Starting to Dictate: Your First Dictation

You can use Dragon to dictate into virtually any Windows application. Further in this workbook, you will learn how to start programs by voice (but one doesn’t need to have started a program by voice in order to dictate into it.)

What you dictate will be inserted wherever your insertion point (cursor) is located in your document. There are many ways of moving the insertion point by voice, but know that you can also re-position it by hand (clicking the mouse where you want it, or using your keyboard’s arrow keys) just as you normally would.

TIP Before dictating, make sure the desired window is active (its title bar should not be dimmed), and the insertion point (vertical bar) is where you want your dictation to appear. (Your operating system can make such visual elements easier to see.)

Dictating text and punctuation marks

Here are the most common punctuation marks, followed by what you say to “voice-type” them:

. period (or full stop)   ! exclamation point or exclamation mark
, comma                   : colon
? question mark           ; semi-colon

For these exercises, start a word processor (for example, you can say start DragonPad).

Exercise 1: Look at the following sample, dictate it, then say microphone off. (If any word is misrecognized, ignore it for now.) The very first words may take a moment to appear on the screen; this is normal.

How is this different from dictating to a person? I should try to provide clean input: speaking naturally, but without mumbling or trailing off!

Do turn off your microphone when you finish dictating! If your last sentence reads something like “trailing off! Microphone off”, you probably forgot to pause briefly before giving the command. (If you cannot use your hands, say “go to sleep” or “stop listening” instead of “microphone off.”)

New line and new paragraph

With Dragon active, you can press your Enter key but also simply say the commands new line and new paragraph.

Note: When you start dictating your new paragraph, Dragon will capitalize its first letter automatically, just like it automatically capitalizes after a period, an exclamation point, or a question mark. By default, Dragon doesn’t capitalize after new line or colon.

TIP If you prefer new line to trigger capitalization, you can change its default via the Vocabulary Editor, since new line belongs to a special group of commands accessible there; these so-called Dictation Commands, such as cap, caps on and numeral, appear near the very top of the Vocabulary Editor’s list, with a blank Written Form field. To find them quickly, change the Display drop-down list to “Word with spoken forms only”. Once you’ve highlighted new line in the Vocabulary Editor, say or click Properties, then choose “capitalized” from the drop-down list “Format the next word”.

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The Results Display and its options

Exercise 2: Study the following text sample then dictate it in a blank document. (Ignore any errors for now.)

The more I use it, the software will adapt to the way I sound and the words I use. At the same time, I will also acquire good habits like pausing optimally, keeping silent when hesitating, and turning the microphone off, or putting it into its sleep state, when necessary.

As you dictate, a small “rolling” Dragon icon appears, indicating that recognition is in progress.

If the option “show preliminary results” is enabled (under Appearance in the Options dialog), you will instead see the following as in version 10 and prior:

- Your words first appear in a small horizontal rectangle called the Results Box. Words accumulate in the Results Box until you pause, at which point they appear in your document. If many words are dictated without a pause, the box automatically stretches out.
- The contents of the Results Box sometimes change as you speak; what first appears there may not be what is inserted in your document, since Dragon sometimes revises its original guess based on subsequent words.

Dragon uses the everything it hears between two pauses to best choose what exactly it should transcribe; this is particularly important for words that can be spelled in different ways, like “to” and “too”. If you speak single words or just a few words at a time, the software has few or no contextual clues. For this reason, long continuous “utterances” can be recognized more accurately than short ones (and long words better than short ones).

IMPORTANT : Try to formulate your sentences and commands before you start dictating them. This can be challenging at first, particularly for those who have been “thinking through their fingers” for years, but you’ll develop the habit once you see what a difference it makes.

Note: Especially if you tend to forget punctuation, or if you are writing informally, consider Dragon’s option to automatically insert commas and periods as you dictate (see Auto-Formatting under the Tools menu). The Help contains details about this option and the commands to turn it on and off.

The location and behavior of the Results indicator can be customized from the Options dialog. Many users find it most convenient to “anchor” the indicator to a place where it’s unlikely to hide anything, such as the bottom right corner of their screen; to do that, just check the “Anchor” checkbox, close the Options dialog, then drag the indicator to the desired place.

Exercise 3: Dictate a paragraph of some four sentences on today’s weather. (For now, ignore any errors.) Did you forget to dictate punctuation in this paragraph? It can be harder to remember when we are “composing out loud” but, with practice, it will become second nature.

Below are other frequent punctuation marks—you may want to say them out loud once before the next exercise. Note in particular the ellipsis and the difference between dash and hyphen.

Remember that you can use the Vocabulary Editor to see punctuation and symbols with their existing spoken forms, as well as to add your own spoken forms, and to modify properties (such as “having no following space” like the open quote.)

```
“ open quote                ...  ellipsis or dot dot dot
” close quote               &  ampersand or and sign
```
( open paren or open parenthesis -- dash 
) close paren or close parenthesis - hyphen

**TIP:** You don’t always have to say hyphens: thanks to its built-in Vocabulary, Dragon can automatically include hyphens in items such as 3-year-old, above-mentioned, after-tax, ad-libbed, ankle-length, anti-infective, as well as famous hyphenated names like Abdul-Jabbar. (To see many, you can choose “Words containing punctuation” in the Vocabulary Editor’s dropdown list “Display”.)

