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How to test microphone windows 10

If you need to join voice calls or video conferences, or if you want to make recordings or stream content online, you have to set up your microphone. Moreover, to ensure clear, high-quality audio during such activities, you must also test your microphone. Windows 10 lets you control your microphone settings, allowing you to adjust microphone sensitivity and boost volume. In this guide, I'll show you how to access microphone settings, configure them, and test your microphone. Let's get started: Open the Windows 10 Settings (Windows + I) and click or tap System. Open Settings and go to System Then, select Sound in the left sidebar. Select Sound in the left sidebar On the right-hand pane, scroll down to the Input section. Here, you can see a drop-down list labeled Choose your input device that lists all microphones connected to your computer, as well as other options for accessing the properties of the default mic and for troubleshooting. The microphone settings in Windows 10 Let's take these options one by one and see how they allow you to adjust your microphone: In the Input section, choose your preferred microphone from the drop-down list labeled Choose your input device. If you have multiple microphones (e.g., an external mic, a built-in mic, and a headset mic), select the one you want to use as the default. Choose the default microphone in Windows 10 TIP: Check out this guide for all the details and all the methods you can use to control which microphone is the default used on your Windows 10 computer. Then, once you've selected the microphone, you can configure its settings and improve sound quality. Here's how to do it: After selecting your microphone, click or tap the Device properties and test microphone link under it to access its settings. Device properties and test microphone This action takes you to the microphone's properties page. Read on to see what you can do there: First of all, you can rename the selected microphone to identify it easier. Type a name in the first text field on the page, and then click or tap Rename to save it. How to rename a microphone Under the microphone name, there's a checkbox labeled Disable. It has no explanations, but it's pretty clear what its purpose is - turning off the selected microphone. In case that's something you want, check the Disable option, and your mic is no longer used by Windows 10 or the apps you installed on your computer. How to disable a microphone in Windows 10 If the microphone is disabled and you want to enable it instead, simply uncheck the Disable option. How to enable a microphone in Windows 10 TIP: You may also want to know how to change default sound devices in Windows 10 (playback and recording). Next, you see a Volume slider. Adjust it to modify your microphone's sensitivity. Increase it if the sound is too low, or decrease if the sound recorded is too loud or distorted. Change the input volume of the microphone Following the Volume settings, you find a button named Start test. As you suspect, this button is used to check whether your microphone works properly. Press the Start test button and speak into your microphone for a bit. Press Start test to check the microphone When you're done speaking, press the Stop test button. Click/tap Stop test to end the test In an instant, Windows 10 will display a message like this: The highest value we saw was 100 percent Any value above 0 means that your microphone is picking up sound, so it works. However, the higher the value, the more sound it captures. A message that shows the microphone is working well NOTE: If the test result is zero, your mike doesn't detect any sound. In other words, it doesn't work. In this case, you should check the Volume slider above the Start test button and make sure your microphone isn't muted. Furthermore, if your microphone works in some apps but not others, you might need to check Windows 10's microphone privacy settings. Now you know how to adjust mic sensitivity, boost your microphone volume, and test it in Windows 10. So, regardless of whether you've got a new mic or if you're still using your old one, you're now ready to choose the best microphone settings on your Windows 10 PC. Hopefully, your microphone will do a good job in any activity you require it, be that online meetings, streaming, or simply recording your voice. Do you have any questions or feedback to add to this guide? Let me know in the comments section below. Testing your microphone on Windows 10 is a simple process that ensures your audio device is working correctly. You'll need to access your computer's settings, navigate to the appropriate audio options, and follow a few easy steps to check your mic. These steps will help you confirm that your microphone is functioning, and you'll be ready for video calls, recording, or any other audio needs. The following steps will guide you through testing your microphone on Windows 10, ensuring it is properly set up and operational. Press the "Windows" key + "I" to open the Settings menu. The Settings menu is your computer's control center, where you can manage all system preferences. Opening it with the shortcut saves time. Select "System" from the Settings menu. The System section contains various settings related to your computer's hardware, including display, sound, and power options. Click on "Sound" in the left sidebar. The Sound settings control all audio devices connected to your computer. Here, you can manage input and output devices like your microphone and speakers. Under "Input," select your microphone from the drop-down menu. Choosing the correct microphone ensures that the system is testing the right device. Make sure your preferred mic is selected if you have multiple audio devices. Click on "Device properties" and then select "Test." This action will start the testing process. Speak into your microphone, and the input level bar should move, indicating that sound is being detected. If needed, adjust the microphone volume using the slider under "Input volume." Proper volume settings can make a big difference in audio quality. Adjusting the input volume ensures that your voice is heard clearly without being too loud or too soft. After completing these steps, you should see visual feedback showing that your microphone is picking up sound. If the input level bar moves as you speak, your microphone is working correctly. Make sure your microphone is properly connected to your computer before starting the test. Check for any physical mute switches on the microphone that might be turned on. Ensure your microphone drivers are up to date by visiting the manufacturer's website. Use the "Troubleshoot" option in Sound settings if your microphone isn't working as expected. Test your microphone in different applications to confirm it works in all desired scenarios. Your microphone may not work due to incorrect settings, outdated drivers, or physical connection issues. Check each of these to troubleshoot the problem. Adjust the input volume slider in the Sound settings. You might also need to increase the boost level if your microphone supports it. Most microphones are compatible with Windows 10, but you might need to install specific drivers for some models. Always check the manufacturer's recommendations. Use noise reduction settings in your application or