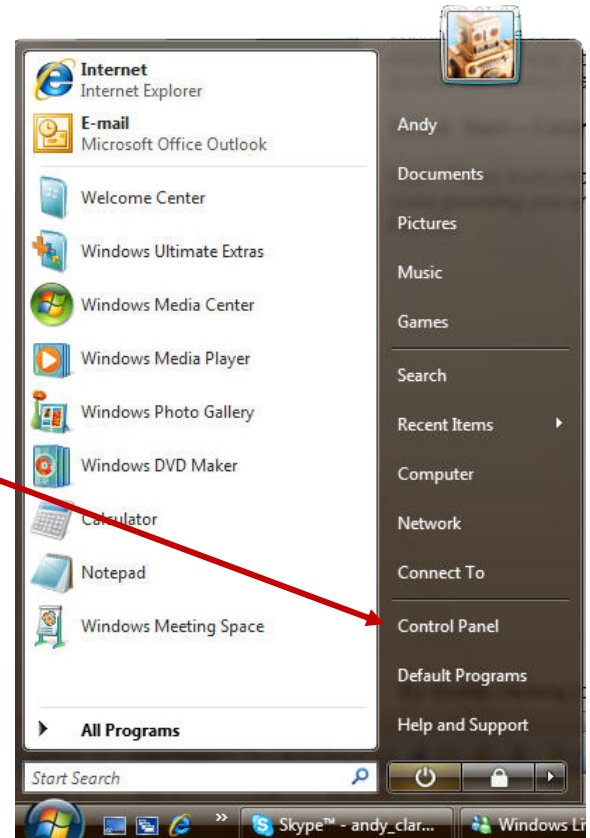


This skillsheet has been designed to give you a tour of the Windows Vista Ease of Access Centre options for people with a hearing impairment.

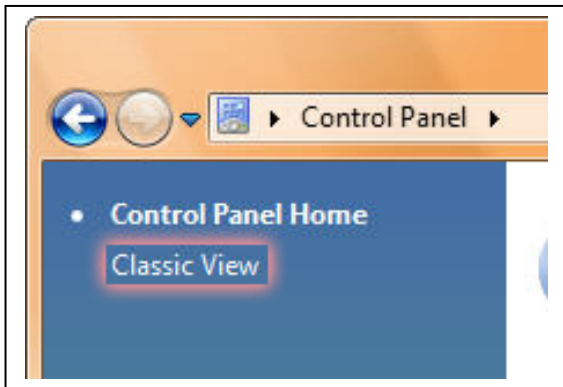
If you have been using a PC for some time but are new to Windows Vista you will have noticed many changes. At its core the Ease of Access Centre has all the features of the old Windows Accessibility Options and more, it's just a little different in the way you access them. To start we need to access the Control Panel and switch it into **Classic View**.

Select: Start – Control Panel

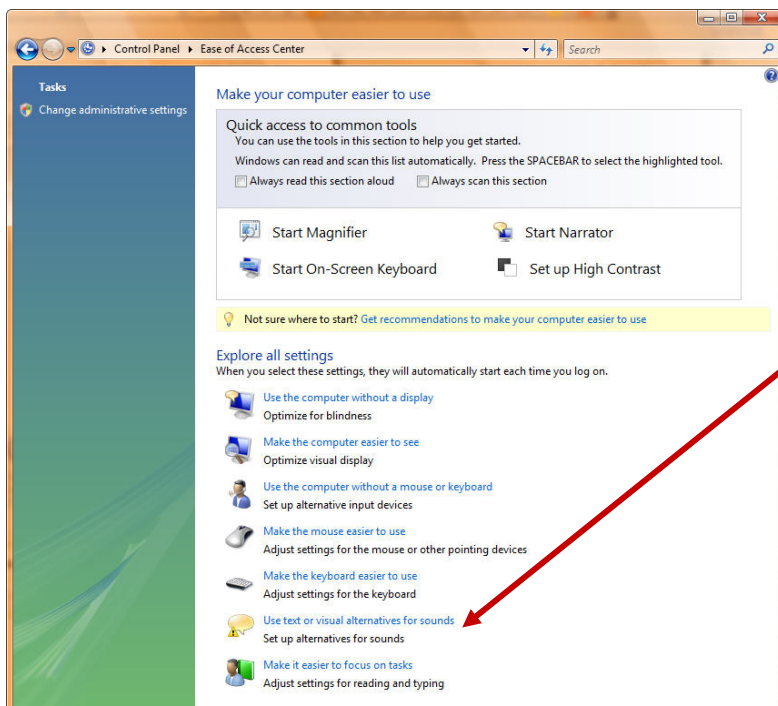
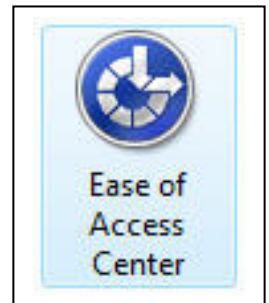
Note: These instructions are the same for all versions of Vista providing you are running the Aero or Basic interface themes.