You can prevent Dragon from entering a hyphen by pausing or saying “spacebar” where the hyphen would be.

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**Exercise 4:** Dictate the following sample. (If any recognition errors occur, ignore them for now.)

| These lessons remind me that “practice makes perfect.” (Who said this, Confucius?) |
| When it comes to speech-recognition software, truer words were never spoken… |

Note: At the moment one turns off its microphone off, Dragon may still be working on the last sounds it heard.

**Key points for your first dictation:**

- ✓ What you dictate is transcribed at the *insertion point* (the blinking vertical bar), the place where characters would appear if you started to type. Before you dictate, make sure that the desired window is not just visible, but also has the focus.

- ✓ To modify how Dragon indicates that recognition is in progress, see the Options dialog under Appearance. To avoid situations where the Results indicator (icon or box) hides something on your screen, you can "anchor" the indicator. You can also change how long the indicator remains on the screen.

- ✓ Speaking in long, continuous phrases provides contextual clues and thus helps Dragon choose between *homophones* like “right” and “write” or “to” and “two”.

- ✓ Punctuation is part of the recognition context. Be sure to dictate at least periods and commas or turn on the automatic punctuation option.

- ✓ Two important Dictation Commands are **new paragraph** and **new line**. By default, **new line** doesn’t trigger capitalization of the following word; you can change that through the Vocabulary Editor’s Properties dialog.

- ✓ The very first words you dictate may take a moment to appear on the screen. This is normal.
Dictating Prices, Units, Dates, Times, Addresses…

Dragon follows spacing and capitalization rules: for example, it inserts a space after commas but none before, and it capitalizes at the beginning of sentences and paragraphs.

In this lesson, you learn about contextual automatic formatting that allows you to naturally dictate prices, times, dates, abbreviations, contractions, units of measure, street addresses, e-mail addresses, URLs, ISO currency codes and other special text. You also learn about Spell Mode and other recognition modes.

Automatic text formatting during normal dictation

On the Auto-Formatting Options dialog, available from the Tools menu, you can turn Dragon’s rules of auto-formatting off and on as desired. For example, you can choose the following:

- Transcribe numbers greater than two as numerals. (By default, Dragon follows the rule that small integers should be written as words unless in contexts such as a unit or address.)
- Expand contractions (such as “won’t” and “didn’t”).
- Insert two spaces after periods.

The Vocabulary Editor’s Word Properties dialog offers related capabilities. It lets you obtain contextual formatting: you can ask that numerals always be used after a particular word (as in “version 4”) and you can set alternate written forms (for instance, if you prefer “figure” to be written “Fig.” before numbers, as in “Fig. 3”).

Note: The Vocabulary Editor also lets you change the properties of Dictation Commands (for instance, you may wish “new line” to trigger capitalization, as “new paragraph” does).

Please see Vocabulary Customization.

Exercise 1: Dictate some phone numbers with and without area code. (No need to say “hyphen”.)

Please call 607-585-3926 instead of 587-1239. Toll free directory: 1-800-555-1212
**Exercise 2:** Dictate the following address. For the line containing the zip code, just say *Oakland California 9 1 2 3 5*; Dragon automatically uses the postal abbreviation for the state and precedes it with a comma.

127 Evergreen Terrace  
Oakland, CA 91235

**Exercise 3:** Dictate the following dates. (Dragon automatically formats when you say, for instance, “*Monday July sixteenth 2009*”.

**Exercise 4:** Dictate a few sentences containing prices, including the one here. (Say *four dollars and ninety cents*; Dragon will automatically format it with the dollar sign and dot.)

*Suggested retail price: $4.90*

**Exercise 5:** Dictate the following sentence, or a similar one containing a URL. Pronounce the URL *ww dot the best business dot com*. Dragon will automatically remove the spaces between words.

*Please visit www.thebestbusiness.com for more information.*

**Exercise 6** Dictate the following e-mail addresses. (Remember: for e-mail addresses you frequently dictate, adding them to your vocabulary will ensure that you can dictate them quickly and with high accuracy.)

*Laura_Miller@domain.com* (say “Laura underscore Miller” and “at” or “at sign”)*
*customerservice@electricalexperts.com* (“customer service at sign electrical experts dot com”)

**The restricted Recognition Modes**

There may be times when you want Dragon to recognize *less* than it normally does. You may want to speak only commands, or enter many numbers or characters in a row—when inputting figures or product codes into a database, for instance.

Take a moment to explore Dragon’s restricted recognition modes, which include Numbers Mode, Spell Mode, Command Mode and Dictation Mode. (Please see the Help for details beyond the ones below.) Note: Dragon includes a persistent indication of the current recognition mode on the DragonBar (next to the Full Text Control checkmark).

