Accessibility Features Web Browsers

Browser Accessibility Comparison Table

Feature	Safari (Mac)	Google Chrome	Microsoft Edge
Simplify page view	Yes	No	Yes
Text-to-Speech	Yes	No	Yes
Zoom	Yes	Yes	Yes
Background Contrast	Yes	No	Yes
Web Extensions for Accessibility	Limited	Yes	Yes
Live Captions	No	Yes	No

Safari (Mac)

Safari is only available on Apple's operating systems such as macOS, IOS and iPadOS. It is not available for use on Windows devices.

It offers a range of built-in accessibility features found under Reader mode that can help make web content easier to read, understand, and interact with.

1. Reader Mode (Simplify page view)

Reader Mode simplifies websites by removing distractions such as ads, menus, and other non-essential page elements, making content easier to read.

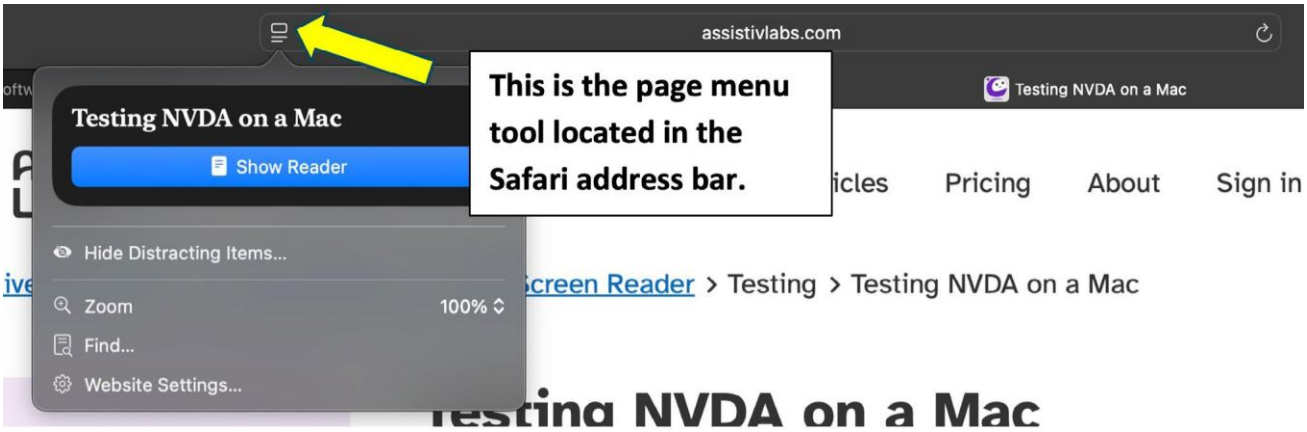
It includes the following features:

- Background contrast options (such as White, Sepia, Grey, or Black)
- Font customisation options to adjust the reading style
- Zoom controls to make text and page content larger or smaller

Please note that Reader Mode is not available on every website, as Safari can only enable it on pages where it can identify a clear article or reading-focused layout.

How to use Reader Mode and its tools:

1. Open Safari and navigate to a website where you would like to use Reader Mode.
2. Check if Reader Mode is available on the website by selecting the Page Menu button on the left side of the Safari address bar.



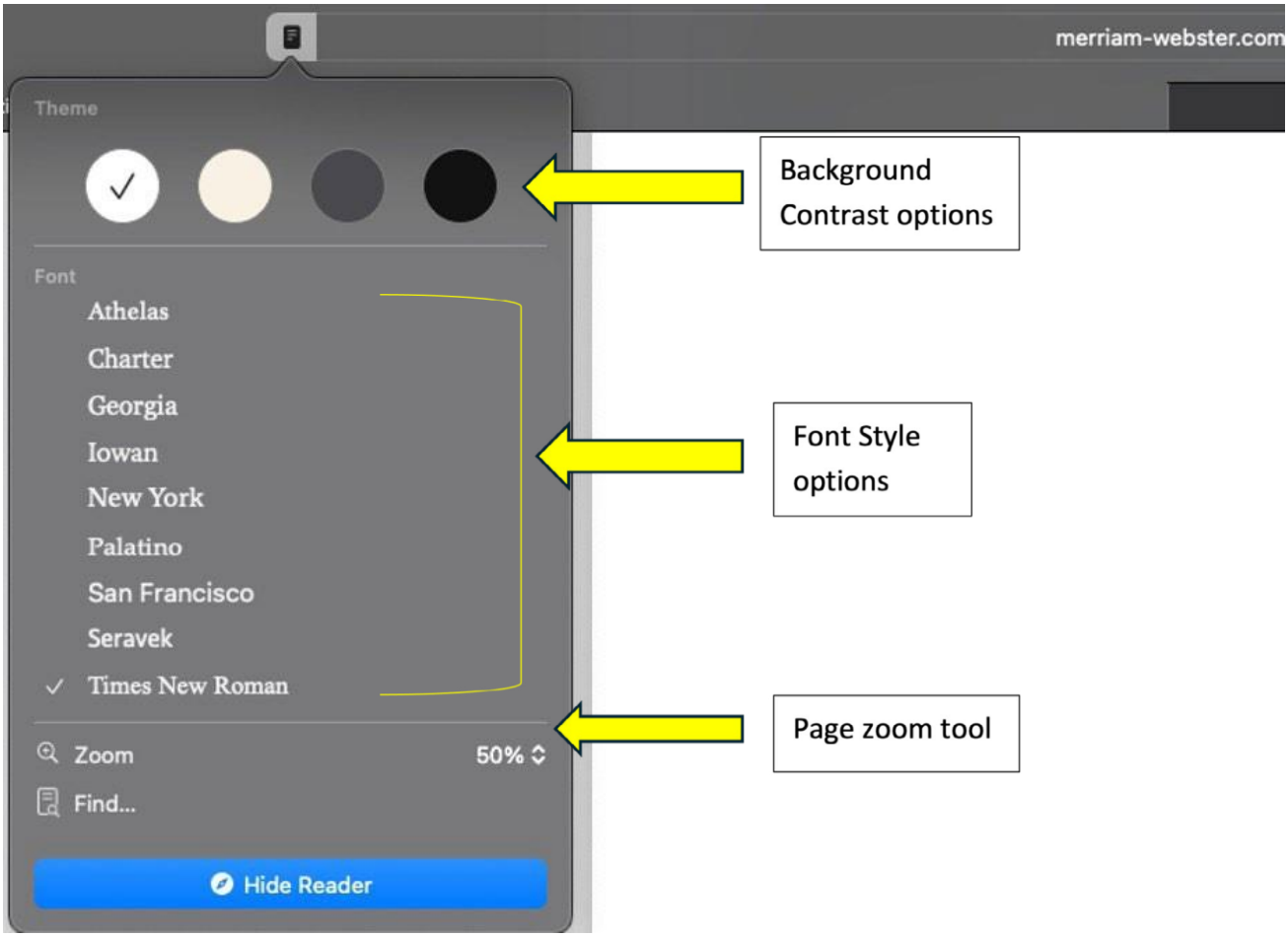
An image of a yellow arrow pointing to the Page menu tool inside Safari address bar.

3. Where you can see “Show Reader’, Reader Mode is available on the website. Select the button to enter Reader Mode.



An image of a yellow arrow pointing to the Show Reader option inside Safari Page Menu.

4. While in Reader Mode, select the “Page Menu” button again where you can access Reader options.



An image showing Page Menu drop-down in Safari Reader Mode. A yellow arrow points to the background colour options, a second yellow arrow points to the font style options, and a third yellow arrow points to the zoom adjustment controls within Safari Reader Mode.

