Dragon Naturally Speaking Guide

Speech-recognition software

Dragon Naturally Speaking is a speech-recognition programme that allows you to enter text into programmes such as Microsoft Word by speaking into a microphone attached to the PC. This can be very useful if for any reason you find it easier to speak rather than use a keyboard and / or mouse. For example people who have developed RSI may choose to use Dragon as an alternative to using the keyboard. It can also be very useful for people with Dyslexia.

Although Dragon is often used to dictate text there are other uses for the programme. You can use Dragon for email and to search the Internet. In this help sheet we will look at the process of getting started in Dragon, training Dragon to recognise your voice and accessing some of the training material available within the programme.

Opening Dragon Naturally Speaking

1. To open Dragon Naturally Speaking double-click on the Dragon Naturally Speaking icon on the desktop on the Start menu.

2. Remember that you need a headset (microphone and headphones) to use this programme. There are headsets attached to PCs in the Assistive Technology Rooms (ATR) in the Perry library.

3. The programme opens. Dragon can run in ‘floating mode’, in a toolbar that is free floating in the middle of the screen. The toolbar is known as the DragonBar.

4. The Dragon Bar can be dragged to a convenient location or it can be ‘docked’ to the top or bottom of the screen.
Creating your Profile

1. When the programme opens you will usually see a list of users in the **Open User Profile** box. These are people who have already used the Dragon software on this computer. You will need to create your own **profile**. Click on **New** to start creating your own profile.

![Open User Profile dialog box]

2. The **Profile Creation wizard** will open. Click on **Next** to begin.

3. The **Profile Creation wizard** will now guide you through a series of steps. Fill in the fields as required. You will need to name your profile, select your **age group**, **region** (to determine spelling and word usage) and **accent**.
4. You will need to select the **speech device** you are using, usually the **USB headset** that comes with the latest version of Dragon or a Mic-in jack.

**Choose a speech device**

Most people use Dragon by speaking directly to their computer with a **microphone**. Speaking directly with a microphone is the recommended way to start. You can also record your voice with a **recorded audio device** and transfer the files to your computer so Dragon can transcribe them. You can **add another source** if you want to use an additional device.

More information about the Dragon Remote Microphone Application is available in Help.

5. At the end of this process you will be asked to confirm your settings and create your profile.

### Your profile is being created

Creating Profile for: A Student

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### Checking your Microphone

1. Once the profile has been created you will be advised about how best to **position your microphone** in order to get the best use of the programme.

2. **Adjust the microphone** as suggested in this box.

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### Position your microphone properly

Correct positioning of your microphone is one of the most important factors in receiving good dictation. The microphone should be about an inch away from your mouth, slanted to one side. The listening side (commonly the dot) should be facing your mouth. Use the pictures below as a guideline.
3. You will also be asked to read some text aloud in order to check the **volume setting** and **quality** of your microphone equipment. Read the texts aloud to check that the volume is adjusted correctly and that the audio input from your microphone is of sufficient quality.

For Dragon to recognize your voice accurately, it needs to check the quality of your audio system and your microphone. Speak into the microphone as clearly and naturally as you did in the previous step. While reading this, Dragon is listening to you and examining the quality of your audio. Once Dragon has enough information, you will hear a beep to signal that the process is complete. This should take about fifteen seconds. If you do not hear the beep, start reading again from the beginning until you do.

4. When the programme is satisfied that your equipment is working correctly it will beep to signal you. These checks do not take very long.

5. You are now ready to begin the **General Training** process. For this you will read some text aloud in order to train Dragon to get used to your voice. Click **Next** to continue.
1. The **General Training** process is for the Dragon software to get used to your voice. You will read aloud some text so that the programme can get used to the way you speak and save these settings in your user profile.

2. For General Training you will be asked to choose a passage of text to read aloud. There are a number of interesting passages you can read but the first one in the list ‘**What to Expect from Speech Recognition**’ is helpful as it includes lots of advice about using Dragon.

3. Read the text through as it appears onscreen. As you read the text aloud and as the programme detects your voice, the text onscreen will go from black to grey and the yellow arrow indicating where you should read will move through the text.
4. If while you are reading, the programme does not detect your voice at times then the yellow arrow will stay in the same place. If this happens try reading the piece of text again as clearly as you can. Try speaking in phrases rather than repeating words. For example say 'When you have finished reading' rather than 'When...When...When'. If you get stuck on one page you can click on the Skip button to go to the next screen or Redo to start again.

5. As you read, the progress meter underneath the text will show you how far you have progressed. General training usually takes about 10 to 15 minutes. Please do not be discouraged if you get stuck or if it feels very unusual. If this is the first time you have used the software it will feel a little strange but with practise it becomes more natural.

6. When you have completed this training the box above will appear. Click on OK. You will then be asked to wait while your user profile is adapted.

7. You will then see a series of dialogue boxes asking you to let Dragon search your Documents and email to increase the accuracy of your profile and also to run these checks regularly. **Click Next to skip these options.** Also select 'Don’t run Data Collection'. You should only select these options if using a personal copy of the Dragon software on your own computer.
Congratulations, your profile is ready for use!

As you use Dragon, you can improve accuracy in several ways, including personalizing the vocabulary to prevent recognition errors.

We encourage you to explore the DragonBar’s Help menu, as well as Dragon’s many options.

