe right or left with one finger.
Scroll a page	Swipe up or down with three fingers.
Stop the talking	Tap once with two fingers.
Read the whole screen from the top	Swipe up with two fingers.

TIP

Practice safely

In the VoiceOver settings there is a **VoiceOver Practice** area where you can try gestures and hear what each one does without opening anything by mistake.

GOOD TO KNOW

Learning VoiceOver takes a little time — and help is free

If your vision is declining toward the point where you'd need a screen reader, learning it a bit at a time while you can still see some of the screen makes the change much gentler. Vision rehabilitation services (Chapter 22) often teach screen readers, and Apple publishes free VoiceOver guides on its accessibility website.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Even if your sight changes a great deal, your iPhone can keep working for you — calls, messages, books and the news — entirely by sound and touch.

PART 3

Android Phones & Samsung Galaxy

Bigger text and display size, magnification, contrast and dark theme, having the phone read to you, and the camera magnifier apps. Written for Android 16 and Samsung One UI 8; menu names vary a little from one phone maker to another.

CHAPTER 10

Bigger Text & Display Size on Android

Android phones come from many makers — Google Pixel, Samsung Galaxy, Motorola and others — so the menus aren't always in exactly the same place. The trick that works on every one of them: open **Settings** and use the **search box** at the top. Type what you want, like "font size," and tap the result.

Font size: bigger words

1. Open **Settings**.
2. Tap the search box at the top and type **Font size**. Tap the result.
3. Drag the **Font size** slider to the right. A preview shows how text will look. Google says Android can make text up to 200% of normal size.
4. Leave the screen — the change takes effect right away.

Display size: bigger everything

Display size makes buttons, icons and pictures larger along with the words. On a Pixel you'll find both sliders together under **Settings** > **Display & touch** > **Display size and text**. On other phones, search Settings for **Display size**.

Bold text and high-contrast text

On the same **Display size and text** screen, look for **Bold text** (thicker letters) and **High contrast text** (which adds an outline so letters stand out from the background). Both are worth trying. A **Reset settings** button puts everything back the way it came.

On a Samsung Galaxy (One UI)

1. Open **Settings** > **Display** > **Font size and style**.
2. Drag the **Font size** slider. Turn on **Bold font** for darker letters.
3. Back in **Display**, use **Screen zoom** to make the whole layout larger.
4. For outlined, high-contrast letters, go to **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Vision enhancements** (on some models **Visibility enhancements**) and turn on **High contrast fonts**.

GOOD TO KNOW

Samsung's very largest sizes don't work everywhere

Samsung notes that the biggest font sizes may not be supported in every app; apps that can't show them fall back to a smaller large size. If one app stays small, try pinch-to-zoom or Magnification (Chapter 11).

TIP

Easy mode on Samsung

Samsung's **Easy mode** (**Settings** > **Display** > **Easy mode**) gives you a simpler Home screen with bigger icons and text, all in one switch. Many people with tired eyes love it.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Your texts, contacts and clock become easy to read at arm's length — the change you'll notice every single time you pick up the phone.

CHAPTER 11

Magnification, Contrast & Dark Theme on Android

Android's **Magnification** is a built-in magnifying glass for the screen. It enlarges anything — apps that ignore your font size, photos, maps and tiny buttons.

Turn on the Magnification shortcut

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Magnification**.
2. Turn on **Magnification shortcut**.
3. Tap **Magnification shortcut** to choose how you'll start it: an on-screen **Accessibility button**, holding both **volume keys**, or **triple-tapping** the screen.

Using it

- Start magnification with your shortcut, then tap the screen (or the part you want enlarged).
- Drag **two fingers** to move around the magnified screen.
- Pinch two fingers together or apart to change how much it's magnified. Google says magnification goes up to 8 times.
- Use your shortcut again to stop.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **Triple-tap makes ordinary taps a little slower**
>
> If you choose triple-tap as your shortcut, the phone waits a moment after each tap to see whether a triple-tap is coming. Google notes this can make the phone feel slightly slower. If that bothers you, pick the Accessibility button instead.

Dark theme and color inversion

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility**, then look under **Color and motion** (or search Settings for **Dark theme**).
2. Turn on **Dark theme** for light letters on dark backgrounds.
3. Or turn on **Color inversion**, which flips every color on the screen, photos included.