2. VoiceOver (Text-to-speech)

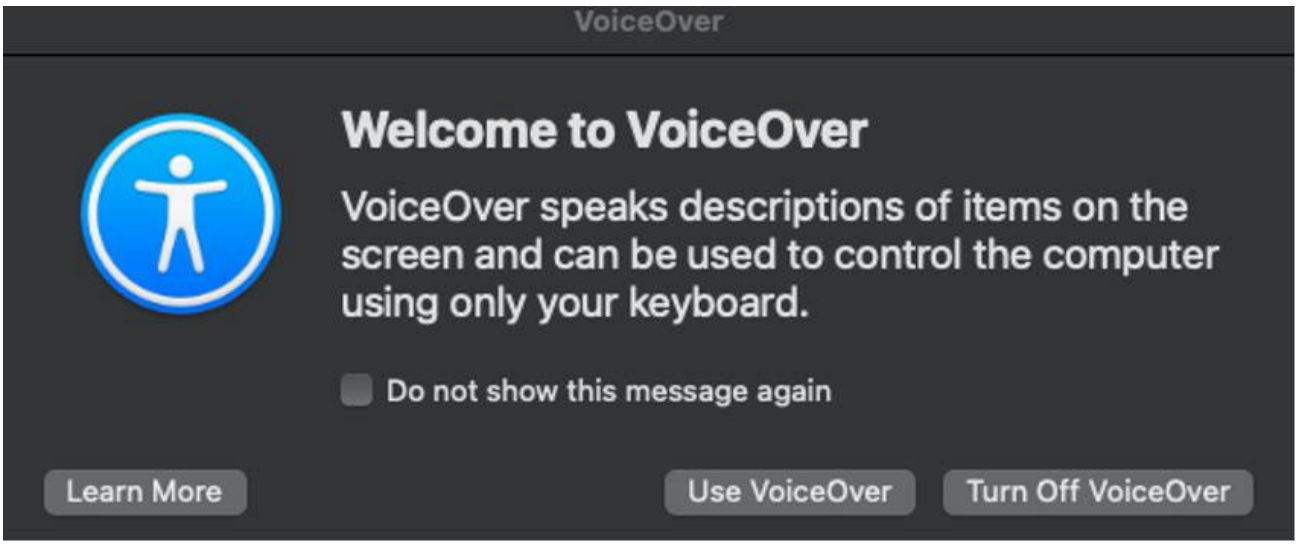
While VoiceOver is Apple's built-in screen reader for macOS and is not a Safari-specific accessibility feature, it can be used effectively within the Safari browser, as it is closely integrated with macOS.

VoiceOver uses text-to-speech technology to read on-screen content aloud and provides spoken feedback for text, buttons, links, menus, notifications, and other interface elements.

How VoiceOver Works in Safari:

1. To turn VoiceOver on or off, press Command + F5 on your Mac keyboard. Alternatively, open System Settings, select Accessibility from the left-hand menu, choose VoiceOver, and then turn VoiceOver on or off.

2. When VoiceOver is enabled, a VoiceOver welcome window will appear on your screen.



An Image of VoiceOver welcome screen on macOS with information about getting started with Apple's built-in screen reader.

3. Select Learn More to explore VoiceOver features and commands or select Use VoiceOver to begin using the screen reader.

4. VoiceOver reads aloud the item that is currently selected or in focus, such as a heading, paragraph, link, button or image.

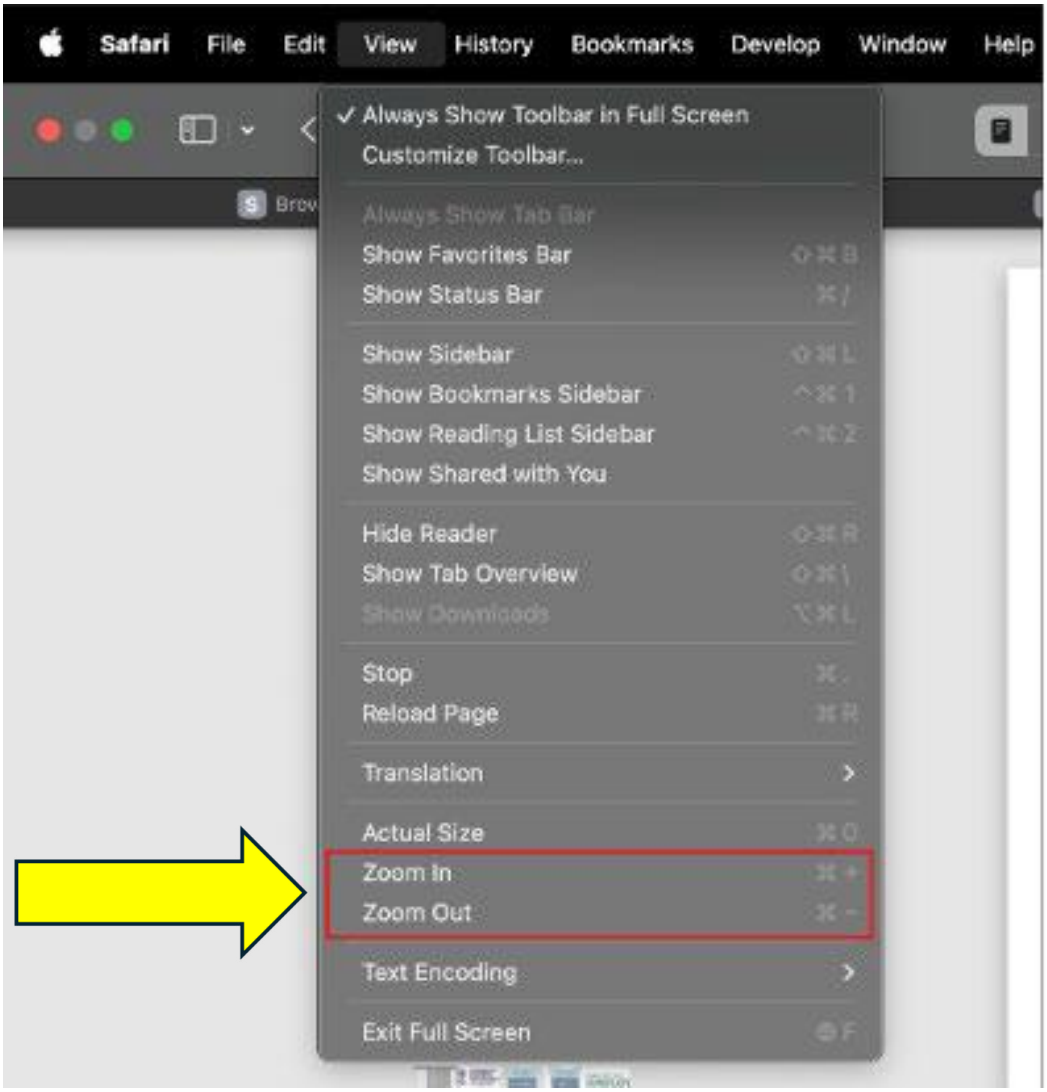
5. As you navigate through a website, VoiceOver will announce and read the content of each item as it becomes focused.

3. Zoom

The Zoom feature magnifies the website content, allowing the text and other page elements to be larger or smaller to suit personal needs.

How to use Zoom in macOS:

1. Press Command and + to make website content larger.
2. Press Command and - to make website content smaller.
3. Press Command and 0 to return the website to its default size.
4. Alternatively, select View from the menu bar at the top-left of the screen, then choose Zoom In or Zoom Out.



