

TextAloud 3: New Features and Enhancements!

The leading Text to Speech software just got even better



From NextUp.com, the leader in text-to-speech software, comes **TextAloud™ 3**. *TextAloud* has been hailed since 2000 for the way it uses the PC and the power of voice synthesis to “speak aloud” documents, e-mail, web pages, and more, turning reading into listening. It’s become a popular and indispensable tool for students and professionals alike, allowing them to listen to their reading and even save it to MP3, WAV or other formats.

This latest *TextAloud 3* release is better than ever, offering a host of new and exciting improvements, including:

- ➔ **A New ‘Tabbed’ Interface** that offers an easy and instant way to view and work with multiple items or articles, while new skins and personalization options make working with the main menu, toolbars, and popup menu a snap.
- ➔ **Easier Features to Follow Along With Your Text**, with smooth scrolling support for articles, plus several new word highlighting options when text is spoken from articles, and a new ‘Masking’ feature that dims any un-highlighted text—helpful for concentrating on current text only.
- ➔ **Drag and Drop** support has been extended to include files as well as text, allowing users to add articles by dragging files from *Windows Explorer* to the *TextAloud 3* main window.
- ➔ **Clipboard and Mouse Monitoring**. Dialogs have been streamlined and downsized, while Clipboard monitoring is highly customizable, and users can now tailor their clipboard preferences for a wide range of needs.
- ➔ **Improved Hotkeys** for several new actions, which can now be customized with specific options or tasks, such as switching between voices.
- ➔ **Updated Toolbar Plug-ins** for *Internet Explorer*, *Firefox* and *Microsoft Outlook* have been updated, with the addition as well of new Plug-ins for *Microsoft Word*, *Outlook Express* and *Windows Mail*. All toolbars now support word highlighting, and allow users to configure button displays, sizes, and captions.
- ➔ **Integration with Windows Explorer** popup and context menu. The popup menu entry “Open With *TextAloud*” allows users to select one or more files in *Windows Explorer*, and to add the files to *TextAloud 3* as individual articles.
- ➔ **Expanded Document Support** for old and new formats, including ASCII Text, RTF, *Microsoft Word* (.DOC and .DOCX), *WordPerfect* (.WPD), *Open Office* (.ODT), PDF, HTML and XML.
- ➔ **Expanded Support for Archiving** is now included in *TextAloud 3*, with articles able to be archived and retrieved later, even after deletion. Users can now also purge articles from the archive automatically once they reach a specified age, if desired.

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➔ **Improved Language Support** for multiple languages, and it's now easier than ever to create Pronunciation Editor entries that are language-specific.

➔ **Enhanced Spelling and Dictionary Features.** *TextAloud 3* now includes an integrated spell-checker. A spell check dictionary for U.S. English is included, while dictionaries for other languages and specialized terminology (including technical, medical and legal) are also available for download.



Users can also now select any English word in an article and select “English Dictionary Lookup” from the popup menu. *TextAloud 3* will look up the word in an online dictionary, display the definition in a window, and speak the definition aloud.

➔ **An Expanded, Improved Pronunciation Editor** whose corrections can now be made specific to voice, language, and/or vendor. Corrections may also be conveniently grouped into multiple dictionaries, which can be activated automatically, based on whatever voice is currently speaking.

The new Pronunciation Editor dialog also greatly simplifies the process of creating entries to re-spell text, skip text, and supply voice level phoneme corrections. Multiple dictionary support also allows users to create (or disable) dictionaries customized for specific kinds of text—for example, separate dictionaries for legal, medical, and technical terminology.

➔ **Proofreading Enhancements**, with new features supporting two different proofreading approaches. The original Proofreader window is now referred to as “Vocal Proofreading,” while a new proofreading method, called “Step Proofreading” has been added in which *TextAloud 3* automatically pauses after each step, letting users step forward and/or backward through the text—by letter, word, line, paragraph and screen.

Both Vocal and Step proofreading are recognized in *TextAloud 3* as “Profiles”, where profiles allow users to configure text processing specific to these proofreading modes. For example, when either of these proofreading modes is active, *TextAloud 3* can be configured to play sound files when certain characters are encountered, or to speak punctuation characters aloud, and so on.