Samsung's vision extras

Samsung gathers its vision features under **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Vision enhancements**. Besides high contrast fonts, Samsung lists:

- **High contrast keyboard** — keyboard colors that are easier to see.
- **Display mode** choices, including **High contrast** and **Large display**.
- **Magnification** and a camera **Magnifier**, plus color adjustments and color filters.

TIP

One-tap access from Quick settings

Samsung lets you add vision enhancements to the Quick settings panel (swipe down from the top). Google's Android also adds a **Font Size** tile to Quick Settings once you've changed font size in Settings.

HEADS UP

If the screen is suddenly huge or the colors are inverted

That's Magnification or Color inversion, switched on by a stray tap. Use your shortcut again, or go back to **Settings** > **Accessibility** and switch it off. Nothing is broken.

CHAPTER 12

Select to Speak, TalkBack & Voice Typing

Android can read to you, too. **Select to Speak** reads whatever you tap, and is the easy everyday choice. **TalkBack** is Android's full screen reader. And voice typing lets you talk instead of type.

Select to Speak: tap and listen

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Select to Speak**. (If you don't see it, Google suggests updating the free **Android Accessibility Suite** app from the Play Store.)
2. Turn on **Select to Speak shortcut**.
3. To use it, start your shortcut — a two-finger swipe up from the bottom, or the Accessibility button.
4. Tap any text or picture to hear it, drag your finger across several items, or tap **Play** to hear the whole screen.
5. The player has buttons to pause, skip, and speed up or slow down.

TIP

Point the camera and have it read

Google says you can also open the camera, point it at printed text, start Select to Speak, and drag your finger across the words on the screen to hear them read aloud. And in many apps you can select text, tap **More**, then **Read aloud**, without turning Select to Speak on at all.

TalkBack: Android's screen reader

HEADS UP

Read this before you try it

With TalkBack on, **one tap selects and announces**, you **double-tap** to open, and you scroll with **two fingers**. If it's turned on by surprise the phone seems unresponsive. To turn it off, press and hold **both volume keys** for a few seconds if that shortcut is set up, or say "Hey Google, turn off TalkBack."

1. Open **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **TalkBack**.
2. Turn on **Use TalkBack** and confirm. A short tutorial usually starts — it's worth doing.

3. Turn on the **TalkBack shortcut** so holding both volume keys turns it on and off.

To do this	Do this
Hear an item	Touch it, or drag one finger across the screen.
Open the selected item	Double-tap anywhere.
Next / previous item	Swipe right or left with one finger.
Scroll	Swipe up or down with two fingers.

Voice typing

When the keyboard is showing, tap the **microphone** on it and speak. Say "period," "comma" or "question mark" for punctuation. Your phone's assistant can also read and send messages for you — try "Hey Google, read my messages" or "Hey Google, call my son."

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Rest your eyes and keep up with your messages, news and email. Select to Speak is the easiest place to start; TalkBack is there if your sight changes more.

CHAPTER 13

Camera Magnifiers on Android

Just like the iPhone, an Android phone can use its camera as a lighted magnifying glass for labels, menus and mail. Which app you use depends on your phone.

Pixel phones: the Magnifier app

Google makes a free **Magnifier** app for Pixel phones. Google says it works on Pixel 5 and later (not the Pixel Tablet), and you can download it from the Google Play Store if it isn't already installed.

1. Open **Magnifier** and point the camera at what you want to read.
2. Zoom with the **+** and **-** buttons or by pinching.
3. If it's dim, look for the light button; the app also offers color filters for higher contrast.
4. Tap to take a still picture so you can lower the phone and study it.
5. Use **search** to type or say a word — for example on a long menu — and the app highlights and zooms to where that word appears.

> TIP
> **Open it with a double-tap on the back**
> On many Pixels you can set **Quick Tap** so a double-tap on the back of the phone opens Magnifier. Search Settings for **Quick Tap**.

Samsung Galaxy: Magnifier

Samsung includes a camera **Magnifier** among its vision enhancements. Search Settings for **Magnifier** and turn it on; you can add a shortcut so it's quick to open. It works the same way: point, zoom, add light, freeze the picture.