Note: Select Classic View from the menu at the top left corner of the window.

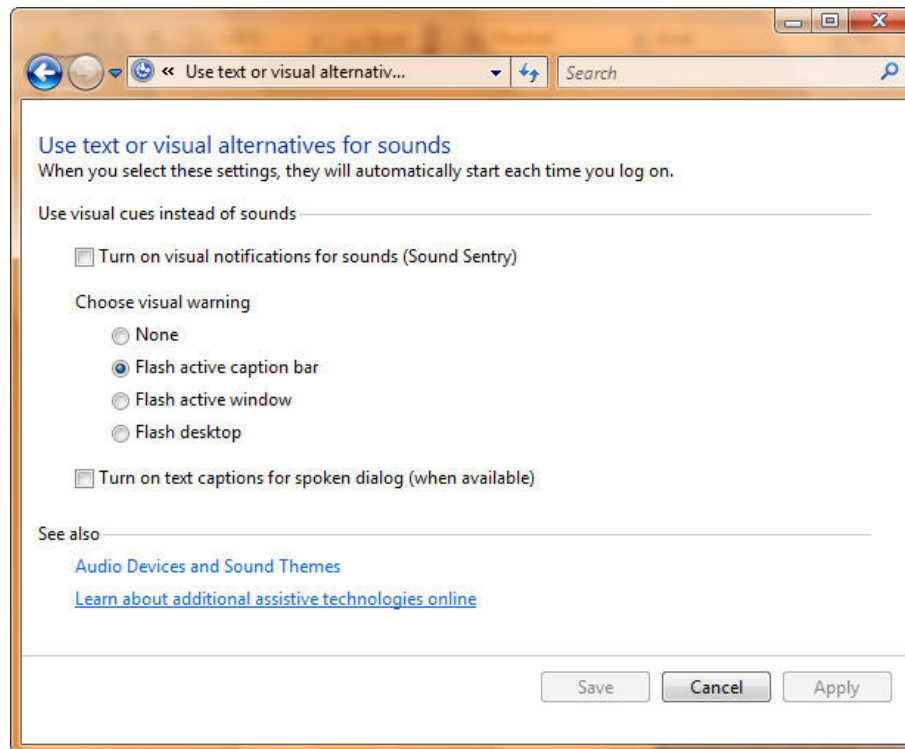


When you have opened the control panel in classic view double click/run the “Ease of Access Centre” icon to open the Ease of Access Centre.



Once you have opened the Ease of Access Centre you will find that the main controls are split into 7 areas. Select the option to **“Use text or visual alternatives for sounds”**.

From this control you will be able to set up the way in which the computer responds when an alert is triggered.



Use visual cues instead of sounds:

Often, Windows will inform the user of problems through sound rather than through a visual prompt on the screen. This has been common since the advent of the modern computer. Although these messages tend not to be critical when used on their own, they can be useful. Obviously this can be a problem for people who cannot hear them.

However, it should also be noted that there is little on a standard computer which would restrict an individual with a hearing impairment from having good access.

Sound Sentry translates system sounds into visual warnings such as a flash of the active caption bar, window, or desktop.

Note: Sound Sentry can only intercept the internal system speaker. If a soundcard is installed then sounds will be generated through that device as normal and you will see no effect from activating visual notifications. However, there is a link to the '**Audio Devices and Sound Themes**' set up panel from this window.

Turn on text captions for spoken dialog: This is a feature where "closed captions" for animated graphics and video can be automatically set to appear. As of yet there is little available that would make use of this feature as the vast majority of video available on the internet doesn't include captioning. However, this may well change over time and become a very important feature for people with impaired hearing.



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This skillsheet is part of a series created for Windows Vista. For more information please visit our website www.abilitynet.org.uk or call 0800 269 545.

Skillsheets in this series include:

- **Windows Vista – Ease of Use Centre**
- **Windows Vista – Tuning the Keyboard**
- **Windows Vista – Text or Visual Alternatives for Sounds**
- **Windows Vista – Mouse Properties**
- **Windows Vista – Personalise the Display Options**

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