An image of Safari View menu on a Mac, with a yellow arrow pointing to the Zoom In and Zoom Out options used to change the zoom level of a website.

Microsoft Edge (Available on Windows and Mac)

1. Reading mode (Simplify page view)

Reading Mode is a feature in Microsoft Edge that makes websites easier to read by removing distractions such as ads, menus, and side panels. It also includes tools to help you read online content, such as:

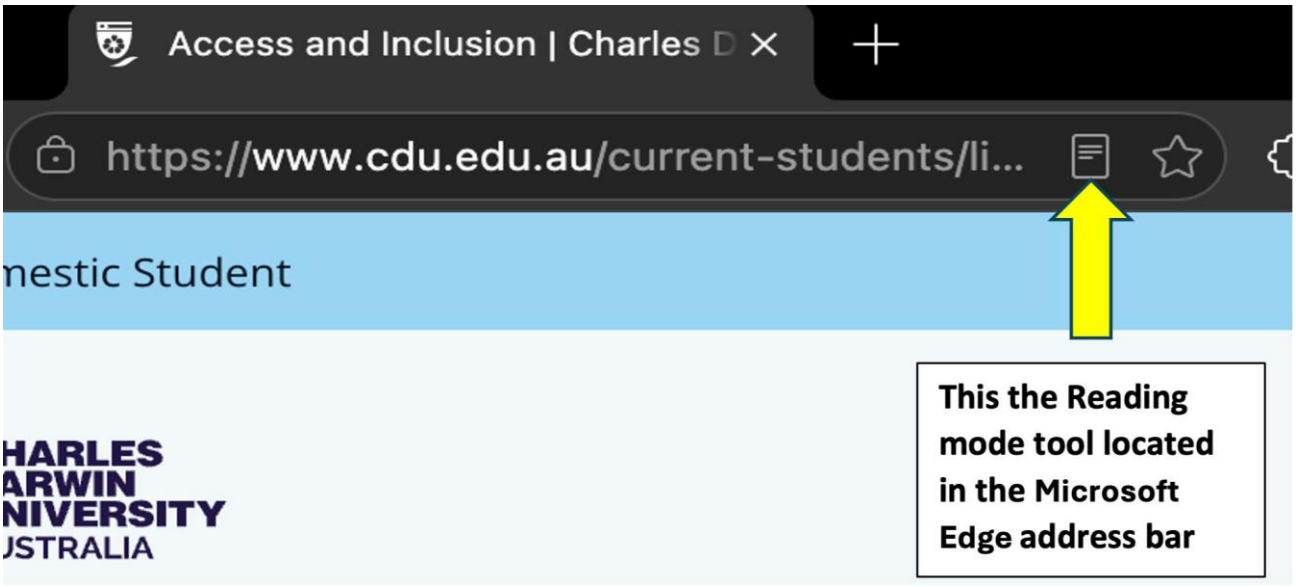
> Microsoft Copilot features, such as Summarize and Explain, may be available in Reading Mode to help users understand website content.

> Font Style and Size options along with column width options

> Background colour settings

How to use Reading mode and its tools:

1. Once you open a website, select the Reading mode icon in the address bar or press F9.



An image of a yellow arrow pointing to the Reading mode tool in the Microsoft Edge address bar.

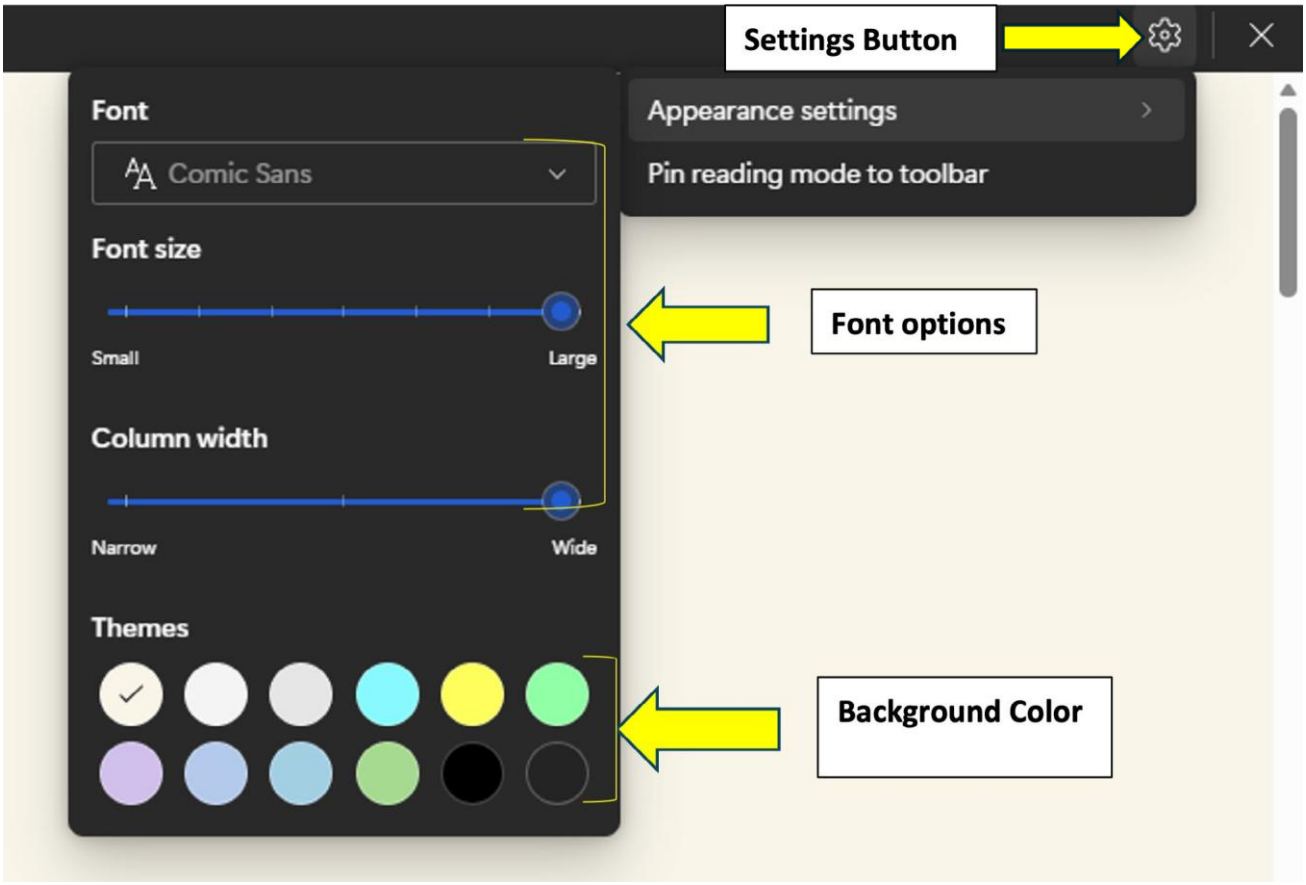
2. At the top right of the page, select the settings button and choose appearance settings. From there, you can customise the reading experience by changing the:

   > Font style: Change the appearance of the text.

   > Font size: Increase or decrease text size for easier reading.

   > Column width: Adjust the width of the text column.

   > Background colour: Change the page background to improve contrast and readability.



An image of the Appearance settings menu in Reading Mode where a yellow arrow points to the settings button, a second yellow arrow points to the font options, and a third yellow arrow points to the background colour options used to customise the reading experience.