Any Android: Google Lookout

Lookout is a free Google app for people who are blind or have low vision. Instead of enlarging, it *speaks* what the camera sees. Google describes these modes:

Mode	What it does
Text	Reads short text aloud as you point the camera — a sign, a label, an envelope.

Mode	What it does
Documents	Guides you to fit a whole page in view, then reads the full page.
Food labels	Recognizes packaged foods by their label or barcode (in some countries).
Currency	Reads one paper bill at a time — U.S. dollars, euros or Indian rupees. It doesn't recognize coins.
Images	Describes a photo you take or share with it.
Explore	Describes objects and text around you. Google calls this mode less accurate than the others.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Reading your own mail, checking which can is soup and which is beans, telling a five-dollar bill from a twenty — the everyday independence that's easy to miss until it's gone.

HEADS UP

Double-check what matters

Reading apps are very good but not perfect. For medicine doses, bills and anything important, confirm with a second method — the Magnifier, a pharmacist, or a trusted person.

PART 4

Your Computer

Windows 11 and the Mac both have bigger text, a screen magnifier, high-contrast colors and a built-in screen reader. Here's how to find each one, with the keyboard shortcuts worth knowing.

CHAPTER 14

Windows 11: Bigger Text, Magnifier & Narrator

A computer's big screen is already a gift for tired eyes. Windows 11 can make it kinder still. All of these settings live in one place: **Settings** > **Accessibility**. The fastest way there is to hold the **Windows key** (the key with the four-pane window on it) and tap **U**.

Make just the text bigger

1. Press **Windows key + U**, or click **Start** > **Settings** > **Accessibility**.
2. Click **Text size**.
3. Drag the **Text size** slider to the right until the sample text is comfortable.
4. Click **Apply**. The screen goes blank for a moment while Windows makes the change.

Make everything bigger: scale

1. Open **Settings** > **System** > **Display**.
2. Under **Scale & layout**, open the **Scale** list and pick a larger percentage, such as 125% or 150%.

> TIP
>
> **A bigger, easier-to-find mouse pointer**
>
> In **Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Mouse pointer and touch**, you can make the pointer much larger and give it a bright color. It's one of the most-appreciated small changes on a computer.

Magnifier: a magnifying glass for the screen

To do this	Press
Turn Magnifier on / zoom in	**Windows key + plus sign (+)**
Zoom out	**Windows key + minus sign (-)**
Turn Magnifier off	**Windows key + Esc**

Once Magnifier is on, move the mouse and the enlarged view follows it. A small toolbar lets you choose a **full-screen** view, a **lens** that follows the pointer, or a **docked** strip at the top. Magnifier can also read text aloud — Microsoft calls this **Magnifier reading**.

TIP

Just one web page too small?

In Microsoft Edge, Chrome or any web browser, hold **Ctrl** and tap **+** to enlarge the page, **Ctrl** and **-** to shrink it, and **Ctrl** and **0** (zero) to put it back to normal. Edge can also read a page aloud: right-click the page and choose **Read aloud**.

Contrast themes and color filters

Settings > **Accessibility** > **Contrast themes** offers high-contrast color schemes, such as bright text on a solid black background. Pick one and click **Apply**. **Color filters**, in the same Accessibility area, can turn the screen grayscale or adjust colors for color blindness. And **Settings** > **Personalization** > **Colors** lets you choose **Dark** mode.

Narrator: the Windows screen reader

1. Press **Windows key + Ctrl + Enter**. Narrator starts speaking.
2. Press the same three keys again to turn it off.
3. To change Narrator's voice and speed, press **Windows key + Ctrl + N** to open Narrator settings.

GOOD TO KNOW

Narrator talks a lot — on purpose

Narrator reads every menu and button, because it's built so someone who can't see the screen at all can use the computer. For simply listening to an article, Edge's Read aloud is gentler. Microsoft publishes a free, complete Narrator guide on its support website.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Email, online banking, the news and video calls with family all become comfortable on a big screen, without leaning in or squinting.

CHAPTER 15

Mac: Bigger Text, Zoom, Hover Text & Magnifier

On a Mac, the vision settings are in **System Settings** > **Accessibility**. Open System Settings from the **Apple menu** (the apple in the top-left corner of the screen).

