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NVDA 2023.3 is released: everything about to know

Description

NVDA, or **NonVisual Desktop Access**, stands as an exceptional open-source screen reader, readily available at no cost. It seamlessly integrates with Windows operating systems, offering robust support for widely used applications like Microsoft Office and various web browsers. NVDA boasts an array of features, including Braille support, speech synthesizers, and customizable keystrokes.

Exciting news for 2023! The latest version of NVDA (2023.3) has been released by NV Access, the esteemed organization behind NVDA, making it accessible for public use.

Whatâ??s new in NVDA Version 2023.3:

Here is the recap of the Changelog for NVDA Version2023.3 from the official documentation:

This release introduces the Add-on Store to replace the Add-ons Manager.
In the Add-on Store you can browse, search, install and update community add-ons.
You can now manually override incompatibility issues with outdated add-ons at your own risk.

There are new braille features, commands, and display support.
There are also new input gestures for OCR and flattened object navigation.
Navigating and reporting formatting in Microsoft Office is improved.

There are many bug fixes, particularly for braille, Microsoft Office, web browsers and Windows 11.

eSpeak-NG, LibLouis braille translator, and Unicode CLDR have been updated.

New Features

- Add-on Store has been added to NVDA. (#13985)
    - Browse, search, install and update community add-ons.
    - Manually override incompatibility issues with outdated add-ons.
    - The Add-ons Manager has been removed and replaced by the Add-on Store.
    - For more information please read the updated user guide.
- New input gestures:
    - An unbound gesture to cycle through the available languages for Windows OCR. (#13036)

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- An unbound gesture to cycle through the braille show messages modes. (#14864)
- An unbound gesture to toggle showing the selection indicator for braille. (#14948)
- Added default keyboard gesture assignments to move to the next or previous object in a flattened view of the object hierarchy. (#15053)
  - Desktop: `NVDA+numpad9` and `NVDA+numpad3` to move to the previous and next objects respectively.
  - Laptop: `shift+NVDA+[` and `shift+NVDA+]` to move to the previous and next objects respectively.

- New braille features:
  - Added support for the Help Tech Activator braille display. (#14917)
  - A new option to toggle showing the selection indicator (dots 7 and 8). (#14948)
  - A new option to optionally move the system caret or focus when changing the review cursor position with braille routing keys. (#14885, #3166)
  - When pressing `numpad2` three times to report the numerical value of the character at the position of the review cursor, the information is now also provided in braille. (#14826)
  - Added support for the `aria-brailleroledescription` ARIA 1.3 attribute, allowing web authors to override the type of an element shown on the braille display. (#14748)
  - Baum braille driver: added several braille chord gestures for performing common keyboard commands such as `windows+d` and `alt+tab`.
    Please refer to the NVDA User Guide for a full list. (#14714)

- Added pronunciation of Unicode symbols:
  - braille symbols such as `â •â £â ?â ?â ?â •â ?`. (#13778)
  - Mac Option key symbol â?¥. (#14682)

- Added gestures for Tivomatic Caiku Albatross braille displays. (#14844, #15002)
  - showing the braille settings dialog
  - accessing the status bar
  - cycling the braille cursor shape
  - cycling the braille show messages mode
  - toggling the braille cursor on/off
  - toggling the â??braille show selection indicatorâ?• state
  - cycling the â??braille move system caret when routing review cursorâ?• mode. (#15122)

- Microsoft Office features:
  - When highlighted text is enabled Document Formatting, highlight colours are now reported in Microsoft Word. (#7396, #12101, #5866)
  - When colors are enabled Document Formatting, background colours are now reported in Microsoft Word. (#5866)

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    - When using Excel shortcuts to toggle format such as bold, italic, underline and strike through of a cell in Excel, the result is now reported. (#14923)

- Experimental enhanced sound management:
    - NVDA can now output audio via the Windows Audio Session API (WASAPI), which may improve the responsiveness, performance and stability of NVDA speech and sounds. (#14697)
    - WASAPI usage can be enabled in Advanced settings.
      Additionally, if WASAPI is enabled, the following Advanced settings can also be configured.
        - An option to have the volume of NVDA sounds and beeps follow the volume setting of the voice you are using. (#1409)
        - An option to separately configure the volume of NVDA sounds. (#1409, #15038)
    - There is a known issue with intermittent crashing when WASAPI is enabled. (#15150)
- In Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome, NVDA now reports when a control opens a dialog, grid, list or tree if the author has specified this using `aria-haspopup`. (#8235)
- It is now possible to use system variables (such as `%temp%` or `%homepath%`) in the path specification while creating portable copies of NVDA. (#14680)
- In Windows 10 May 2019 Update and later, NVDA can announce virtual desktop names when opening, changing, and closing them. (#5641)
- A system wide parameter has been added to allow users and system administrators to force NVDA to start in secure mode. (#10018)