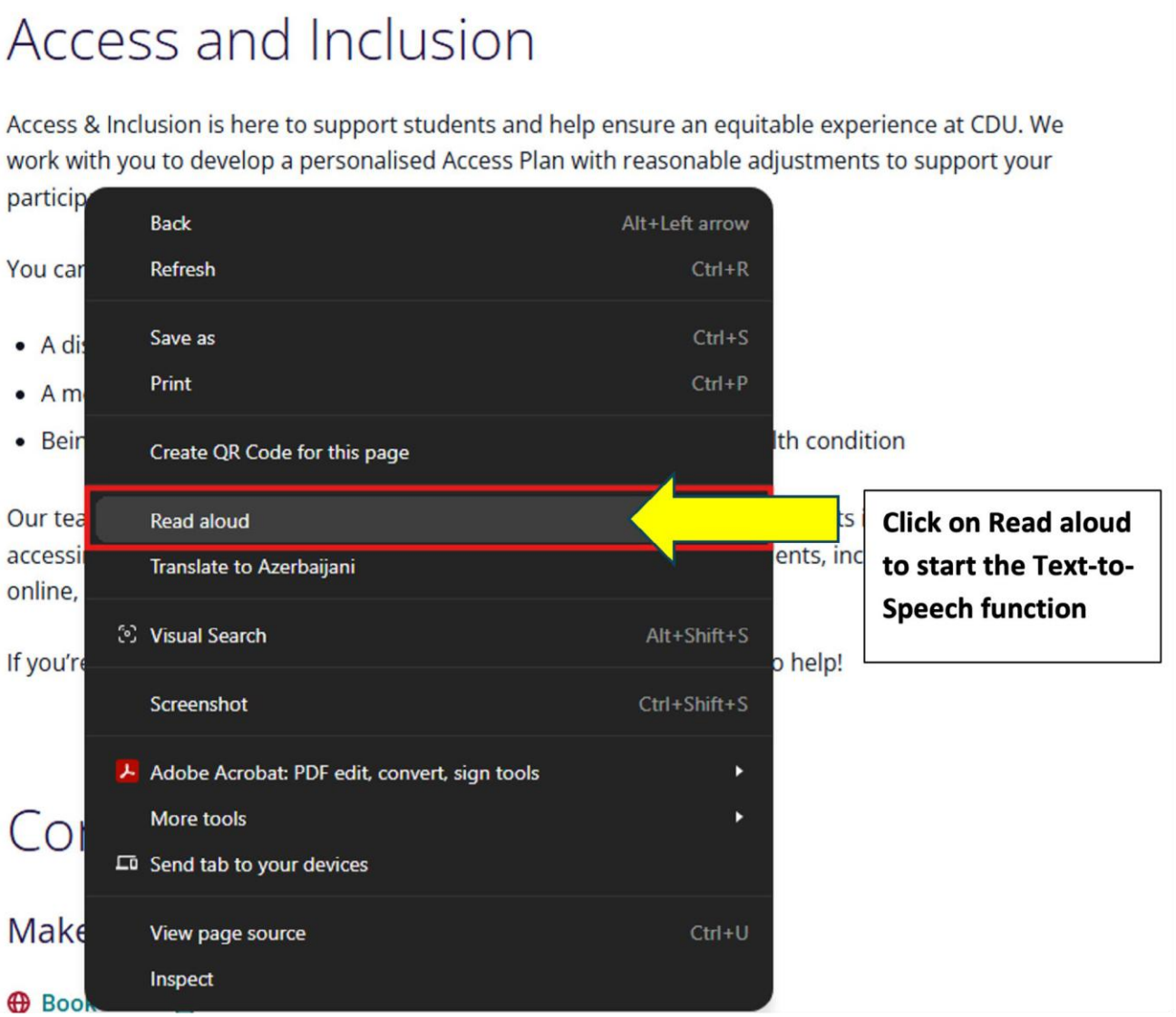
3. To return to the standard website view, press the reading mode icon on the address bar again or press F9 on your keyboard.

2. Read Aloud (Text-to-speech)

Read Aloud tool reads content from websites using text-to-speech technology. It works best when used within reading mode, but it can also be used independently throughout Microsoft Edge to listen to content without entering reading mode.

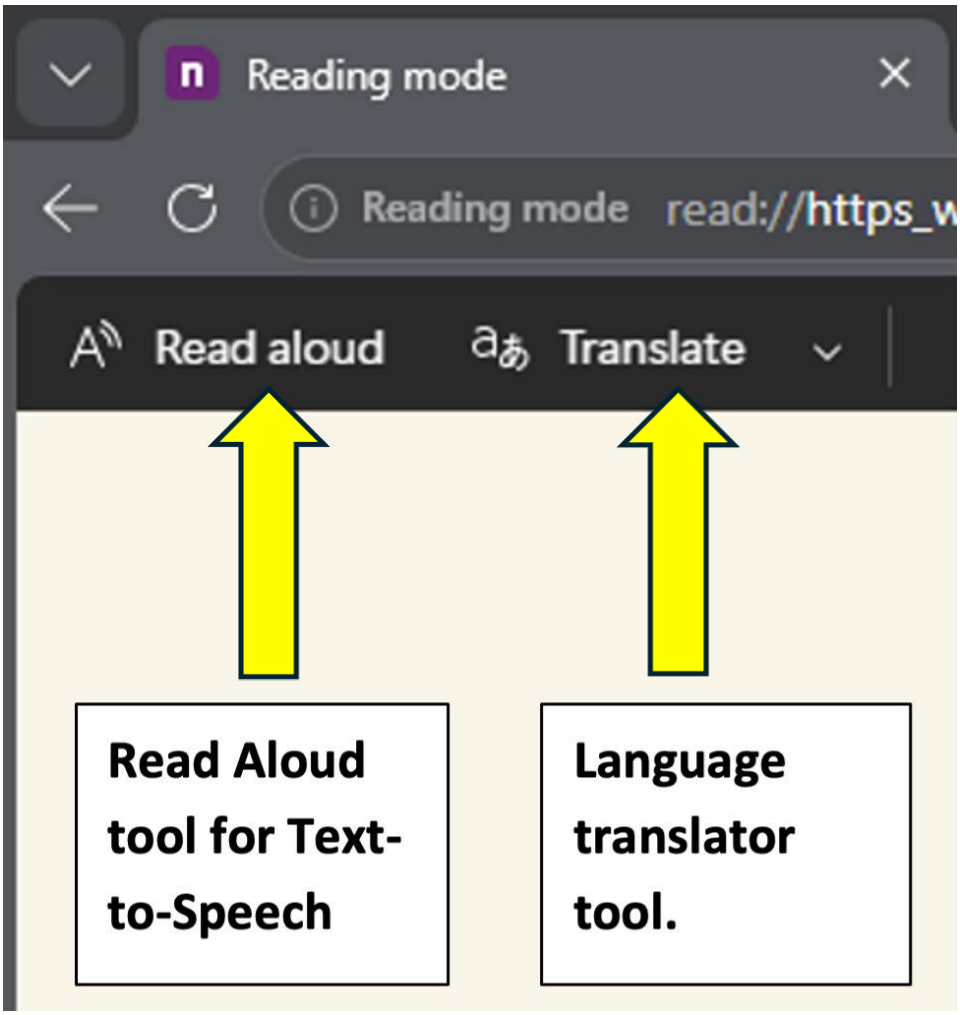
How to access Read Aloud:

1. Right-click on your website and select Read aloud, or press Ctrl + Shift + U
2. If you're using Microsoft edge on Apple Mac computer, use Command + Shift + U on Mac
3. You can also select read aloud by right clicking anywhere on a website.