Bigger text

1. Choose **Apple menu** > **System Settings**, then click **Accessibility** in the sidebar.
2. Click **Display**.
3. Click **Text size** and move the slider. Apple says this enlarges text across many apps, plus text and icons on the desktop and in sidebars.

To make *everything* on the screen bigger, open **System Settings** > **Displays** and choose a setting toward **Larger Text**. In Safari, **Command** and **+** enlarges just the web page.

Zoom: magnify the whole screen

1. Open **System Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Zoom**.
2. Turn on **Use keyboard shortcuts to zoom**. Then **Option-Command-8** turns zoom on or off, **Option-Command-equal sign** zooms in, and **Option-Command-minus sign** zooms out.
3. Or turn on **Use scroll gesture with modifier keys to zoom**, then hold **Control** and scroll (or slide two fingers on the trackpad) to zoom in and out.
4. Choose whether zoom fills the whole screen or works as a lens over part of it.

Hover Text: a big pop-up of whatever you point at

1. In **System Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Zoom**, scroll to **Hover Text** and turn it on.
2. Point at any text with the mouse, then press and hold the **Command** key. A large, clear copy of the text appears in a window.
3. **Hover Typing**, nearby, shows a big copy of whatever you're typing in a text box. Press **Esc** to hide it for a moment.

Contrast, colors and the pointer

In **Accessibility** > **Display** you'll also find **Increase contrast**, **Reduce transparency**, color filters, invert colors, and pointer settings to make the pointer bigger. **Appearance** in System Settings switches the Mac to **Dark** mode.

Magnifier for Mac

With **macOS Tahoe 26** and later, the Mac has its own **Magnifier** app, much like the iPhone's. It can use the Mac's camera, a connected USB camera, or your iPhone as a camera, to enlarge a document on the desk or a whiteboard across the room. It can also reformat captured text to make it easier to read, and read it aloud.

1. Open **Finder** > **Applications** > **Utilities** > **Magnifier**, or press **Command-Space bar**, type **Magnifier**, and press Return.
2. To use a different camera, choose it from the **Camera** menu.
3. Zoom and adjust the picture until the print is easy to read.

VoiceOver on the Mac

The Mac's screen reader is also called **VoiceOver**. Turn it on or off in **System Settings** > **Accessibility** > **VoiceOver**, or by pressing **Command-F5** (on some keyboards, hold the Touch ID button and press it three times quickly). The first time, a short welcome offers a tutorial — it's a good one.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Your Mac becomes a reading machine: big, clear text on a large screen, a magnifier for paper on the desk, and a voice to read to you when your eyes are tired.

PART 5

Apps That See for You

Free apps that read printed text aloud, describe what's in front of you, or connect you by video with a sighted volunteer — and how to use them safely.

CHAPTER 16

Be My Eyes & Be My AI

Be My Eyes is a free app that connects people who are blind or have low vision with sighted volunteers through a live video call. You point your phone's camera at something — a thermostat, a can label, a form — and a volunteer tells you what they see. The app also includes **Be My AI**, an artificial-intelligence helper that describes a photo you take, any time of day.

What it costs and where it runs

- **Free** for the people who use it and for volunteers, according to Be My Eyes.
- Available for **iPhone** and **Android**, and Be My Eyes offers a free desktop app for **Windows**.
- Be My Eyes also works on **Meta AI glasses** (Ray-Ban and Oakley models) for hands-free volunteer calls.

Getting started

1. Install **Be My Eyes** from the App Store (iPhone) or Google Play (Android).
2. Open it and choose that you need visual assistance (not that you're volunteering).
3. Create a free account with your email, or sign in with Apple or Google, and allow the camera and microphone when asked.
4. To talk to a person, tap **Call a volunteer**. To use the AI, open **Be My AI** and take a picture.

Be My AI: ask about a picture

Take a photo of something — a letter, a menu, a shirt — and Be My AI describes it in detail. You can then ask follow-up questions by typing or speaking: "What's the total due?" or "What color is the tie?" It's available around the clock and doesn't involve another person.

Calling a volunteer

When you call, the app connects you with an available volunteer who speaks your language. They see through your phone's back camera and talk you through it: "Tilt it up a little — there, the expiration date says..." Volunteers are ordinary people who've signed up to help, and you can end the call any time.