**TIP** Dictation Mode can be helpful if you want to dictate *as quickly as possible.*
Numbers Mode

When you are about to dictate a sequence of numeric data, consider switching to Numbers Mode. When in this mode, the software tries to recognize everything it hears as number-related (or as a command).

Step 1: Say numbers mode on or choose Numbers Mode from the DragonBar’s Modes menu. (Notice the status message in the DragonBar.)

Now that Dragon is in Numbers mode, you can:
- dictate numbers and punctuation (hyphen, dollar sign…). For decimal point, say dot or point.
- say new line, new paragraph and space
- say go up|down|left|right <n> to move the focus to another line, cell, or item.

Step 2: To resume regular dictation, you can say a command such as switch to normal mode, or use the Modes menu.

Spell Mode

The Spell Mode is useful for dictating character sequences which don’t form pronounceable words, as is often the case for part numbers, license plate numbers, codes, usernames and passwords… It’s also useful for spelling out terms which you anticipate Dragon won’t know, such as words in a foreign language or unusual product names. Of course, if you plan to use these words or phrases more than once, you should add them to the Vocabulary, with spoken form if warranted.

Step 1: Say Spell Mode on or Switch to Spell Mode. The DragonBar will indicate that Spell Mode is on.

You can now dictate characters, including letters, digits, and symbols, as well as spacebar.
- To capitalize a letter, say cap immediately followed by the letter.
- As in Numbers Mode, you can use the move <direction> <number> commands to navigate. You can also say space. (Dragon won’t automatically handle spacing as it usually does.)
- You cannot use new line or new paragraph, but you can say press Enter.

Step 2: You can return to normal dictating by voice (Spell Mode off…) or by hand (Modes menu> Normal Mode).

TIP: The Help topic “Spelling Characters” contains the list of possible pronunciations, including the alpha-bravo-charlie alphabet and accented characters like “n tilde” and “alpha umlaut”. When spelling out, you can also say “oh” instead of “zero”.

The Spell Command: characters within Normal Mode

If you need to dictate a sequence of characters in the middle of normal dictation, the Spell command is usually faster than switching in and out of Spell mode: while in Normal Mode, you can say “spell” immediately followed by a sequence of characters (digits, letters, symbols, and space or spacebar). See the Help for details.

This can also be useful in cases where you want to put on the screen a word that would normally be interpreted as a symbol or a command. For instance, if you wanted to be sure that Dragon types the word “comma” instead of the character comma, you could say “spell space C O M M A”. This is also useful for the word “cap” which is also a Dictation Command (to trigger capitalization of the following word): say “spell space C A P.”

Exercise 7: Dictate “access code: 75Zq/7”, then practice with character sequences of your choice. (Pause briefly after the colon, then say “spell 7 5 cap zee cue slash 7”. Try to not pause at all during the sequence; if you paused, just resume by saying “spell” immediately followed by the rest of your sequence.)
Key points about dictating numbers and special text

✓ Dragon can format dates, times, prices, street addresses, phone numbers, Web addresses, units of measure, and other special text automatically. The Auto-Formatting options dialog (from the Tools menu) lets you turn these built-in rules off or on as desired. Also, the Word Properties dialog lets you adjust spacing, capitalization, abbreviations (such as Gen. for General) and other alternate written forms (such as “honour” and other spellings used in Canada). In version 13, Dragon reaches out to you through its Smart Format Rules box when it detects that you made a change that might warrant adjusting one of its format-related settings.

✓ The restricted recognition modes can make dictating special text more efficient. They are accessible by voice commands (“Numbers Mode on”, “switch to Normal Mode”) and through the DragonBar’s Modes menu.

✓ Dictation Mode can be helpful if you want to dictate as quickly as possible.

✓ If you will be dictating only numbers and punctuation, consider turning Numbers Mode on.

✓ If dictating a long sequence of characters (letters, digits, punctuation, symbols), consider Spell Mode. The Spell command is good for short sequences which you can say all at once, without pausing, such as “spell space T W O”.

✓ When spelling out, you can use alternate pronunciations for the letters (such as alpha, bravo, etc.) and insert a capital letter by saying cap just before the letter. You can also say space or spacebar. (In Spell Mode, Dragon doesn’t handle spacing as it usually does.)
Correcting Dragon’s Errors in Your Dictated Text

Human beings sometimes can’t recognize words correctly—especially if the speaker and the listener come from
different regions, if the speaker is discussing an unfamiliar subject, or if the words are not well articulated. In
addition, when we hear a word for the first time, we may not know how to spell it. Some people’s first or last
names can be spelled different ways (like Gene/Jean, Hansen/Hanson).

This is also true for Dragon! The software uses contextual clues and statistical information to guess what to
transcribe, but sometimes cannot guess correctly. In particular, it may not recognize uncommon words on the first
try, and instead types something that was likely according to its statistics. It cannot recognize and transcribe a
word it has never seen.