An image of a yellow arrow pointing to the 'Read aloud' option when you press right-click on your mouse inside any webpage in Microsoft Edge browser.

4. If you are using Reading Mode, the Read Aloud option is also available in the top-left corner of the website, next to the Translate option.



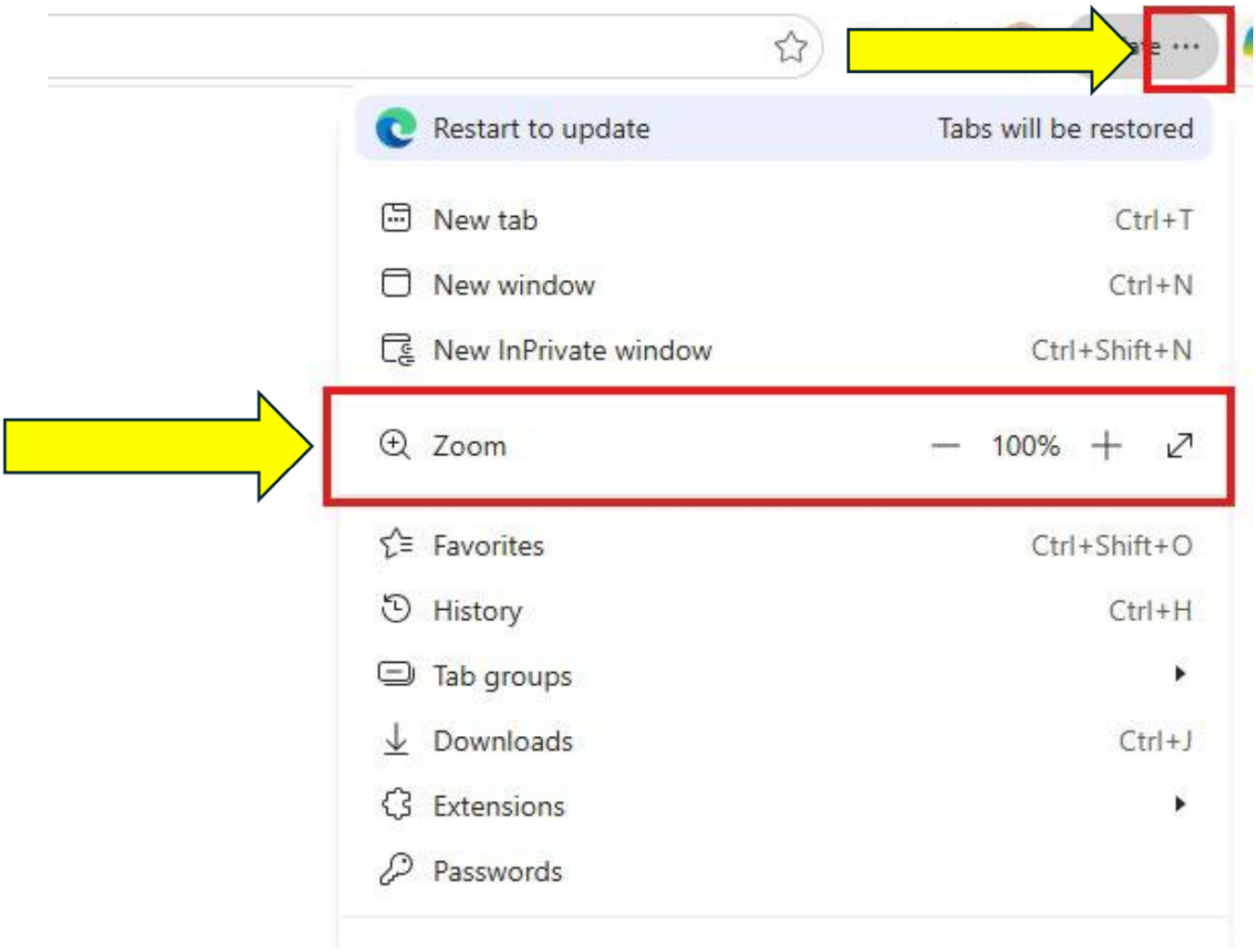
An image of the tools available within Reading Mode. A yellow arrow points to the Read Aloud tool, while a second yellow arrow points to the Translate tool in the Reading Mode toolbar.

3. Zoom

The Zoom feature magnifies website content, allowing the text and other page elements to be larger or smaller to suit personal needs.

Keyboard shortcuts:

1. Press Ctrl and + to make website content larger.
2. Press Ctrl and - to make website content smaller.
3. Press Ctrl and 0 to return to the website to its default size.
4. You can also hold Ctrl and scroll up with your mouse wheel to zoom in or hold Ctrl and scroll down to zoom out.
5. Alternatively, click the three dots in the top right corner of the Edge window. Under Zoom, select the + button to zoom in or the − button to zoom out.



An image of two yellow arrows on the Microsoft Edge homepage. The first arrow points to the three-dot menu in the top-right corner of the browser. The second arrow points to the Zoom option within the menu.

4. Image Descriptions for screen readers

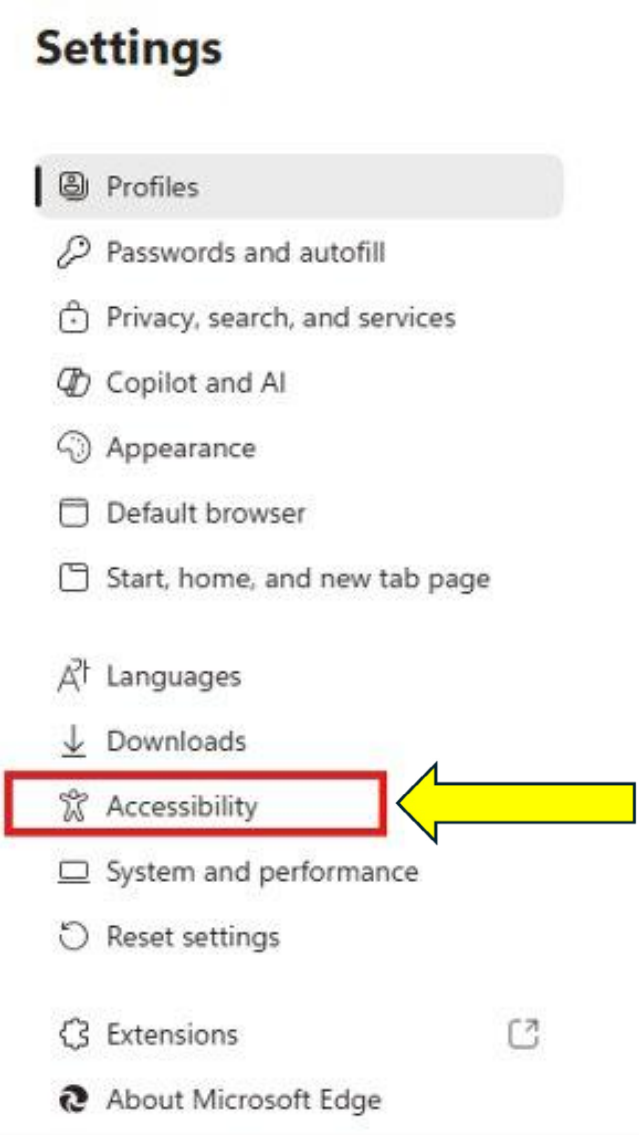
When using a Screen Reader, Microsoft Edge can generate descriptions for images that do not have alternative text which can be read aloud by the screen reader, helping users understand the content and purpose of images.