Changes

- Component updates:
    - eSpeak NG has been updated to 1.52-dev commit `ed9a7bcf`. (#15036)
    - Updated LibLouis braille translator to 3.26.0. (#14970)
    - CLDR has been updated to version 43.0. (#14918)
- LibreOffice changes:
    - When reporting the review cursor location, the current cursor/caret location is now reported relative to the current page in LibreOffice Writer 7.6 and newer, similar to what is done for Microsoft Word. (#11696)
    - Announcement of the status bar (e.g. triggered by `NVDA+end`) works for LibreOffice. (#11698)
    - When moving to a different cell in LibreOffice Calc, NVDA no longer incorrectly announces the coordinates of the previously focused cell when cell coordinate announcement is

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disabled in NVDAâ??s settings. (#15098)

- Braille changes:
  - When using a braille display via the Standard HID braille driver, the dpad can be used to emulate the arrow keys and enter.
    Also `space+dot1` and `space+dot4` now map to up and down arrow respectively. (#14713)
  - Updates to dynamic web content (ARIA live regions) are now displayed in braille.
    This can be disabled in the Advanced Settings panel. (#7756)

- Dash and em-dash symbols will always be sent to the synthesizer. (#13830)
- Distance reported in Microsoft Word will now honour the unit defined in Wordâ??s advanced options even when using UIA to access Word documents. (#14542)
- NVDA responds faster when moving the cursor in edit controls. (#14708)
- Script for reporting the destination of a link now reports from the caret / focus position rather than the navigator object. (#14659)
- Portable copy creation no longer requires that a drive letter be entered as part of the absolute path. (#14680)
- If Windows is configured to display seconds in the system tray clock, using `NVDA+f12` to report the time now honors that setting. (#14742)
- NVDA will now report unlabeled groupings that have useful position information, such as in recent versions of Microsoft Office 365 menus. (#14878)

Bug Fixes

- Braille:
  - Several stability fixes to input/output for braille displays, resulting in less frequent errors and crashes of NVDA. (#14627)
  - NVDA will no longer unnecessarily switch to no braille multiple times during auto detection, resulting in a cleaner log and less overhead. (#14524)
  - NVDA will now switch back to USB if a HID Bluetooth device (such as the HumanWare Brailliant or APH Mantis) is automatically detected and an USB connection becomes available.
    This only worked for Bluetooth Serial ports before. (#14524)
  - When no braille display is connected and the braille viewer is closed by pressing `alt+f4` or clicking the close button, the display size of the braille subsystem will again be reset to no cells. (#15214)

- Web browsers:
  - NVDA no longer occasionally causes Mozilla Firefox to crash or stop responding. (#14647)

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  - In Mozilla Firefox and Google Chrome, typed characters are no longer reported in some text boxes even when speak typed characters is disabled. (#8442)
  - You can now use browse mode in Chromium Embedded Controls where it was not possible previously. (#13493, #8553)
  - In Mozilla Firefox, moving the mouse over text after a link now reliably reports the text. (#9235)
  - The destination of graphic links is now reported accurately in more cases in Chrome and Edge. (#14783)
  - When trying to report the URL for a link without a href attribute NVDA is no longer silent. Instead NVDA reports that the link has no destination. (#14723)
  - In Browse mode, NVDA will no longer incorrectly ignore focus moving to a parent or child control e.g. moving from a control to its parent list item or gridcell. (#14611)
    - Note however that this fix only applies when the Automatically set focus to focusable elementsâ?• option in Browse Mode settings is turned off (which is the default).

- Fixes for Windows 11:
  - NVDA can once again announce Notepad status bar contents. (#14573)
  - Switching between tabs will announce the new tab name and position for Notepad and File Explorer. (#14587, #14388)
  - NVDA will once again announce candidate items when entering text in languages such as Chinese and Japanese. (#14509)
  - It is once again possible to open the Contributors and License items on the NVDA Help menu. (#14725)
- Microsoft Office fixes:
  - When rapidly moving through cells in Excel, NVDA is now less likely to report the wrong cell or selection. (#14983, #12200, #12108)
  - When landing on an Excel cell from outside a work sheet, braille and focus highlighter are no longer needlessly updated to the object that had focus previously. (#15136)
  - NVDA no longer fails to announce focusing password fields in Microsoft Excel and Outlook. (#14839)
- For symbols which do not have a symbol description in the current locale, the default English symbol level will be used. (#14558, #14417)
- It is now possible to use the backslash character in the replacement field of a dictionaries entry, when the type is not set to regular expression. (#14556)
- In Windows 10 and 11 Calculator, a portable copy of NVDA will no longer do nothing or play error tones when entering expressions in standard calculator in compact overlay mode. (#14679)
- NVDA again recovers from many more situations such as applications that stop responding which previously caused it to freeze completely. (#14759)
- When forcing UIA support with certain terminal and consoles, a bug is fixed which caused a freeze and the log file to be spammed. (#14689)

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- NVDA will no longer refuse to save the configuration after a configuration reset. (#13187)
- When running a temporary version from the launcher, NVDA will not mislead users into thinking they can save the configuration. (#14914)
- NVDA now generally responds slightly faster to commands and focus changes. (#14928)
- Displaying the OCR settings will not fail on some systems anymore. (#15017)
- Fix bug related to saving and loading the NVDA configuration, including switching synthesizers. (#14760)
- Fix bug causing text review â??flick upâ?• touch gesture to move pages rather than move to previous line. (#15127)

Changes for Developers

Please refer to the developer guide for information on NVDAâ??s API deprecation and removal process.