SCAM ALERT

Never show a stranger your card numbers or passwords

Volunteers are generally kind and helpful — but they're strangers. Don't point the camera at your credit card, bank statements, Social Security card, checks or passwords during a volunteer call. For private papers, use Be My AI, the Magnifier, or a family member you trust. And no legitimate helper will ever ask you to buy gift cards or send money.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Help is in your pocket the moment you need a pair of eyes — reading the oven dial, matching socks, checking a package — without waiting for a visit.

CHAPTER 17

Seeing AI, Lookout & Other Reading Apps

A few other free apps use the camera to read and describe the world. They overlap with each other, so you don't need them all. Try one, and keep the one that feels easiest.

Microsoft Seeing AI (iPhone and Android)

Seeing AI is a free Microsoft app for iPhone and Android. It's organized into **channels** you swipe between at the bottom of the screen:

Channel	What it does
Short Text	Speaks text as soon as it appears in front of the camera — great for envelopes and labels.
Documents	Talks you through lining up a full page, then reads it aloud. Microsoft says you can then ask questions about the document.
Scene	Describes what's in a photo; tap for a richer description.
Currency	Identifies paper money, including U.S. dollars.

Google Lookout (Android)

Covered in Chapter 13: free, Android only, with Text, Documents, Food labels, Currency, Images and Explore modes.

Built into your phone already

- **iPhone Magnifier's Detection Mode** reads text and describes scenes (Chapter 7).
- **Android's Select to Speak** can read text through the camera (Chapter 12).
- Your phone's **camera app** often recognizes text: on an iPhone, point the camera at printed words and tap the text button that appears to select or copy them.

Which should I try first?

If you have…	Try first	Then maybe
An iPhone	Magnifier (built in)	Be My Eyes, Seeing AI
A Pixel or other Android	Magnifier or Lookout	Be My Eyes, Seeing AI
A Samsung Galaxy	Samsung's Magnifier	Lookout, Be My Eyes, Seeing AI
A Windows computer	Windows Magnifier	Be My Eyes desktop app

GOOD TO KNOW

Other apps you may hear about

There are other reading apps and smart-glasses products for people with low vision, some of them paid. Features and prices change often, so before paying for one, ask a low-vision specialist or vision rehabilitation program (Chapter 22) whether it fits your needs, and look for a free trial.

CHAPTER 18

Using Seeing Apps Safely & Wisely

These apps are a wonderful help, and a little good sense keeps them that way. Here are the habits worth keeping.

AI can be wrong — double-check what matters

- Artificial intelligence sometimes misreads numbers or guesses. For **medicine** names and doses, use a second method: the Magnifier, the pharmacy's large-print label, or ask your pharmacist.
- For **money matters** — a bill's amount, a check, a bank letter — confirm with a trusted person or by calling the company at the number on your card or statement.
- Never rely on an app to tell you when it's safe to cross a street.

Protect your privacy

- Photos you take with AI apps are sent over the internet to be described. Read the app's privacy information if that matters to you, and avoid photographing other people's private papers.
- Keep card numbers, passwords, account numbers and your Medicare or Social Security card out of volunteer video calls.
- Download apps only from the App Store or Google Play — never from a link in a text or email.

SCAM ALERT

Watch out for "free device" and fake-support calls

Be wary of calls, ads or mailers offering a "free" magnifier or vision device if you'll just give your Medicare or Social Security number. That's a common way scammers get your information. Likewise, no one from Apple, Google, Microsoft or Be My Eyes will call you out of the blue to "fix" your phone's settings. Hang up, and call someone you trust.

TIP

Let family help — on your terms

Video-calling a family member (FaceTime, WhatsApp, Google Meet) and pointing the camera at the mail works just as well as any app — and they'll probably enjoy being asked.

PART 6

Beyond the Phone

Video magnifiers for reading at the table, getting back to books with large print, e-readers and free talking books, and simple helpers around the house — including good lighting.

CHAPTER 19

Video Magnifiers & Handheld Magnifiers

A phone magnifier is perfect for a quick look. But if you want to read the mail, a recipe or a whole letter comfortably, sitting down, a dedicated **video magnifier** may serve you better. You may also hear them called **CCTVs** (from "closed-circuit television") or **electronic magnifiers**.