Note: This does not add text to the image or website. It creates a description that a screen reader can read aloud when alternative text is not available.

1. Open Microsoft Edge.

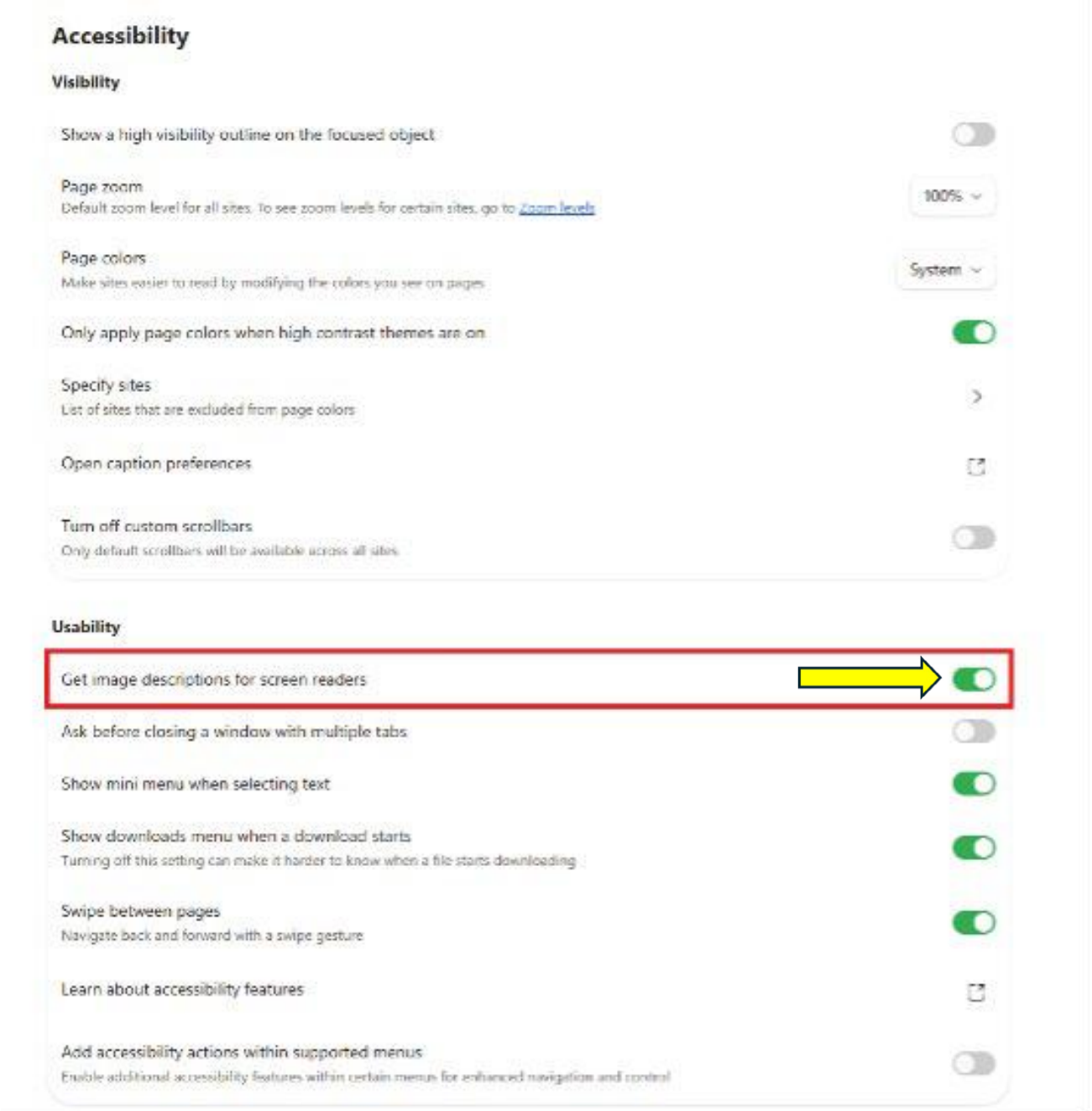
2. Select the three dots next to your Microsoft profile picture in the top-right corner of the browser window, then select Settings.

3. In the Settings menu, select Accessibility from the left-hand navigation pane



An image of the Microsoft Edge settings page. The Accessibility option in the left-hand navigation menu is highlighted with a red outline, and a yellow arrow points to the Accessibility option.

4. Under the Usability section, select the toggle for Get image descriptions from Microsoft for screen readers to turn it on.



An image of the Microsoft Edge Accessibility settings page. The Get image descriptions from Microsoft for screen readers option is highlighted with a red outline, and a yellow arrow points to the toggle used to turn the feature on.

Google Chrome Browser (Available on Windows and Mac)

The Google Chrome web browser includes the below accessibility features:

> Page zoom

> Live Caption

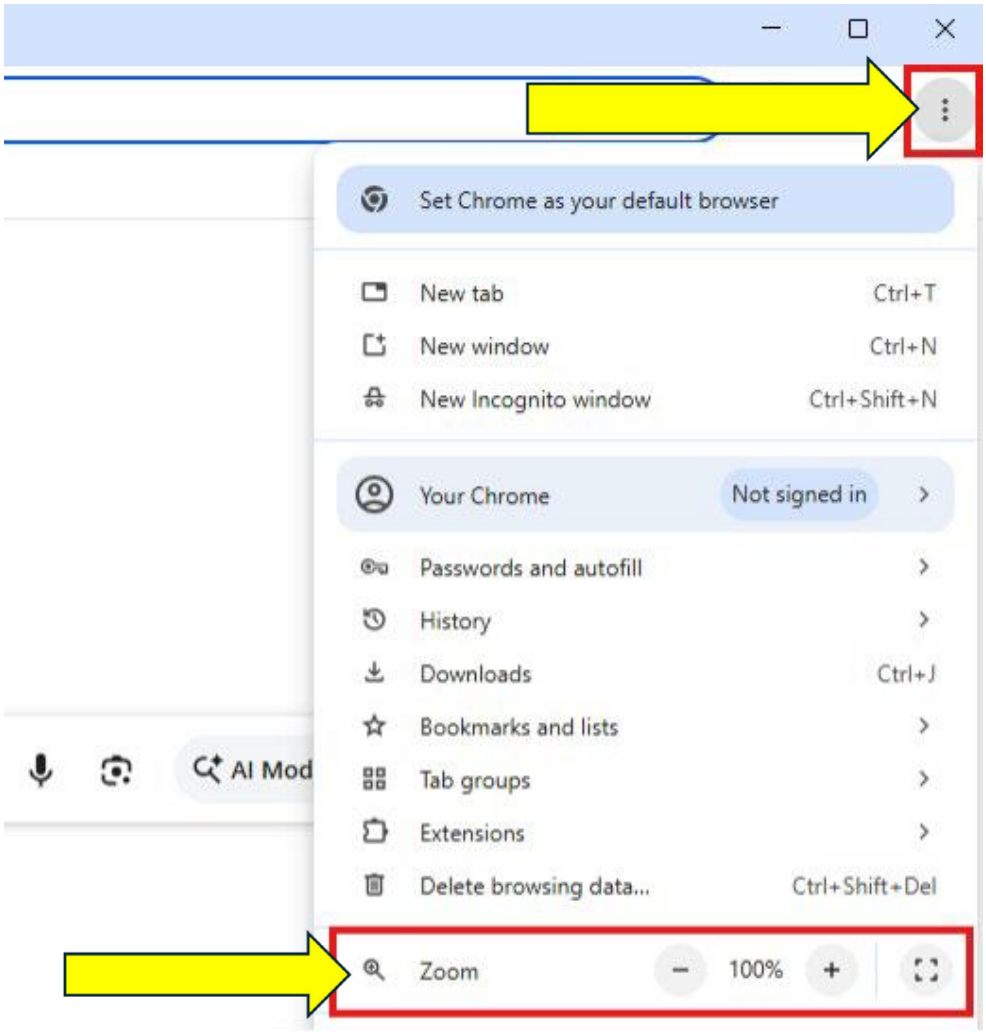
> Browser extensions that you can install to support your accessibility needs.