Fortunately, in addition to optimizing acoustic factors, taking advantage of the vocabulary customization tools and
using proper correction techniques will significantly reduce the number of errors. Dragon’s Help contains many
details about the different ways to perform it, including by keyboard.

You can choose when to perform corrections. If you look at your screen while dictating and you notice that
Dragon just got a word wrong, it's usually best to finish your train of thought before you correct that
misrecognition: you may want to at least finish your paragraph. That being said, if the misrecognition affects a
word which is likely to appear many times in your document, it's a good idea to correct it as soon as possible.

Handling multiple matches in your text

Dragon lets you directly address a specific word or phrase in your text. When you give a command such as
correct <xyz> or delete <xyz> or capitalize <xyz> (<xyz> being the word or phrase to address) and Dragon
finds several matches, Dragon places a number next to each match.

You then say the number of the desired one. If you wish to affect all instances at once, say choose all. (If you
want the numbers to disappear, say cancel, click your mouse, or just keep dictating.)

Saying undo that undoes the change for just the last instance. To undo the change to all, say undo all.

Note: choose all cannot work for “select” or for “insert before/after”. If you wish to replace several instances, you
may want to explore your application’s capabilities for replacing, including specific capitalization.

IMPORTANT: In Dragon’s commands, <xyz> represents the relevant segment on the screen (which could
be more than one word and could include numbers or punctuation marks). When you give the ‘correct <xyz>’
command, be sure to say what is on the screen, not what you had intended.
It can be useful to provide context for the word(s) you intend to change: for instance, to correct "a" in the phrase "Alex sent a request," you may want to say “correct sent a” or "correct sent a request."

The Correction Menu: the default interface

By default, when you say a command starting with the word “correct,” Dragon brings up the Correction Menu, which lists alternative transcriptions as well as a few of the commands you may wish to say. In the example illustrated below, the speaker said “correct Madison.”

- **If what you had said is in the list**, you can pick it by voice, saying choose and its number, or by hand (click the desired choice or use the down arrow and Enter key).

- **If it is not**, you can click or say spell that which opens the Spelling Window. There, you can indicate the correct transcription using voice, keyboard, mouse, or a combination (see below).

Note that the last item on the Correction menu gives you direct access to the Options dialog’s Correction section. (As seen on that tab, another default setting you can modify is Dragon’s opening the Correction menu also when you use the command select <xyz>.)

Correcting in the Spelling Window

Some users prefer the Spelling Window to be the default interface for correction, so they can act directly when Dragon’s choice list doesn’t show their desired transcription (instead of having to use “spell that” from the Correction menu to get to the Spelling Window).

This requires changing one of Dragon’s Correction options. Here is one way to do this: say open Dragon options then say click Correct commands bring up Spelling Window (or click that check box).
With this option set, saying commands that start with "correct" opens the *Spelling Window*. So does using the Correction button on the Classic DragonBar, or pressing the Correction hot key (the *numeric minus* by default).

As you will see, there are many ways to indicate in the Spelling Window what should have been recognized—including typing, or spelling out individual characters, hence the name “Spelling Window.”

Here is an example. Imagine you wanted "Madyssen" (note the unusual spelling of this name) but Dragon wrote "medicine" (a word commonly used in English) instead of "Madyssen" (a relatively rare noun). To correct Dragon’s error, you can say “correct medicine”. The Spelling Window then opens.
At its top is what was transcribed, and below is a list of alternate transcriptions, each preceded by a number.

Here is what you can do:

If what Dragon should have transcribed is listed:
say choose n (the number of the correct line—you can also pick by double-clicking or using the down arrow and Enter key).

If no choice is quite correct but one is close:
save time by modifying it instead of entering it yourself:
click it, or say edit n (in our illustration, you could say “edit 1” then “backspace 4” then “Y S S E N”).

If what Dragon should have transcribed is NOT listed:
enter it then say click OK or press Enter (in our example, you could say “cap M A D Y S S E N”).

The Spelling Window then closes and, in your text, Dragon replaces the misrecognized segment with what you indicated was the correct transcription.

Note: In addition to adjusting your document, Dragon learned a bit of information to refine your profile, and if you entered in the Spelling Window a word that wasn’t in its active vocabulary, Dragon has now added that word to its active vocabulary (you could now see that word in the Vocabulary Editor).

Remember that Dragon allows the use of voice but doesn’t prohibit manual action; at different times one may be quicker or easier than the other. In the edit line of the Spelling Window, it can be faster to make modifications with mouse or keyboard, but you can perform correction entirely by voice.

You cannot dictate words in the Spelling Window. However, you can dictate:

• Individual characters: letters, digits, space, symbols (see your documentation for details)
• Commands like “backspace 5”, “move right 4 characters”, “delete next word”, “select line”

Note: In the Spelling Window, Backspace and Delete commands should be used instead of scratch that, especially if Press Key commands are used.

