

Smart devices for All

Did you know that smart devices such as iPhones, iPads, Android Phones, Android Tablets and Windows Phones, all have built in accessibility features that enable blind and partially sighted people to still use these devices, just the same as people with full vision.

Windows Desktops/Laptops and Apple Mac Desktops/Laptops also come with the same features.

This means that if your sight is failing, or you have no vision at all, you can still learn how to use these high street devices, in way you might not have thought possible.

All that is needed is for you to turn on the accessibility feature that will help you most.

All devices will support colour adjustment, magnification and narration of the screen contents.

This means that you can adjust the colours a device displays on the screen, or even display no colour, just black and white. Increase the size of text and other elements on the screen to suit your level of vision, or turn on the narration feature which will then speak out the contents of the screen to you.

You will have to learn a few gestures with your fingers, so where most sighted people just tap with one finger on a touch screen to activate a particular icon (think of an icon as a button with a picture on), you may have to double tap with a finger on the required icon.

In order to navigate around a screen full of icons you may have to flick your finger across the screen, left or right to move the narrator focus to different icons. When narration has been activated, the label on each icon will be spoken to you, so that when you hear the icon (button) of interest, you can then activate that icon by double tapping with one finger.

It might sound a bit confusing but once you've learnt the basics you'll soon get the hang of it.

There are two local charities that can provide advice with using smart devices when your eyesight is failing. One is the RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind which operates nationally and Warwickshire Vision Support which operates throughout Warwickshire.

To contact the RNIB call 0303 123 999, to contact Warwickshire Vision Support contact 01926 411 331, either charity will put you through to someone who can tell you more about what accessibility features are available on these devices, and how to activate them.

If you are able to search on the Internet, just type the name of either of these two charities into Google and you be presented with their respective Websites, in the search list that will be displayed by Google.

I also run a Website that contains a lot of useful information for the visually impaired and their helpers, my Website address is <http://simplyinformed.uk/>.

Whatever you do, don't think this is outside your scope, there is a new world waiting for you to discover, you will be surprised what new doors this can open for you.

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