

Android

An Introduction to Live Transcribe

What is Live Transcribe?

Live Transcribe, by Google, is a smartphone app designed primarily for people who are deaf or who have severe hearing difficulties. It is used to transcribe spoken words, in real-time, into text. The app can also prove beneficial to people who have speech difficulties!

How does Live Transcribe Work?

The person with a hearing or speech difficulty installs the Live Transcribe app onto their smartphone. When they want to find out what someone is saying, they open the app and hold their smartphone close to the person who is speaking. Upon doing this, the spoken words are transcribed instantly into text and displayed on the screen. If the person with a hearing or speech difficulty wants to respond, they can do so by typing a message and showing this to the person they are communicating with.

Assumptions made in the creation of this document

Certain assumptions have been made during the creation of this document. They are as follows:

- The latest version of Live Transcribe has been installed onto your Android Smartphone. At the time of writing (09 June 2025), the latest version is 8.3.739810924.
- The version of Android installed on your Android Smartphone is 14 or later.
- Your Smartphone is connected to the internet.

Note 1: Live Transcribe is pre-installed on some Android smartphones. However, if it is not installed on your device, you can download it for free from the Google Play store.

Note 2: The instructions given in this document have been created using a Samsung Galaxy S21 Smartphone, running Android version 14. If you are using a non-Samsung device and/or a later version of Android, you may find some minor differences. However, it isn't anticipated that you will!

Setting Up Live Transcribe

The Live Transcribe app is installed as a service. This means that by default, there is no icon for it in the Apps screen. Therefore, in order to use Live Transcribe, you must first enable it via the Settings screen.

To set up Live Transcribe, follow these suggested steps:

1. From the Home Screen, activate the "Settings" icon. For reference, this icon has an associated graphic of a cog-wheel. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.

Note 3: If you do not have a Settings icon on your Home Screen, activate the Apps button and in the resulting screen, locate and activate the Settings icon.

2. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "Accessibility" button. This button also contains the text "Vision, Hearing, Dexterity". Upon doing this, the Accessibility screen will be displayed.
3. In the Accessibility screen, locate and activate the "Installed apps" button. Upon doing this, the Installed apps screen will be displayed. This screen contains a number of apps. One of these will be Live Transcribe!
4. Locate and activate the "Live Transcribe" button. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
5. At the top of the Live Transcribe screen, you will find the "Stop" button and beneath this, another button labelled "Open Live Transcribe". This button is used to turn the service on/off.

Activate the "Open Live Transcribe" button to open Live Transcribe! Upon doing this, a screen will be displayed which asks permission for Live Transcribe and Sound Notifications to record audio.

6. There are three options available. These are "While using the app", "Only this time" and "Don't allow". Activate the "While using the app" button. Upon doing this, a message will be displayed at the top of the screen stating that "you can now transcribe without an internet connection". Activate the "Dismiss" button, to close this message.
7. Activate the "Back" button, situated at the top left corner of the screen, until you are back in the Settings screen.
8. Finally, activate the Home button, situated at the centre of the Navigation bar, at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to your Home screen.

Note 4: Sometimes, the Navigation bar is hidden. If this is the case, perform a One Finger Swipe Up from the bottom of the screen to reveal it.

Making it Easy to Start Live Transcribe

The easiest way of starting Live Transcribe is to use the Google Assistant or Gemini. However, if you have speech difficulties, this might not be very easy. There is another way, which might suit you better. This is the Accessibility shortcut, which can be added as a button to the Navigation Bar, at the bottom of the screen.

To add the Accessibility button to the Navigation Bar, follow these suggested steps:

1. From the Home Screen, activate the "Settings" icon. For reference, this icon has an associated graphic of a cog-wheel. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.

Note 5: If you do not have a Settings icon on your Home Screen, activate the Apps button and in the resulting screen, locate and activate the Settings icon.

2. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "Accessibility" button. Upon doing this, the Accessibility screen will be displayed.
3. In the Accessibility screen, locate and activate the "Advanced settings" button. Upon doing this, the Advanced settings screen will be displayed.
4. In the Advanced settings screen, locate and activate the "Accessibility button" button. Upon doing this, the Accessibility button screen will be displayed.
5. In the Accessibility button screen, locate and activate the "Select actions" button. For reference, this button will also contain the name/s of the Accessibility features which have been assigned to the Accessibility button. Upon doing this, the Select actions screen will be displayed.
6. In the Select actions screen, you will find a long list of Accessibility features. Each feature has an associated tick box, which indicates whether the feature has been enabled. You will most likely find that none of these features are ticked.