As you enter characters in the window, Dragon presents new choices in the list so you may not have to enter all characters! Here are tips for spelling out:

• To spell a capital letter, just say cap followed by the letter.
• You can use alternate pronunciations to spell letters: alpha, letter alpha, letter a, bravo, charlie, delta, echo, foxtrot, etc. (see the Help for the full list)
• To insert a space, say space or spacebar.
• If one of the choices listed is close, you can save time by modifying it: say modify and its number, which brings it to the window’s edit line.
Exercise 1: Look at the following sample, dictate it, then use the `correct <xyz>` command to fix any errors. (This sample was designed to create errors! All the names here could be spelled in different ways.)

```
Until further notice, the BHDP meeting will be held in room B31 (not B40).

Special invitees this week: Stephen Hess, Anne Petersen, and Gene Wood.
```

**TIP:** If several consecutive words are incorrect, correct them together. For instance, if "B40" were recognized as "before tea," you would say `correct before tea`.

Exercise 2: Dictate a few sentences containing uncommon words, such as names and nicknames or product names, until a few misrecognitions appear. For each misrecognition, bring up the Spelling Window and practice spelling out what you actually said, as well as editing one of the choices from the list.

**Using playback to aid correction**

Sometimes, especially if you dictate a significant amount of text before correcting, you may not remember exactly what you actually said. Dragon’s playback feature is very helpful in these instances. You can take advantage of it in several ways.

If you see that a certain word or phrase appears incorrectly, use the `correct` command to open the Spelling Window. Once it appears, click or say `Play Back` to hear the recording of your voice as you dictated that text. It may be that in fact you had misspoken or mumbled; this happens to everyone, particularly near the end of the day! In that case, close the Spelling Window (you can say `click cancel`) and dictate the word(s) again.

**TIP:** You can have playback occur automatically with Correction. In the Options dialog, check **Automatic Playback on Correction**. This is particularly helpful as you first learn to use Dragon; you may want to turn it off after a few weeks of practice.

You can also use Playback to hear sections of dictation in the document itself. To do this, select the editable text you would like to hear played back. Then, say `play that back`, or use the DragonBar’s Audio menu. If you find a misrecognition, you can stop playback by clicking the mouse (or using the Correction hotkey or button -- see below). Because speech input cannot be received during playback, you cannot stop playback by voice. If clicking the mouse is problematic for you, play small selections at a time.

Note: You may wish to explore the Playback attributes in the Options dialog.

If using the Classic DragonBar, expanding it (click its chevron or say `view extras bar`) gives access to several extras:

- The **Correction button** opens the correction interface (as do the Correction commands and hot key).
- The playback icons, similar to those on a music player, allow you to begin playback, speed up (useful for large sections of text) or stop playback, and skip backwards or forward.
The **Transcribe button** launches the transcription of recorded dictations (for details, see the Help including the **Auto-Transcribe Folder Agent**).

**Exercise 3:** Dictate a detailed paragraph about people you know. Then select it and play it back. If you find any misrecognitions, use the Correction button, hot key, or commands to correct them.

Note: As you use Dragon more, experiment with how to correct and *when* to correct. (We recommend finishing at least your current paragraph before making a correction, so that you preserve your train of thought.) Notice what seems more convenient and efficient for you.

**Smart Format Rules**

When you make a correction related to formatting, such as abbreviations, titles, units of measure, or alternate forms, Dragon may display its Smart Format Rules box, offering to change one of its Auto-Formatting options or Word Properties settings. You can then either accept one of the adjustments offered, or dismiss the box.

If you wish to, you can change settings yourself from the Auto-Formatting Options dialog box or the **Vocabulary Editor**, as in previous versions. The Smart Format Rules feature simply "reaches out" to you, making it quick and easy for you to adjust the settings you care about.

For example: When you dictate "five kilograms," Dragon writes "5 kg" and if you then change "kilograms" to "kg" (by overtyping, or using the Correction menu or Spelling window) Dragon presents the Smart Format Rules box pictured here.

![Smart Format Rules](image)

Take a moment to read what the box offers. Then, if you want one of the proposed adjustments to be made, say "choose" followed by the desired number.

If you don't want any of the choices proposed, you can say "cancel" or just move on to whatever you would have done if the box had not come up.
Key points about correcting recognition errors

Refining your profile can prevent many errors, because it helps Dragon learn how you sound and what words and phrases you use often. Add words and phrases to the Vocabulary, with Spoken Forms and/or Properties if warranted and be sure to let Dragon see your words and phrases in context, for instance by letting it analyze relevant documents.

Although correcting misrecognitions may seem time-consuming at first, it will result in increased accuracy, which in turn means that there will be fewer and fewer misrecognitions to address.

To have the Spelling window as the default correction interface, enable the option "Correct" Commands Bring Up Spelling Window.

Flow is important: commands require a brief pause before and after. Do not pause at all between the word 'correct' and the misrecognized word(s). At first, you may want to “rehearse” the whole command in your head before speaking it.

When the Spelling Window is open, you can say choose n to pick from its list. If no choice is exact but one is close, you can quickly modify it: click it or say edit and its number (for instance edit 5). This brings it to the top, where you can edit it by hand or by voice.