The main kinds

Kind	What it is
Desktop video magnifier	A camera on a stand above a sliding tray, with a large screen on top. Slide your mail or book under the camera and read it big on the screen. Some can also write: you can sign a check or fill in a form while watching your hand on the screen.
Portable / handheld electronic magnifier	A small screen with a camera on the back, like a chunky phone, made only for magnifying. Simple buttons, big zoom, high-contrast colors. Good for the grocery store and the pharmacy.
Reading machines (text-to-speech)	A camera you set a page under; it reads the page aloud in a clear voice. Helpful when magnifying is no longer enough.
Optical magnifiers	Traditional lighted hand and stand magnifiers. No batteries to learn — still very useful, especially when prescribed for your eyes.

What to look for

- **Screen size** — bigger screens show more words at once at high zoom.
- **Simple, large, well-spaced buttons** you can find by touch.
- **High-contrast color modes** — white or yellow on black is easier for many eyes than black on white.
- **Steady picture** with no glare from glossy paper.
- **Speech**, if you'd like it to read aloud as well as magnify.
- **A real demonstration** before you buy, ideally with your own mail and your own glasses.

What they cost

Prices vary a great deal by size and features. As a general guide, handheld electronic magnifiers typically cost a few hundred dollars, and desktop video magnifiers usually run well over a thousand. Models that also read aloud cost more. Check current prices directly with sellers, and ask about return policies and warranties.

TIP

Try before you buy — and ask about help paying

A low-vision clinic or vision rehabilitation program (Chapter 22) can often let you try several models and may know of programs that help with the cost. Your phone's free Magnifier is a good way to learn which zoom level and colors suit you before you spend anything.

SCAM ALERT

Be wary of pressure sales

Be cautious of anyone who calls unasked, insists on a same-day decision, or says insurance or Medicare will "definitely" pay if you hand over your Medicare number. Get a written price, check coverage yourself, and take your time.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Sitting at your own table, reading your own letters, writing your own checks and enjoying a recipe card again — at your pace, in your own home.

CHAPTER 20

Reading Books Again: E-Readers, Libby & Talking Books

If reading books has become a strain, don't give up on books — change how they reach you. Larger type, a glowing screen, or a good narrator can bring back the pleasure.

E-readers and tablets: any book in large print

On a Kindle, an iPad, or an Android tablet, *every* book can be large print. You choose the size of the letters, the typeface, the spacing and often the background color.

- **Kindle e-readers:** while reading, tap near the top of the screen and tap **Aa** to change the font size, typeface and boldness.
- **Apple Books (iPhone, iPad):** while reading, tap the screen, then the menu button, and choose the themes and settings option to change text size and background.
- **A tablet** gives you a bigger page than a phone, and a bigger page means fewer page turns at a large size.

TIP

White letters on a black page

Most reading apps offer a dark or black page theme. For people bothered by glare, light text on a dark page can be far more comfortable, especially in the evening.

Libby: free e-books and audiobooks from your library

With a library card, the free **Libby** app lets you borrow e-books and audiobooks from your public library on a phone or tablet. E-books can be set to large text, and audiobooks are read by professional narrators. Your local library's staff are usually glad to help you set it up.

Talking Books from the Library of Congress (NLS)

The **National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled** (NLS), part of the Library of Congress, runs a free library of audiobooks, magazines and braille for people who can't read regular print because of low vision, blindness, or a physical disability. Service is through a network of cooperating libraries across the country.

- **Free player on loan.** Eligible patrons can get an NLS digital talking-book player, with simple buttons, on loan at no charge from their network library.

- **BARD and the BARD Mobile app.** Enrolled patrons can download books with the free BARD Mobile app on a phone or tablet, once their network library sets up a BARD account.
- **Smart speakers.** NLS also describes a **My Talking Books** skill for listening on smart speakers.
- **Braille** books and magazines are also available, including through BARD Mobile with a refreshable braille display.

1. Visit **loc.gov/nls** or call NLS at **1-888-657-7323** (1-888-NLS-READ) to be connected with the network library that serves Ohio.
2. Fill out the application. It asks someone to confirm that you can't read regular print — the network library will tell you who can sign it.
3. Once you're enrolled, ask for a player, a BARD account, or both.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this does for you

Novels, history, westerns, mysteries and magazines — read aloud by good narrators, delivered free. For many people this is the single best answer to "I miss reading."