TextAloud has always been highly popular as a proofreading tool, and the software now offers two different methods for doing so.

➔ **Support for More Audio Formats** beyond the creation of MP3 and WMA audio files. *TextAloud 3* can now produce audio files using standard codecs available on your system. *TextAloud 3* also allows users to configure encoders not included in the Windows® Multimedia system as “Custom Encoders.”

➔ **A Streamlined Audio File Creation Process, including:**

- For Sapi5 voices, a feature called “Direct Encoding” allows audio files to be created directly from text. The need for intermediate WAV files and resampling steps is completely eliminated, resulting in much better performance.
- For both Sapi4 and Sapi5, processing for large articles has been improved, and the requirement to split large articles before writing audio files has been removed.
- A tag can now be included to automatically split audio files at each split tag in the text. This allows users to create multiple audio files from a single article.
- An option is also now available that will automatically split audio files by time. Instead of using a split tag, articles are split automatically based on a time value specified by the user.
- Audio files generated by *TextAloud* can now include background audio, using any MP3, WAV, or WMA file that you specify. The background audio volume can be adjusted, allowing a soft background track to loop as you listen to a lengthy article.

- ➔ **Audio Tags.** A panel in Audio File Options now gives users control over ID3V2 tags written to audio files.
- ➔ **File Splitter Improvements** allowing splits to be written directly to *TextAloud 3* articles, as well as output to text files as before.

TextAloud 3 also offers new split options that allow users to split by target output size, split by paragraph, and split by keywords in the text. Splitting by keyword has also been improved to let users specify exactly what happens to the keyword itself at each split. Users can now choose to leave the keyword at the end of the previous split, the start of the new split, or exclude the keyword from both splits.

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TextAloud 3's new
character options,
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- ➔ **Automatic Insertion of Pauses and Other Text.** As in *TextAloud 2*, users can specify pauses to be automatically inserted at the end of each sentence and/or paragraph. With the new insertion point functionality in *TextAloud 3*, users can also specify automatic text insertions that speak the article title before speaking article text, play an audio clip at the end of an article, and so on.
- ➔ **Article Tags***
TextAloud 3 has a menu (and toolbar) dedicated to inserting tags in articles to control spoken audio. Users can now easily insert tags in order to:
 - Insert pauses
 - Adjust speed, pitch and volume as text is spoken
 - Tag words or groups of words to be spelled instead of spoken as words
 - Embed audio clips (MP3, WAV, or WMA files) in the text
 - Mark places in the text where audio files should be split automatically, allowing users to generate several audio files instead of one large one
 - Add comments in the text that are not spoken.
 - *Note: *Some of these tags work only with Sapi5*
- ➔ **An Automatic Actions Feature**, which offers a more automated way of handling certain features implemented as options in *TextAloud 2* (such as speaking automatically, or deleting an article after speaking). These are much more flexible, include notification capabilities, and will be expanded in the future for further increased functionality, as well.
- ➔ **Character Speaking and Filtering.** *TextAloud 3* is popular with writers, who will love the new character options in *TextAloud 3*, which include a wide range of capabilities for handling individual characters. Users can now configure groups of characters with options to filter the characters, speak the characters, play sound files, or insert pauses in the text.
- ➔ **System Requirements**
 - Windows® 98/ME/NT/2000/XP/Vista
 - Minimum P200
 - 64MB RAM
 - 10MB Disk Space
 - Sound Card

TextAloud 3 is priced at just \$29.95, and is available for Windows® 7, Vista, 98, NT, 2000 and XP. It is available for fast, safe and secure purchase via <http://www.nextup.com>, with additional optional premium voices from **AT&T Natural Voices™**, **Nuance RealSpeak™**, **Acapela®**, and **Cepstral®** also available.

Evaluation copies of *TextAloud 3* are currently available for the media upon request (contact publicist Angela Mitchell at **(904) 982-8043** or Paramitch@aol.com).