1. Zoom

The Zoom feature magnifies website content, allowing the text and other page elements to be larger or smaller to suit personal needs.

How to use zoom in Google Chrome:

1. Press Ctrl and + to make website content larger.
2. Press Ctrl and - to make website content smaller.
3. Press Ctrl and 0 to return to the website to its default size.
4. You can also hold Ctrl and scroll up with your mouse wheel to zoom in or hold Ctrl and scroll down to zoom out.
5. Alternatively, click the three dots in the top right corner of the Chrome window. Under Zoom, select the + button to zoom in or the − button to zoom out.



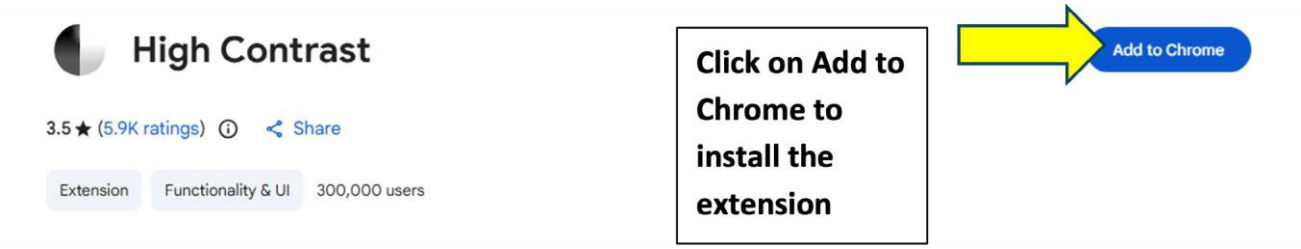
An image of two yellow arrows on Google Chrome. The first arrow points to the three-dot menu in the top-right corner of the browser. The second arrow points to the Zoom option within the menu.

2. Browser extensions

A browser extension is an add-on that you install in your web browser to add new features and customise how websites work. You can explore the Chrome Web Store for-accessibility tools that can help customise your browsing experience. For example, some extensions can change website colours, improve contrast, make text easier to read, or provide additional reading and accessibility support. Here are some extensions we recommend:

1. High Contrast web extension

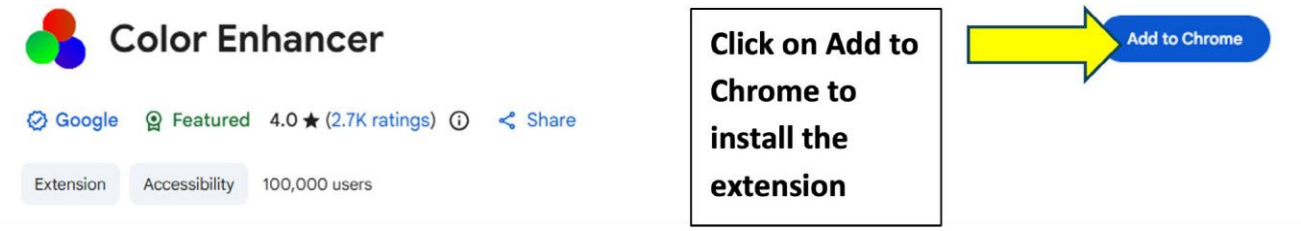
This high contrast web extension changes the colours of websites to improve the visibility of content. It provides a range of display options, such as high contrast, inverted colours, and grayscale, allowing you to customise how websites appear.



A screenshot of the High Contrast extension page in the Chrome Web Store. A yellow arrow points to the Add to Chrome button, showing where to click to install the extension.

2. Color Enhancer web extension

Colour Enhancer web extension allows you to adjust how colours are displayed on websites. It applies a custom colour filter that can help differentiate colours and improve the visibility of colour-based content such as charts, diagrams, and images.



A screenshot of the Color Enhancer extension page in the Chrome Web Store. A yellow arrow points to the Add to Chrome button, showing where to click to install the extension.

3. Live Captions

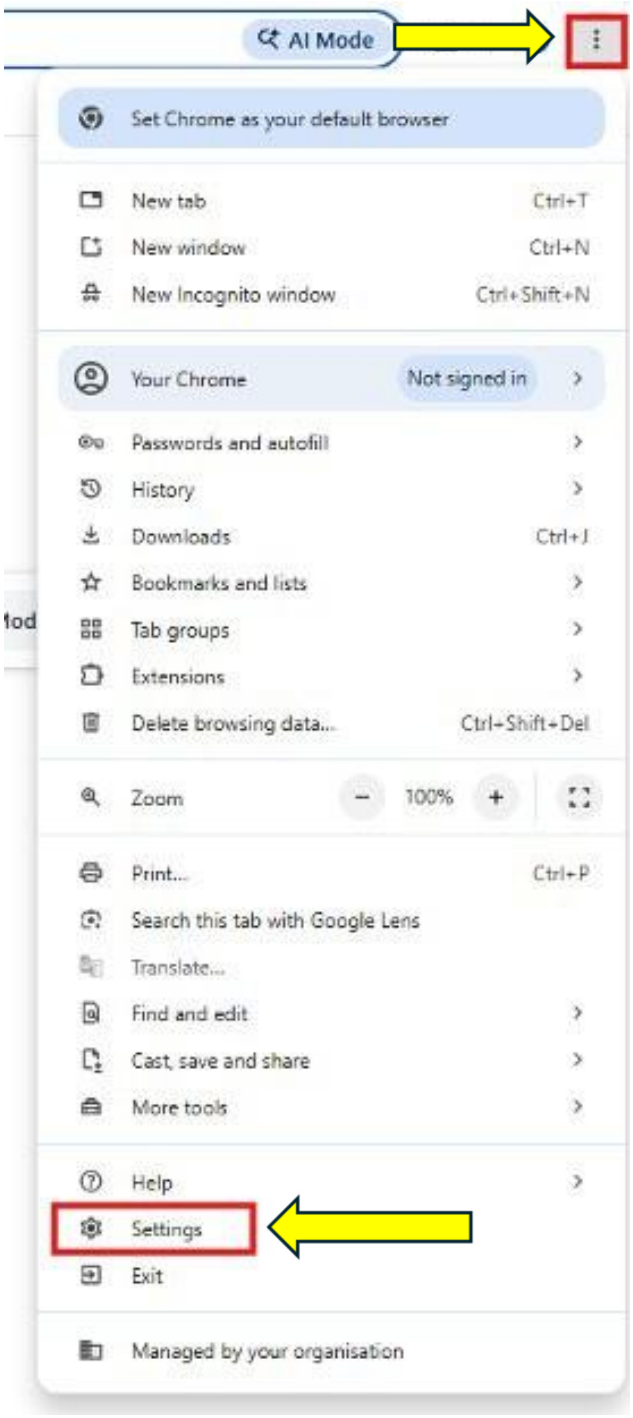
Live Caption is an accessibility feature in Google Chrome that automatically generates captions for speech and other audio playing in your browser.