GOOD TO KNOW

Audiobooks from stores, too

Paid services such as Audible sell audiobooks, and many smart speakers can play them. Libby and NLS are free, so it's worth trying them first.

CHAPTER 21

Smart Speakers, Simpler Phones & Around the House

Some of the most helpful vision tech isn't on a screen at all. A voice assistant answers questions out loud; a simpler phone has bigger buttons; and good light makes everything easier.

Smart speakers: ask out loud

An Amazon Echo (Alexa), a Google Nest speaker (Google Assistant) or an Apple HomePod (Siri) answers questions by voice, so there's nothing to read. Popular uses for people with low vision:

- "What time is it?" "What's the weather today?" "What's on my calendar?"
- "Set a timer for 20 minutes" for the oven, and "Remind me to take my pills at 8 a.m."
- "Call my daughter" or a hands-free drop-in from family (depending on the speaker).
- News, radio stations, music, audiobooks and NLS talking books (Chapter 20).
- Turning lights on and off by voice with smart bulbs or plugs.

GOOD TO KNOW

Our other guides go deeper

Bill's Home Tech has full guides to Alexa and Echo, Google Nest, smart lights and smart plugs. If a speaker sounds helpful, those walk you through setting one up.

A simpler phone, if a smartphone is too much

If a smartphone's screen has become frustrating even with every setting turned up, a simpler phone with large physical buttons, a loud speaker and a big display may suit you better. Our **Simple Phones for Seniors** guide compares the choices. Before switching, though, try the settings in this guide — and Samsung's Easy mode or a larger phone — because a smartphone's Magnifier and reading voice are hard to give up.

Light: the cheapest vision aid there is

- Put a bright, adjustable lamp **beside** or **behind** you, aimed at what you're reading — not shining into your eyes.
- Brighter, even light in hallways, stairs and the kitchen; consider plug-in night-lights for the path to the bathroom.
- Cut glare: lamp shades, curtains or blinds on bright windows, and matte rather than glossy surfaces where you can.
- Ask your eye doctor or low-vision specialist which kind and color of light is best for your eyes.

Simple contrast tricks

- A bright strip of tape on the edge of each stair step.
- Dark cups for milk, light cups for coffee; a dark cutting board for onions, a light one for meat.
- Bump dots (small raised stickers) on the microwave, washer and thermostat buttons you use most.
- Write notes with a thick black marker on white or yellow paper.
- Talking or large-display clocks, watches and kitchen scales.

STAY SAFE

Falls matter more than gadgets

Changing eyesight raises the risk of falls. Good lighting, clear walkways and contrast on steps are worth more than any app. Our **Medical Alert & Fall Detection** guide covers help buttons and watches that can call for help if you do fall.

PART 7

Getting Help & Your Cheat-Sheet

Who can help beyond this guide, when a hand from Bill is worth it, and a one-page summary to keep by your favorite chair.

CHAPTER 22

Where to Get Help

You don't have to figure out low vision alone. Several kinds of help exist, and several are free. Here's who does what.

Who	How they help
Your eye doctor	Start here, and go right away for any sudden change. An ophthalmologist or optometrist diagnoses what's happening and treats what can be treated.
A low-vision specialist	An eye-care professional (often an optometrist) who focuses on making the most of remaining vision. They can prescribe magnifiers and special glasses and advise on lighting. Ask your eye doctor for a referral.
Vision rehabilitation services	Teachers and therapists who show you how to do everyday tasks with low vision — cooking, reading, getting around safely, and using phones, computers and screen readers.
Opportunities for Ohioans with Disabilities (OOD)	Ohio's state vocational rehabilitation agency, which offers services for Ohioans who are blind or visually impaired. Contact OOD to ask what's available for you.
NLS talking books	Free audiobooks, players and braille (Chapter 20). loc.gov/nls or 1-888-657-7323.
Your public library	Large-print books, Libby, and often help with devices and apps.
Apple, Google and Microsoft	Each has a free accessibility help line or support page for its products' vision features.

