

iOS & iPad OS Version 15 and above Gesture Guide Sheet

Introduction

iOS and iPad OS have built into them their own text to speech screen reader and other accessibility options that make it easier for people who are blind and have low vision to access the operating system and apps.

This document discusses Apple VoiceOver and the common gestures that can be used with it. This means that performing physical gestures on the screen of your device will make Apple VoiceOver perform certain functions and speak certain elements on the screen. The physical gestures in this document below will work on both an iPhone and iPad unless otherwise specified.

Apple VoiceOver is a text to speech screen reader which also offers Braille support to a connected Braille display. Both iOS and iPad OS also allow some functionality from a connected keyboard. This will be discussed in another document.

The first thing to note is that Apple VoiceOver has a cursor which appears as a square or rectangular box around what is spoken. This also denotes where the focus is at any given time.

The focus is the place where the computer/screen reader has its attention.

The critical concept of focus should be understood by anyone using any screen reader on any device. Without knowing where the focus is at any given time, it will make it hard to use the device with a screen reader like Apple VoiceOver.

Some common gestures

These gestures should be practiced on the Home Screen before trying them out in an application. Once you have mastered some of these gestures, go ahead and try them in an app.

Single Finger Gestures

- One finger single tap; Speak Item
- One finger double tap; activate focused item
- One finger triple tap; perform long press
- One finger swipe right; move to the next item
- One finger quadruple tap; secondary activate focused item
- One finger left; move to the previous item
- One finger drag; move focus as you drag
- One finger swipe up; move between options in the actions rotor
- One finger swipe down; move between options in the actions rotor
- One finger double tap and hold; bring up a context menu for current item
- One finger double tap, then hold and drag; edit/move an item on the Home Screen.

Two Finger Gestures

- Two finger swipe down; start reading down the screen from the current location. This is often called the "say all" gesture and it will also move the VoiceOver Cursor) down the screen as it speaks
- Two finger double tap; Magic Tap, this may be used to answer an incoming voice or FaceTime call, hang-up on an existing voice or FaceTime call or start/end dictation if you are focused in an edit field or continue playing music or media
- Two finger triple tap; show the item chooser
- Two finger quadruple tap; open quick settings, new to iOS15.

Three Finger Gestures

- Three finger single tap; read item summary
- Three finger double tap; toggle mute, Note: this mutes speech but doesn't turn off Apple VoiceOver
- Three finger triple tap; toggles the screen curtain on and off
- Three finger quadruple tap; copies speech to clipboard.

Four finger Gestures

- Four finger single tap; unassigned, however may be used for a custom command
- Four finger double tap; Start Apple VoiceOver help
- Four finger triple tap; people detection
- Four finger quadruple tap; unassigned, however may be used for a custom command.

The Rotor

The Rotor provides quick and easy access to many settings that can take time to find. These may include speech rate, volume, navigate by character and many more. The items found on the rotor can be changed from the VoiceOver settings under Accessibility. The rotor can be tricky for new users to understand but here are the common gestures that will move you between items in the Rotor. Find the option below that best suits you.

Note: When the rotor is resting on an item, a single finger swipe up or down will change an option/value.

1. Position your thumb and index finger as if they are turning an invisible knob and twist them around in a circle on the screen, this will move you between items in the rotor.
2. Position your left thumb on the screen near the edge and move your right index finger around it in an arch to move between items in the rotor.
3. Lay your device on a flat surface and place two index fingers as if they were at 9 o'clock and 3 o'clock and twist them around in a circle until they are at 12 o'clock and 6 o'clock to change items, this method can be very fast.

Scrub Gesture

Two finger scrub; Escape or moves you back from one screen to the previous screen

Back Tap Gestures, (iPhone only)

Single finger double tap the back of your iPhone; bring up the Notification Centre.

Single finger triple tap the back of your iPhone – bring up the Control Centre.

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