For important details including the automatic Dictation Box option, saying "click" before menus and buttons, and Smart Format Rules, please see:  
What’s new in Dragon 12?

8. When you have completed these steps your profile will be ready for use and you will see the screen above. You will be offered the chance to take the Tutorial which is recommended if you are a first-time user. Click Finish to close the Wizard and open the Tutorial.
1. There are different sections to the Dragon Interactive Tutorial covering **Basics**, **Dictation**, **Correction Menu**, **Spelling Window**, **Editing** and **Learning More**. Click on any of the buttons on the bottom of the window to open these sections.

**Turning on the microphone**

First things first: in order for Dragon to listen, its microphone must be on.

One way to turn on Dragon's microphone is to click its button in the DragonBar.

Once the microphone is on, its icon will be vertical. To turn the microphone off, click its icon or say "microphone off".

Time for you to practice: click the microphone button shown here, notice how it changes, then click it again.

Note: when you don't want Dragon to listen, you can say "go to sleep" or "stop listening".

**The Correction Menu**

Occasionally, Dragon will write a word or phrase differently from what you expected. Other times, you will change your mind about how you want to write something. This lesson gives an example of how you can address this.

Saying "Correct" followed by the word(s) to replace opens the Correction Menu.

The menu lists text alternatives, as well as some commands you may want to say.
2. For advice about dictating text in Dragon you can see the section on Dictating (below). Remember that you can access the tutorial at any time from the Help menu. You can also use the Performance Assistant from the Help menu if you wish to improve the results you are getting from the programme.

Good dictation habits
Speak naturally but clearly. Aim for consistent volume and speed. Aim to say full phrases rather than individual words. First, concentrate on getting your ideas out. Then, review your text and make changes as needed. To begin, click the microphone button.
Say: "With practice"

Dictating text into Microsoft Word

1. To begin dictating text your microphone needs to be turned on. To turn the microphone on, click on the red microphone icon in the DragonBar. The icon will change to green and show as ready for you to speak. You can also turn the Microphone on using its hotkey (the + key on the numeric keypad). You cannot turn the microphone on with a voice command.

2. If for some reason the programme is not ready for you to dictate text the Dragon Bar will show the message ‘User profile is not ready for dictation’ instead of Normal mode as below with the microphone icon showing as green.

3. To begin dictating make sure that you have a document open, that the window is active and that the text insertion point is in the correct place.
As you begin to dictate in Dragon the words you speak into the microphone will appear in your document as below.

On the Dragon Sidebar you can see a list of sample voice commands which you can use when dictating. Different sets of commands are shown from the different tabs on the Sidebar. If the Sidebar is not showing you can select it from the Help menu.

For example to create a new paragraph, say the words ‘New Paragraph’. This is the equivalent in Dragon of hitting the enter key on the keyboard. If the Sidebar is not showing select it from the Help Menu.

Another frequently used command is ‘Scratch That’ which deletes the last thing you said. ‘Scratch That’ is used quite frequently, especially when you are getting used to Dragon and when Dragon is getting used to you! You will need to be patient, especially at the beginning.
Audio options and saving your user profile

1. Dragon records your speech as you dictate text into a programme such as Word. From the Audio menu in Dragon you can select Playback to hear selected text played back to you from your own recorded dictation.

![Audio menu in Dragon with Playback and Read That options highlighted.](image)

2. You can also select Read That to hear selected text read back to you by the software. These options may be useful if you prefer to hear how text sounds rather than read it on screen.

3. The Read That and Playback options are available while the document is open. If you wish to have them available after you have closed the document you will need to save the Dragon Recorded Audio associated with the file. You will be asked if you want to do this when you close the file.

4. It is also possible to transcribe recorded text from the Tools Menu. This allows you to input text from a recorded sound file such as an MP3.

![Tools menu in Dragon with Transcribe Recording option highlighted.](image)

5. To transcribe text select Transcribe Recording from the Tools menu, browse to your audio file and then select the programme you would like to transcribe into. If you wish to transcribe into Word you can just click on an open Word document once you have selected the file.

6. If you have recorded your voice using a digital recording device you can input text using this option. However the results may not always be completely satisfactory. As always, be sure to proofread your work!
Copying your user profile

1. Every time you use Dragon the user profile which you created is updated as the programme learns more about your speech patterns. It is possible to backup or copy your profile onto a USB memory stick or other storage device. You can then open your profile on another PC that has the same version of Dragon installed. To copy your profile in this way go to the Profile menu and select Manage User Profiles. When the Manage User Profiles box opens, select your profile from the list of users. Click on Advanced, and then Export.

2. Select the drive you wish to save your files onto (such as a USB memory stick) and click OK. A folder containing your user profile will be copied on to the drive.

3. You will see a message saying the export of user profile has been completed successfully. When opening these files on a different machine to the one you trained on you will need to browse to your folder in the Open User Profile box.

4. Please note that this process can have varying results. If your profile does not open successfully you may need to take General training again. However it is advisable when using a public computer such as the ones in the Perry Library to export your files as a backup. At times these computers may need to undergo maintenance procedures which would involve the reinstallation of the programme. This would only be carried out if completely necessary but it would mean that saved Dragon files would be lost.

For further information and support contact Student IT Support:
Tel: 020 7815 6678
Email: llr-ithelpdesk@lsbu.ac.uk
Visit: 1 West, Perry Library