7. Locate and activate the "Live Transcribe" button. Upon doing this, a tick will be placed alongside this option and an Accessibility button will appear at the right side of the Navigation Bar, at the bottom of the screen.
8. Activate the "Back" button, situated at the top left corner of the screen, until you are back in the Settings screen.
9. Finally, activate the Home button, situated at the centre of the Navigation bar, at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to your Home screen.

Turning speech into text

Before you can turn speech into text, you must first start Live Transcribe!

Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed. Alternatively, you can start Live Transcribe by invoking the Google Assistant or Gemini and saying "Open Live Transcribe".

Now, when somebody speaks, a transcription of what they said will be displayed instantly on the screen, in large print! When new speech is detected, this is automatically transcribed and displayed beneath the previous text. In the default font size, you will only be able to see in the region of 16 words at any one time. You will have to scroll the screen in order to see all of the transcribed text!

Situated at the upper right corner of the Live Transcribe screen, you will find a circular blue indicator. This shows how well Live Transcribe is picking up sound. If the outer blue circle is small, move nearer to the person whose speech you wish to capture.

At the bottom of the screen, just above the Navigation Bar, you will find the Live Transcribe toolbar. By default, this contains 3 buttons. From left to right these are "Settings" - represented by a picture of a cog-wheel, "Type-back" - represented by a picture of a keyboard and "Switch Language" - which contains the name of the current language in use. These will be discussed later in this document. It is also possible to add extra buttons to the toolbar to provide quick access to specific features!

Note 6: If the Live Transcribe toolbar is not visible, you can swipe up with two fingers from the bottom of the screen to reveal it.

Typing a Reply

For people who have speech difficulties, it is often easier to type a reply to the person they are communicating with!

To type a reply, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Type-back" button, situated to the right of the "Settings" button on the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, a virtual keyboard will be displayed.
2. Directly above the keyboard, you will find an edit box with the text "Type or reply here" inside it. Activate the edit box and then, using the virtual keyboard, type your reply.
3. When you have finished typing, tap the area of the screen that contains the transcribed text. Upon doing this, the keyboard will be hidden.

Pausing and Resuming Transcription

Live Transcribe allows you to pause transcription. The ability to do this is very useful, as it allows you to catch up on your reading, at a pace which is comfortable for you! When transcription is paused, Live Transcribe

carries on working in the background. When transcription is resumed, any words that were spoken whilst transcription was paused will be transcribed and instantly displayed on the screen!

To be able to pause and resume Live Transcription you will first need to add the Hold button to the Live Transcribe toolbar. To do this, follow these suggested steps.

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "More settings" button. Upon doing this, the More settings screen will be displayed.
4. In the More settings screen, locate and activate the "Advanced" button. For reference, this button also contains the text "Hide profanity, Show hold, Offline transcriptions". Upon doing this, the Advanced screen will be displayed.
5. In the Advanced screen, locate the "Show hold" button. For reference, this button also contains the text "Pause transcription so that you can catch up on your reading". At the right edge of this button, you will find a round switch which indicates whether or not Show hold is turned on/off. By default, it is off and the switch will be white in colour.
6. Activate the Show hold button to toggle the switch to the on setting. Upon doing this, it will turn light blue in colour.
7. Finally, activate the Android Back button, situated on the Navigation bar at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you

will be returned to the Live Transcribe screen. The Hold button will now be present, immediately to the left of the Switch Language button.

You can now activate the Hold transcription button to pause the transcription of speech. Upon doing this, the button changes to become the "Continue transcription" button. Activate this button to resume transcription of speech!

Changing the Size of Transcribed Text

It is possible to change the size of the transcribed text. To do this, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "More settings" button. Upon doing this, the More settings screen will be displayed.
4. In the More settings screen, locate and activate the "Text Size" button. Upon doing this, a screen will be displayed which contains a passage of text and beneath this, you will find a slider bar, which can be used to increase or decrease the text size. For reference, the slider has five positions- 0%, 25%, 50%, 75
5. Slide the slider to the desired position. When you have done this, activate the Android Back button to return to the Settings screen. Then activate the Android Back button again to return to the Live Transcribe screen.