You can use the Spelling window to type or spell out words, but not to dictate words directly.

To be sure of what was said for the text segment you are correcting, use Playback. Another advantage of playback: it gives you feedback on how clearly you dictated.
Editing Text by Voice

Dragon lets you use your voice to move around within a document and edit the contents—whether or not that document was originally created by voice. As you learned, the software transcribes your dictation wherever the insertion point is. (The insertion point is usually shown as a blinking vertical bar some call the cursor.)

This lesson presents some of the commands to select text and move the insertion point. Mouse and keyboard can still be used, of course. Don’t try to do everything by voice unless you have to. At first, focus on getting optimal accuracy in your dictations—speaking clearly, adapting the vocabulary, performing corrections as needed, reading a text for acoustic training…

Navigation and selection

Note: Navigation commands use the words go and move interchangeably, and a space counts as one character.

Some commands move the insertion point regardless of its starting location:

move to top, or go to start of document — moves to the beginning of the document
move to bottom — moves to the end of the document

Other commands move the insertion point relative to its present location:

move to end of line (the current line, the one containing the insertion point)
move up(down) 1-20 line(s) or paragraph(s) — e.g. move up 3 lines
move left(back) 1-20 word(s) or character(s) — e.g. move left 7 words
move right(forward) 1-20 word(s) or character(s) — e.g. move forward 3 characters

The insert before/after commands position the insertion point just before or after a specific word or punctuation mark in the text:

insert before your office — moves the insertion point to just before the phrase "your office"
insert after Joe comma — moves to just after the comma following the word "Joe"

The select commands let you designate editable text visible on the screen. Below are just some of them. You can say select followed by what you wish to highlight (include punctuation as needed):

select let me know select comma obviously comma

For longer phrases, you can specify a range by naming its beginning and ending word(s):

select do let THROUGH please — "do let me know at your earliest convenience please"

You can select one or more characters, words, lines or paragraphs at a time: select line, select next 3 paragraphs, select previous 5 words, select next character… as well as select rest of line. Note: You can use similar commands to delete (delete line, delete next three words…) and copy (copy line, copy rest of line…)
You can also select the entire content of the field or document with the command **select all**.

Note: You can "unselect" a selection by saying **unselect that**. Another way is to move the insertion point with a **move right** command, for instance.

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**TIP:** Say commands as a continuous phrase, with a brief pause before and after. For commands that *quote words from your screen*, choose your target words *before* you start to say the command. Otherwise, any hesitation will cause the words of the command to be typed on the screen. (If this happens, just say **scratch that** and give your command again, without pausing this.)

One should always strive to dictate in complete phrases, since context helps the recognition of text. When it comes to commands, formulating the whole phrase and dictating it without pauses isn’t just helpful, it's essential. The exercises below will provide plenty of practice.

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### Handling multiple matches in text

When you give a command that quotes from your text (such as "insert before <xyz>" or "bold <xyz>") and Dragon finds multiple matches for <xyz> (including homophones), Dragon lets you resolve that ambiguity and even take advantage of it. A number will appear next to each visible match. You can then:

- say the number of the desired instance, or
- say "**choose all**" (for commands that can apply it)

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### Direct editing: Bold | Underline | Capitalize | Copy | Delete | Cut…

Dragon lets you perform frequent editing tasks quickly: like you can quote from editable text in the commands **select <xyz>** and **select <start> thru <end>**, you can say the verbs **bold**, **underline**, **italicize** as well as **capitalize**, immediately followed by the desired word(s). This also applies to **copy**, as well as **delete** and **cut**—note that these three can be disabled, as explained below.

Note: If these commands are enabled, Dragon will try to recognize as one of them **any phrase starting with one of these verbs followed by a word or phrase present in the text**: e.g. "bold measures" or "cut corners." Because Dragon recognizes commands only if they are spoken as one flow between two pauses, this could happen if the phrase is said in isolation—for instance, if the speaker is creating a list or had just hesitated (as one often does when composing out loud). If this happens, say **undo that**.

Remember in particular the possibility of unintended recognition of **cut <xyz>** and **delete <xyz>, especially if you dictate without looking at the screen**. If you prefer to avoid this risk, disable these commands: clear their checkbox in the Options dialog.
Full Text Control, “unknown” text fields and the Dictation Box

Commands such as ‘correct <xyz>’ and ‘insert after <xyz>’ (where <xyz> is a word or phrase in your text) work thanks to a Dragon functionality called Full Text Control or enhanced dictation and editing (formerly “Select-and-Say”). This functionality requires the text field to let Dragon be aware of its content, such as where words and sentences begin and end. It also encompasses Dragon’s ability to automatically capitalize the first word, adjust spacing after an insertion, and play back dictation.

Many popular applications build their text fields (or at least most of their fields) in a standard way, and as a result Dragon has Full Text Control in these fields.

