



Use JAWS with the Canvas Learning Management System

The Canvas learning management system is widely used in schools, colleges, and other learning institutions. This web-based platform is accessible with screen readers such as JAWS.

Accessibility in Canvas depends on the accessibility of the platform itself and of course content. You can navigate Canvas with JAWS using standard navigation commands, JAWS Quick Navigation commands, and keyboard shortcuts native to Canvas.

JAWS Quick Navigation keys enable you to navigate web elements such as:

- Regions
- Links
- Headings
- Tables
- Buttons

Visit the [Canvas accessibility](#) page for accessibility tips, a list of native keyboard commands, and additional details.

Accessibility Considerations

- Ensure course layout is simple, clean, and uncluttered. This means correctly labeling each item, so it makes sense to the user. One way to do this is to link URLs to words that describe their destination pages rather than displaying just the web addresses. For example, link the Freedom Scientific blog URL to the text “Freedom Scientific blog” instead of displaying the URL.
- Organize content in short paragraphs so it is easy to scan. Include section headings so the content is easy to navigate using JAWS Navigation Quick keys. Users can locate sections quickly by pressing the letter **H**.
- Use alt text to describe images. Include headings for columns and rows in tables.
- When in an individual discussion, an announcement, or in the Rich Content Editor, press **ALT+F8** to display a list of native keyboard commands. When



on the pages for assignments, modules, and grades, press **SHIFT+ /** to display a list of available native keyboard commands.

Access Your Profile and User Settings

1. When in Canvas, press **B** to locate the Account button and press **ENTER** to activate it. This is where you will access your profile and settings. Here, you can add a profile picture, contact options, and web services.
2. Navigate settings with JAWS Quick Navigation keys. Settings for blind and visually impaired users include:
 - Enable native keyboard shortcuts for easier navigation.
 - Enable high contrast for greater visibility.
 - Use Microsoft Immersive Reader to listen to content.
 - Underline links and to-do items so they are easier to locate.

Access Class Content, Grades, and Quizzes

- Use JAWS Quick Navigation keys and the Canvas native commands to access the contents of each section. Locate courses and grades from the Dashboard.
- Access quizzes from within a course.
- Navigate quizzes using JAWS Quick Navigation commands. Controls may include checkboxes, drop-down menus, or radio buttons. Use the JAWS Quick Navigation keys to select your answers. For example, press the **SPACEBAR** to check a checkbox for a multiple-choice question or select a radio button for a true/false question.

View and Submit Assignments

- Courses may include multiple modules. Each module can contain assignments.
- Complete assignments online using the Rich Text Editor or by uploading files from your computer. When using the Rich Text Editor with JAWS, you will be able to read what you have typed. You can also paste content in the editor from a Microsoft Word or Google document.



Read Announcements

To access announcements from the Dashboard, do the following:

1. Press the JAWS Quick Navigation key **H** to navigate the announcements by heading. The announcement heading is also linked to the announcement.
2. Press **ENTER** to access an announcement.
3. Locate the “Reply” button by pressing **B**.
4. Press **ENTER** to activate it.
5. Press **E** to navigate to the edit box to type a reply.
6. Type your reply and press **TAB** to navigate to the Post Reply button.
7. Press **ENTER** to submit your reply.

Set Notification Preferences and Access the Calendar

To access notification preferences from the Dashboard, do the following:

1. Press **B** to navigate to the Account button and press the **SPACEBAR** to activate it.
2. Navigate notification buttons using the JAWS Quick Navigation key **B**.
3. When on a notification button, press **SPACEBAR** to activate the menu.
4. Navigate the menu options by pressing **DOWN ARROW**, then press **ENTER** on a choice to select it.
5. When on a notification button, JAWS will read the current state of that notification. For example, JAWS will speak “Off” if that notification is off, or “Notify Immediately” if that option is selected.
6. Set notifications for each course or across all courses to prioritize how often you receive certain types of notifications.



To access the calendar from the Dashboard, do the following:

1. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links, then press **C** for calendar.
2. Press **ENTER** to activate the link.
3. Use Agenda View to navigate the calendar with a screen reader.
4. Set this by navigating to the Agenda View button by pressing **B** then pressing the **SPACEBAR** to activate the button.

Participate in Discussions and Collaborate with Others

To access discussions from the Dashboard, do the following:

1. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links.
2. Press **D** until you locate discussions.
3. Press **ENTER** to activate the link.

Turn off threaded replies when creating or editing discussions to make them easy to navigate and follow. Search discussions by title or author. Use tools like Google Docs to enable collaboration among students.

Access Messages

To access your inbox from the Dashboard, do the following:

1. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links.
2. Press **I** to locate the inbox link.
3. Press **ENTER** to activate this link.
4. Navigate the inbox and read messages using standard navigation and JAWS Quick Navigation commands. For example, press **H** to navigate through the message headings, and **DOWN ARROW** to read a message.
5. Press **C** to navigate to the Filter Conversations by Type combo box.



6. Press **ENTER** to access the options, which include:
 - Inbox
 - Sent
 - Archived
 - Unread
 - Starred
 - Submission Comments
7. Press **ENTER** on an option to select it and filter the messages.
8. Locate the Compose a New Message button by pressing **B**, and press **SPACEBAR** to activate it.
9. Press **TAB** to navigate through the fields.
10. Press **SPACEBAR** to expand the Select a Course menu, which is collapsed by default.
11. Press **DOWN ARROW** to navigate through your courses, then press **ENTER** to select a course. You must do this before selecting message recipients.
12. Once you type your message, press **TAB** to locate the Send button and press **ENTER**. If you are no longer in the body field, you can also locate this button by pressing **B**.