Regardless of which text size you choose, you will almost certainly have to scroll the screen in order to see all of the transcribed text. When you start scrolling, a button is displayed just above the toolbar, labelled "Go to Bottom". You can activate this button to quickly move to the end of the transcribed text.

Using a Secondary Language for Transcriptions

Live Transcribe allows you to switch between a primary and secondary language. This can be useful if you are communicating with a person whose first language is not English!

To add and use a secondary language, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "More settings" button. Upon doing this, the More settings screen will be displayed.
4. In the More settings screen, locate and activate the "Secondary Language" button. For reference, this button will also contain the name of the secondary language in use. By default this will be "None". Upon doing this, the Secondary Language screen will be displayed. This screen contains a long list of available languages.
5. In the Secondary Language screen, locate and activate the language you wish to use. Upon doing this, you will be returned to the More settings screen and the secondary Language button will now contain the name of the language you chose.

Note 6: If you are prompted to download an update to the language you specified, activate the "Download" button. This will initiate the download, and when complete, you will be returned to the "More settings" screen.

6. Finally, activate the Android Back button, situated on the Navigation bar at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to the Live Transcribe screen.

You can now switch between languages by activating the Switch Language button, situated at the right edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. For example, if your Primary Language is set to English UK and the Secondary Language is set to French, activating the Switch Language button will switch to French. Now, all words spoken will be transcribed into French! To Switch the Language back to English UK, activate the Switch Language button again.

Changing Screen Colours

Live Transcribe contains an option for inverting the screen colours. This can be useful if you are in a bright environment, as it can make the text easier to see!

To invert the screen colours, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate and activate the "More settings" button. Upon doing this, the More settings screen will be displayed.

4. In the More settings screen, locate and activate the "Theme" button. Upon doing this, the Theme screen will be displayed.
5. In the Theme screen, you will find three buttons. These are "Light", "Dark" and "System". The default theme will be "System". This is indicated by a Blue circle to the left of the button name.
6. Activate the "Dark" button. Upon doing this, the background will change to become black and the text will change to become white and you will be returned to the More Options screen.
7. Finally, activate the Android Back button, situated on the Navigation bar, at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to the Live Transcribe screen.

Saving Transcriptions

Live Transcribe contains an option for saving your transcriptions. The maximum length of time you can save transcriptions for is 3 days! One benefit of saving your transcriptions is that you can copy and then paste the text into an email or text message!

To save your transcriptions, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate the "More Options" button. Upon doing this, the More Options screen will be displayed.
4. In the More Options screen, locate and activate the "Transcription History" button. Upon doing this, your transcriptions will be saved for 3 days.

5. Finally, activate the Android Back button, situated on the Navigation bar, at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to the Live Transcribe screen.

Deleting Transcriptions

After 3 days, your transcriptions will automatically be deleted. However, if you want to delete them manually, you can do so.

To delete your transcriptions manually, follow these suggested steps:

1. Activate the "Accessibility" button, situated at the right edge of the Navigation bar. Upon doing this, the Live Transcribe screen will be displayed.
2. Activate the "Settings" button, situated at the left edge of the Live Transcribe toolbar. Upon doing this, the Settings screen will be displayed.
3. In the Settings screen, locate the "More Options" button. Upon doing this, the More Options screen will be displayed.
4. In the More Options screen, locate and activate the "Delete History" button. Upon doing this, a popup message will be displayed stating "This deletes saved transcriptions from your device". Locate and activate the "Delete" button to delete the saved transcriptions.

Note 7: After deleting your transcriptions, a temporary window will be displayed at the bottom of the screen. This contains 2 buttons labelled Delete History and Undo. You will have 10 seconds to decide whether or not you wish to undo the delete operation. Once 10 seconds has elapsed, the temporary window disappears!

5. Finally, activate the Android Back button, situated on the Navigation bar, at the bottom of the screen. Upon doing this, you will be returned to the Live Transcribe screen.

This is the end of the introduction to using Live Transcribe on an Android smartphone. If you require more information about Live Transcribe, contact the author, Gary Eady, using the following email address.

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