However, you may encounter a field for which Dragon can’t have that awareness—and therefore Dragon can’t always apply all its normal capabilities. PowerPoint slides are one example. If you just dictate a flow of words, you may not notice anything unusual, especially if you start with a word that is always capitalized such as a name or the pronoun “I”.

When the insertion point is in such an “unknown” field, the DragonBar’s Full Text Control indicator is dimmed.

Even in “unknown” text fields, one can use Dragon efficiently—knowing the following:
1. To dictate short entries, you may want to just use what does work in all text fields—dictate normally and, if and when necessary, do the following:
   - say ‘spacebar’ (or press the spacebar),
   - say ‘cap’ before a word to force its capitalization,
   - say generic commands like ‘select line’, ‘undo that’, ‘go to top’ and ‘move <left | right | up | down>’ or reposition the insertion point by hand, etc.

2. To dictate something substantial, consider using the Dictation Box, an intermediary window in which you can create, modify, and correct text. When your text is ready, use the **Transfer** button (say ‘click transfer’): Dragon then closes the box and transfers your text to where you had the insertion point.

To open the Dictation Box, you can:
- Use its hot key: Ctrl+Shift+d
- Say a command such as ‘Open Dictation Box’
- Use the Tools menu

The box comes up automatically if you speak where Dragon doesn’t have Full Text Control (except in Web browsers). This default can be changed in the Options dialog, under Miscellaneous.

There is a lot of flexibility around the Dictation Box. In addition to changing its hot key, you can:
- Give its command one or more alternate names, if you prefer to open it by saying ‘open Dragon box’ for instance(to find the command in the **Command Browser**, you can filter for the word ‘box’ with ‘Global Commands’ selected in the Context list).
- Modify its appearance and behavior: default font size, positioning (anchored or near the cursor), copy and paste method, whether it shows how many characters it contains…
- Have different settings for different applications. See the Help for details.
Replacing and inserting

The select and correct commands are useful when you wish to change some of the text on your screen. As you would with mouse or keyboard, you select the relevant segment then you overwrite it by dictating or typing.

For instance, if your text reads "100 Main Street" but you wish to change it to "500 Washington Street", say select 100 Main (pause) 500 Washington.

TIP: For larger passages, save time by using select line, select <start> through <end>, select paragraph… Note also that the command “resume with…” can be very efficient as an equivalent of selecting what you just dictated up to a particular word then deleting that segment and resume dictation; be sure to read about it in the Help and try it out.

Exercise 1: Practice “overwriting” by voice. Examine then dictate the following paragraph.

I will be in the Boston area for a few days the week after next, and would love to get together for lunch. We could meet at your office at noon. I’ll be staying at the Madison downtown. Talk to you soon!

1) Say select lunch → The word “lunch” is now selected.
   Say an early dinner → The sentence should now read “get together for an early dinner.”

2) Say select noon
Say **six o’clock** → The sentence should now read “We could meet at your office at 6:00.”

3) Say **select in through next** → The segment “in the Boston area for a few days the week after next” is highlighted.

Say **in your area on Tuesday July fifteenth**

Let’s say we now want to add a few words inside this paragraph.

4) Notice the insertion point’s current position. Say **insert after dinner**, then say **if you have time**.

5) Say **insert before exclamation mark** (observe the move), then say **comma I hope**.

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**TIP:** If, after doing some editing in your text, you need to remove trailing white space, you can use commands such as **backspace** or **delete next character** for a single space. You can even say **backspace** combined with a number: for example, **backspace 5** is like pressing the backspace key 5 times.

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Dragon can help you quickly edit text **whether or not this text was created by voice**. The exercise below is to be performed entirely by voice, but remember that for optimal productivity in daily work you may use a combination of voice and keyboard/mouse.

**Exercise 2:** Look at the following text, dictate it, then edit it by voice as described below.

Dear Ms. Cooper,

It was nice meeting you Tuesday. I think you have some good ideas about the Johnson project! Let’s get the team focused on this project by February.

When you have time, could you write up your comments and email them to me? I would really appreciate it.

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• Edit the first sentence so it reads "meeting **with** you last Tuesday".
• Edit the second sentence so it reads "**You** have some great ideas".
• Edit the third sentence so it reads "on this **important** project".
• Edit the third sentence so it reads "by early February", and insert a blank line after it.
• Change the fourth sentence to “Could you please write up your notes and email them to me ASAP?”
• Edit the salutation, changing "Ms. Cooper" to "Allison".
• Edit the last sentence, removing "really", and add a closing line of "Sincerely, Debra Peet-Smith".

Which commands did you find most useful in each situation?
Key points about editing text

- You can use Dragon to edit a document by voice whether the document was dictated or typed.

- Dragon’s many editing commands can address small or large amounts of text, even several paragraphs or the entire document (select paragraph, select all).

- At first, uttering the whole command can be tricky for commands that quote words from your text, such as select... through... and insert before <xyz>. As usual, deciding what you are going to say before starting to speak is recommended. If you paused mid-command, just say scratch that, pause, and give the complete command again.