- Suggested conventions have been added to the add-on manifest specification.
  These are optional for NVDA compatibility, but are encouraged or required for submitting to the Add-on Store. (#14754)
  - Use `lowerCamelCase` for the name field.
  - Use `<major>.<minor>.<patch>` format for the version field (required for add-on datastore).
  - Use `https://` as the schema for the url field (required for add-on datastore).
- Added a new extension point type called `Chain`, which can be used to iterate over iterables returned by registered handlers. (#14531)
- Added the `bdDetect.scanForDevices` extension point.
  Handlers can be registered that yield `BrailleDisplayDriver/DeviceMatch` pairs that donâ??t fit in existing categories, like USB or Bluetooth. (#14531)
- Added extension point: `synthDriverHandler.synthChanged`. (#14618)
- The NVDA Synth Settings Ring now caches available setting values the first time theyâ??re needed, rather than when loading the synthesizer. (#14704)
- You can now call the export method on a gesture map to export it to a dictionary.
  This dictionary can be imported in another gesture by passing it either to the constructor of `GlobalGestureMap` or to the update method on an existing map. (#14582)
- `hwIo.base.IoBase` and its derivatives now have a new constructor parameter to take a `hwIo.ioThread.IoThread`.
  If not provided, the default thread is used. (#14627)
- `hwIo.ioThread.IoThread` now has a `setWaitableTimer` method to set a waitable timer using a python function.
  Similarly, the new `getCompletionRoutine` method allows you to convert a python method into a completion routine safely. (#14627)
- `offsets.OffsetsTextInfo._get_boundingRects` should now always return `List[locationHelper.rectLTWH]` as expected for a subclass of `textInfos.TextInfo`. (

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#12424)

- `highlight-color` is now a format field attribute. (#14610)
- NVDA should more accurately determine if a logged message is coming from NVDA core. (#14812)
- NVDA will no longer log inaccurate warnings or errors about deprecated appModules. (#14806)
- All NVDA extension points are now briefly described in a new, dedicated chapter in the Developer Guide. (#14648)
- `scons checkpot` will no longer check the `userConfig` subfolder anymore. (#14820)
- Translatable strings can now be defined with a singular and a plural form using `ngettext` and `npgettext`. (#12445)

Deprecations

- Passing lambda functions to `hwIo.ioThread.IoThread.queueAsApc` is deprecated.
  Instead, functions should be weakly referenceable. (#14627)
- Importing `LPOVERLAPPED_COMPLETION_ROUTINE` from `hwIo.base` is deprecated.
  Instead import from `hwIo.ioThread`. (#14627)
- `IoThread.autoDeleteApcReference` is deprecated.
  It was introduced in NVDA 2023.1 and was never meant to be part of the public API.
  Until removal, it behaves as a no-op, i.e. a context manager yielding nothing. (#14924)
- `gui.MainFrame.onAddonsManagerCommand` is deprecated, use `gui.MainFrame.onAddonStoreCommand` instead. (#13985)
- `speechDictHandler.speechDictVars.speechDictsPath` is deprecated, use `NVDAState.WritePaths.speechDictsDir` instead. (#15021)
- Importing `voiceDictsPath` and `voiceDictsBackupPath` from `speechDictHandler.dictFormatUpgrade` is deprecated.
  Instead use `WritePaths.voiceDictsDir` and `WritePaths.voiceDictsBackupDir` from `NVDAState`. (#15048)
- `config.CONFIG_IN_LOCAL_APPDATA_SUBKEY` is deprecated.
  Instead use `config.RegistryKey.CONFIG_IN_LOCAL_APPDATA_SUBKEY`. (#15049)

Download NVDA 2023.3 from the official Websiteif you havent already installed on your system

if youâ??re using NVDA and want to update to the latest version(2023.3) follow the steps:

1. Go to NVDA Menu:

   â??

   Press `insert(NVDA)+N` key on your laptop/desktop keyboard(if youâ??re keyboard doesnt have a insert key, press the numpad 0 key(while terning off numlock) to open the NVDA Menu)

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You can also use the capslock key if youâ??ve set the capslock key as your default NVDA modifier

2. Find Help submenu:

   â??

   After opening the NVDA menu, navigate throo down errow or directly press the `H` key to find the Help submenu

   Press the `Enter`key or expand the submenu by right errow

3. Go to check for update:

   â??

   After expanding the help submenu,press down/upp errow to navigate to Check for update option

   Hit enter and follow the onscreen instruction

After updating to the latest version, you can avail the features listed above

Thanks for reading. enjoy

Date
10/11/2026
Date Created
01/11/2023
Author
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