For example, if your lecturer shares a recorded video that does not have captions, Live Caption can display captions as the video plays. It can also be helpful during online classes, webinars, or meetings when captions are not already available.

Note: Live Caption generates captions on your device in real time while the audio is playing. The captions appear on your screen only; they do not change the original video or add permanent captions to the recording.

How to enable Live Caption in Google Chrome:

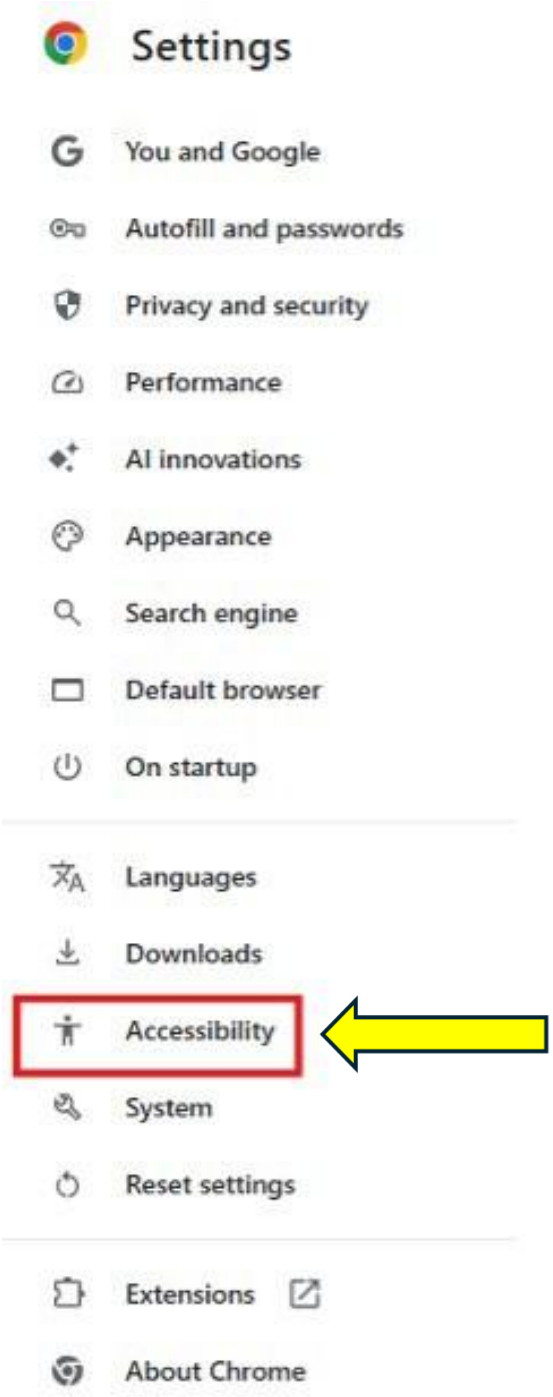
1. Open Google Chrome and on the homepage select the three dots in the top-right corner of the browser.



An image of two yellow arrows on Google Chrome. The first arrow points to the three-dot menu in the top-right corner of the browser. The second arrow points to the settings icon within the menu.

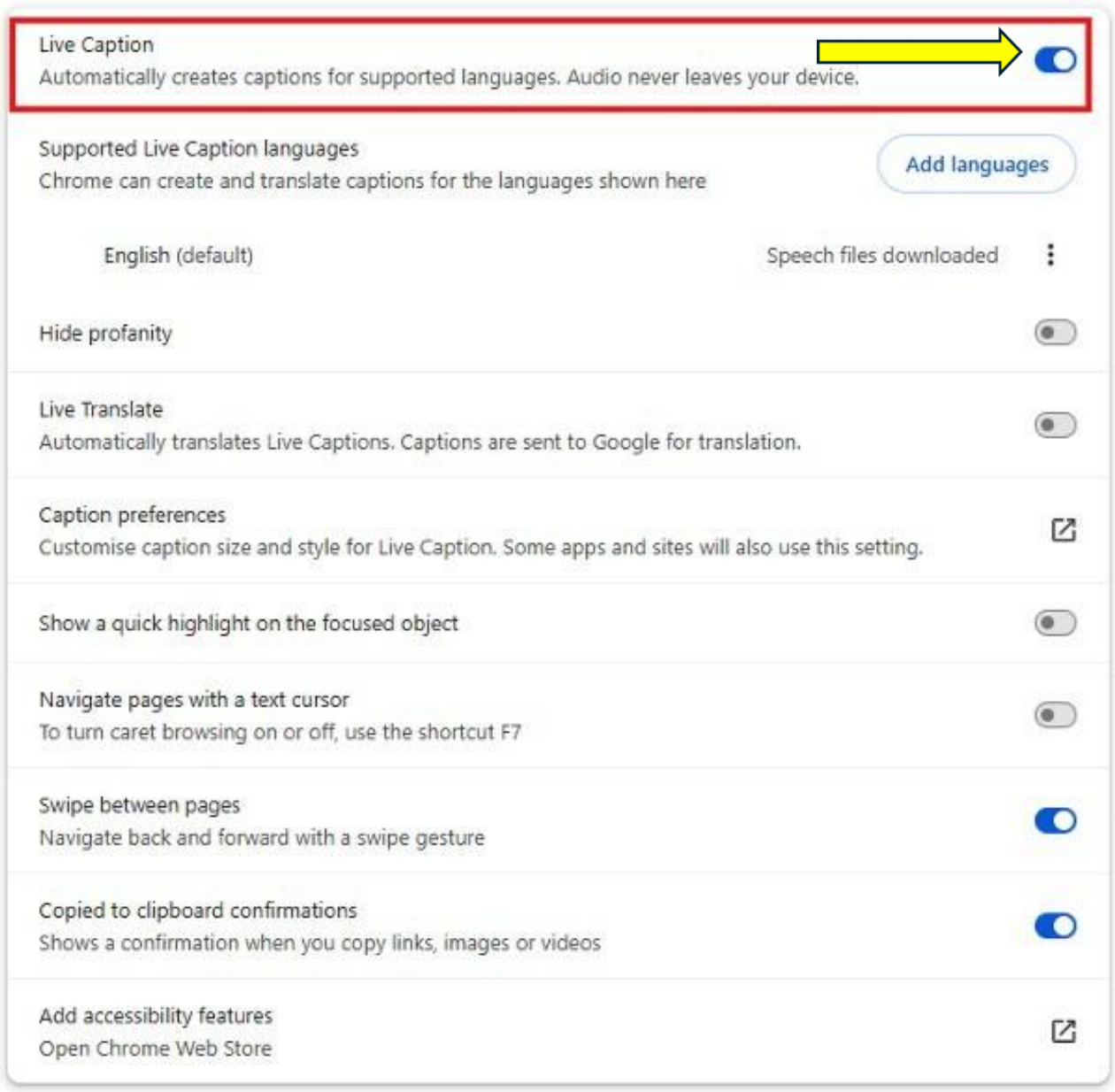
2. Select Settings.

3. In the Settings window, select Accessibility from the left-hand menu



An image of the Google Chrome settings page. The Accessibility option in the left-hand navigation menu is highlighted with a red outline, and a yellow arrow points to the Accessibility option.

4. Under the Accessibility section, select the toggle for Live Caption.



An image of the Google Chrome Accessibility settings page. The Live Caption option is highlighted with a red outline, and a yellow arrow points to the toggle used to turn the feature on.

5. Chrome may download speech files the first time you enable the feature.

6. Once enabled, captions will automatically appear when audio or video is playing in Chrome.

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