- Commands that quote your text (bold <xyz>, correct <xyz>, insert after <xyz>, capitalize <xyz>...) work thanks to a functionality called Full Text Control, which depends on Dragon’s ability to constantly obtain information such as where words and sentences begin, so Dragon can adjust spacing between words and capitalize the beginning of a sentence.

- If dictating in a non-standard field, remember that you can say Cap to start a sentence and spacebar to create a space, as well as use the Dictation Box—an intermediary window which has Full Text Control.

- In Dragon 15, the Dictation box opens automatically where Dragon doesn’t have Full Text Control (except in Web browsers). You can disable this in the Options dialog.

- You can modify the Dictation Box's appearance and behavior; in addition, you can modify its hot key and give its command one or more alternate names.

- You can set the Dictation Box to behave differently for different applications.
Formatting Text by Voice

Whether text was originally dictated or typed, Dragon lets you use your voice to control font (Arial, Courier…), font style (bold, underline…), font size, alignment, color, and more.

Note: In order to preserve your train of thought, it’s a good idea to prioritize dictation over formatting: first dictate your document (or at least finish dictating your paragraph, list, or idea), then revise your words if needed, and only then apply formatting.

The "X that" convention

Dragon has many commands to tell the computer to perform a certain action on a certain item. Many are phrased as "X that", with X being a verb for the desired action: for instance, italicize that and delete that.

Remember, for commands to be recognized, you must pause before and after the command but not within it.

When Dragon hears an "X that" command, it decides what “that” is as follows:

1) If anything on the screen is highlighted (whether by voice or by hand), Dragon performs the action on that selection. (It can be one or more characters or words.)

2) If nothing is highlighted, Dragon performs the action on whatever you dictated since you last paused—in other words, the contents of the Results box, the last utterance.

Note: In commands, you can say “the selection” instead of “that”—as well as “it” or “this.”

Dragon's "X that" editing commands include:

- **cap that** – capitalizes the first letter of words, e.g. Water Management
  (Dragon also has “capitalize <xyz>” as seen in the section on direct editing commands)

- **all caps that** – capitalizes all letters, e.g. EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

- **no caps that** – puts in lowercase all words, e.g. american express

- **delete that** (Dragon also has “delete <xyz>” as seen in the section on direct editing)  

**TIP** To delete your few last utterances, you can repeat scratch that or specify a number of times (for instance, scratch that 5 times) but the command “resume with…” can be most efficient.

- **bold that, italicize that, underline that** (Dragon also has “<verb> <xyz>”)

- **restore that** – removes all bold/italics/underline formatting from the segment

- **left-align that, right-align that, center that, justify that**

- **copy that** and **cut that** (you can also use the direct editing commands “<verb> <xyz>”)

- **paste that**

- **hyphenate that** – puts hyphens in the spaces within the segment

- **compound that** – removes spaces between words in the segment

- **bullet/unbullet that**

- **quote that** – puts quotation marks around the selection or last utterance

- **bracket that** (inserts rounded characters, not square brackets, if your profile is set to UK English)
empty quotes or empty brackets — inserts a pair of quotation marks or brackets so you can dictate between them.

TIP: The Command Browser’s Keyword Filter lets you explore additional command wordings for the applications you frequently use, as seen in this screenshot. For instance, in Word and WordPerfect, you can say “turn bullets on” and “turn bullets off” as well as “format that bulleted and bold.”

The "Format That" commands

Not all formatting commands are worded as "X that", but all follow the same rules about what text the action is performed on: the selection if there is one, otherwise the last utterance (what was said since the last pause.)

As seen in the Command Browser, the many formatting commands include:

format that bullet style (also: bullet that or make that bullet style)
format that numbered
format that centered
format that strikeout — places a line through the selection (for example, January 19)
format that regular
Note that formatting commands can combine several indications, as in:

- **format that Garamond**, **format that Arial 13**, etc. — gives the selection the font name/size specified
- **format that 20 point**, **format that 13 point**, etc. — gives the selection to the point size specified
- **format that bold italics**
- **format that caps bold**
- **format that bulleted and plain**

**Exercise:** Dictate the following to experiment with giving format commands as you dictate and *afterwards*.

I FINALLY read *The Grapes of Wrath*. Although it *is* long, I read it surprisingly *quickly*.

**TIP** To undo the last action, say **undo that**. This is equivalent to the keyboard shortcut Ctrl z.
Key points about formatting documents

✓ The “X that” commands apply to the current selection or, if there is no selection, to the last utterance (what Dragon heard since you last paused).

✓ Remember to pause briefly before and after saying a command.

✓ You can repeat delete that or scratch that up to 10 times to delete the last things you said—you can also say scratch that 3 times, scratch that 7 times... For deleting from the end of your dictation back to a particular word, the command resume with... can be very efficient; we strongly recommend it.

✓ To undo the last action, you can say undo that (which is equivalent to press control z).

✓ For efficiency, prioritize dictation over formatting: first finish capturing your thought, then revise or correct the text if needed, and only then apply formatting.