TIP

Bring your phone to the appointment

When you see a low-vision specialist or a rehabilitation teacher, bring your phone or tablet. They can help you set the zoom and colors that match what they've prescribed, and you'll leave with a device that's tuned to your eyes.

GOOD TO KNOW

For families helping from a distance

If you're helping a parent, you can set many of these features up together over a video call, or ask for help with remote screen sharing. Our **Helping a Parent from Afar** guide explains how.

STAY SAFE

When to call a doctor right away

Sudden loss of vision, a curtain or shadow over part of your sight, many new floaters or flashes of light, or new eye pain are reasons to call your eye doctor immediately or seek emergency care. Don't wait to try a gadget first.

CHAPTER 23

When to Call Bill

I've written this guide so you can handle most of these settings yourself. But being helpful also means being honest about when a hand saves you time and frustration. Here's my straight advice.

Times a call is well worth it

- **A full comfort setup** — text size, bold, contrast, Magnifier shortcut and a reading voice, all tuned to your eyes on your phone, tablet and computer.
- **Choosing and installing a seeing app** like Be My Eyes or Seeing AI, and a practice run together.
- **Setting up a smart speaker** for time, weather, reminders, calls and talking books.
- **Something changed and you can't change it back** — the screen is huge, the colors are strange, or the phone won't stop talking.
- **Getting ready for a screen reader**, learning a few VoiceOver or TalkBack steps while you can still see the screen.
- **Families far away** who'd like someone local to visit and set things up.

What working with me is like

I come to your home here in Portage County, or help remotely, and I work at your pace — no rushing, no talking down. I explain each change in plain words, try it with you, and only keep what you like. I'll always tell you honestly when a gadget isn't worth the money. That's been my way through more than 30 years of professional experience.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042** or book a time at **billshometech.com/book**. My help is **$49 remote · $99 in your home**. This guide is free to read and share.

GOOD TO KNOW

You may meet Sophie

When you call or visit billshometech.com, you may be greeted by **Sophie**, my AI receptionist. She can answer quick questions and help you book a time with me. The actual help always comes from me.

Thank you for letting me help. Take your time, try one setting at a time, and remember I'm only a phone call away.

— Bill

CHAPTER 24

Your Low-Vision Tech Cheat-Sheet

Print this page and keep it by your favorite chair. The whole guide, boiled down.

Where the settings live

Device	Go here
iPhone / iPad	**Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display & Text Size**, **Zoom**, **Read & Speak**, **Accessibility Shortcut**
Android (Pixel and others)	**Settings** > search **Font size**, **Display size**; **Accessibility** > **Magnification**, **Select to Speak**
Samsung Galaxy	**Settings** > **Display** > **Font size and style**; **Accessibility** > **Vision enhancements**
Windows 11	**Windows key + U** > **Text size**; Magnifier: **Windows key + plus** / **minus** / **Esc**
Mac	**System Settings** > **Accessibility** > **Display**, **Zoom** (Hover Text)

Quick moves

To do this	Do this
Magnify with the camera (iPhone)	Triple-click the side button (after setting the Accessibility Shortcut).
Read the page aloud (iPhone)	Swipe down with two fingers from the top (Speak Screen on).
Read what I tap (Android)	Two-finger swipe up, then tap the text (Select to Speak on).
Screen stuck huge (iPhone)	Double-tap with three fingers.
Phone won't stop talking	"Siri, turn off VoiceOver" or "Hey Google, turn off TalkBack."
Bigger web page (computer)	Hold **Ctrl** (Windows) or **Command** (Mac) and tap **+**.

Write it down once

Keep handy	
My text size setting	_____
My Accessibility Shortcut / magnifier shortcut	_____
Seeing app I use	_____
Eye doctor / low-vision specialist	_____
NLS / library card number	_____
A family member who helps	_____

When something's wrong, in order

1. Screen huge? Use your zoom shortcut again (three-finger double-tap on iPhone).
2. Colors strange? Turn off Invert or Color Filters in the Accessibility settings.
3. Phone talking and taps not working? Ask Siri or Google to turn off VoiceOver or TalkBack.
4. Still stuck? Restart the phone or computer.
5. Call Bill at (330) 200-8042.

STAY SAFE

Your eyes come first

Any sudden change in your vision: call your eye doctor right away. Technology is a helper; your eye doctor is the expert.