enable the "Noise suppression" feature in Windows 10 if available. A good quality microphone with a built-in noise filter also helps. Yes, you can right-click the speaker icon in the taskbar and select "Open Sound settings" for a quicker route. Open Settings Navigate to System Access Sound Settings Choose Your Microphone Test Your Microphone Adjust Microphone Volume Testing your microphone on Windows 10 is easy once you know the steps. By following the outlined process, you can quickly ensure your audio setup is functioning correctly. Whether you're preparing for a video call, recording a podcast, or just checking your gear, these steps will help you get it right. Remember, a functional microphone is essential for clear communication. If you run into issues, refer back to our tips and FAQs for additional help. Keeping your drivers updated and regularly testing your equipment can save you from frustrating technical problems later on. Now that you know how to test your microphone on Windows 10, you're all set for smooth and clear audio experiences. Matthew Burleigh has been writing tech tutorials since 2008. His writing has appeared on dozens of different websites and been read over 50 million times. After receiving his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in Computer Science he spent several years working in IT management for small businesses. However, he now works full time writing content online and creating websites. His main writing topics include iPhones, Microsoft Office, Google Apps, Android, and Photoshop, but he has also written about many other tech topics as well. Read his full bio here. The Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks.Browse Editors' FavoritesExperience AI-Powered CreativityThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks.Browse Editors' FavoritesExperience AI-Powered CreativityThe Motorsport Images Collections captures events from 1895 to today's most recent coverage.Discover The CollectionCurated, compelling, and worth your time. Explore our latest gallery of Editors' Picks.Browse Editors' FavoritesExperience AI-Powered Creativity Download Article Connect any kind of external microphone to your computer with this simple guide Download Article If you want to upgrade your computer's audio inputs with an external microphone, either for chatting or to do some home recording, you can learn to hook up your new set-up, whether you've got basic computer microphones or more professional XLR-type mics. If you're struggling to figure out why you're not getting a signal, you can also learn to troubleshoot in the final section. This wikiHow article covers everything you want to know about connecting a microphone to your computer. Basic microphones can be connected to your computer via their audio or USB jack. Professional mics often use an XLR cable, which requires an adapter to connect to your computer. Ensure your microphone has been selected as your computer's primary sound input by making sure it is checked under the Sound > Input section on macOS and the Sound > Recording section on Windows. 1 Examine the jack on the microphone. Generally, most basic computer microphones will have one of two varieties of jack: an 1/8" TRS jack, which is essentially the same kind of jack you would find on a pair of headphones, or a USB jack, which is flat. Both of these jacks have corresponding ports on most computers.[1] If you're using an XLR microphone, a quarter-inch jack, or some other variety of mic, skip to the next section. 2 Locate the corresponding port on your computer. Almost all desktop computers will have visible microphone ports on either the front or the back of the tower. Usually, this port will be colored pink, and have a microphone image over it. If you have an 1/8 inch jack, all you have to do is plug it into this port and start testing sound. If you have a USB jack on the end of your microphone, most computers will have two or more USB ports on the side, or the back of the computer. Simply plug the USB jack into one of these ports. Laptops and some more contemporary computers don't have microphone ports, because they're generally outfitted with internal microphones. It's usually possible to plug into the headphone port on most computers, however, and adjust your sound settings later. Advertisement 3 Test your new microphone with the recording software of your choice. The easiest and quickest way to test your levels and check your settings is to go to your input sound options and make sure that the device you just plugged in is visible, and that it is selected for use. Open a recording program and attempt to use the microphone and set the levels.[2] On Windows, you can use the Sound Recorder. On a Mac, Quicktime or GarageBand are your best options. Some manufacturers offer their own software to work in conjunction with their external microphones. These offer greater control over the unique features of the mic. If you're not getting a signal, skip to the last section for troubleshooting tips. Advertisement 1 Examine the jack on the end of the microphone. Higher grade music microphones, condenser mics, and other professional gear will generally require an adapter or a converter cable before you plug them in. These range in price, and will vary depending on the type of microphone you're trying to input into the computer. If you see a triangle of prongs on the end of the end of the microphone, that's an XLR mic, and you'll need to get either a cable which converts the XLR jack into the 1/8 inch port, a converter box which will convert it into USB, or a mixer. If you are using the mic for music recording, it likely requires Phantom Power and will therefore not work with a cable converter. We recommend using a mixer, or investing in an Audio Interface. Consult this wikiHow guide for more information. If the jack is a quarter-inch, the size of a guitar cable, you'll need to purchase an adapter cable that will convert into either USB or 1/8 inch size, and plug it into the mic port or headphone port. These cables are usually quite cheap. 2 Get the appropriate converter. Both of these types of mics will need to be connected to some kind of adapter before you plug them into the computer. Because these microphones are typically higher quality, it's best to invest in good adaption equipment to keep the signal as strong as possible. XLR mics can be adapted relatively cheaply with cables or a USB converter box, but some users find that this can be "crackly," losing some of the presence of good microphones. For the best sound quality, invest in a mixing board with a USB output. Quarter-inch to eighth-inch converter cables are widely available and pretty cheap to buy. You can find them at any electronics store or online electronics retailer. 3 Test your new microphone with the recording software of your choice. The easiest and quickest way to test your levels and check your settings is to go to your input sound options and make sure that the device you just plugged in is visible, and that it is selected for use. Open a recording program and attempt to use the microphone and set the levels.[3] On Windows, you can use the Sound Recorder. On a Mac, Quicktime or GarageBand are your best options. Some manufacturers offer their own software to work in conjunction with their external microphones. These offer greater control over the unique features of the mic. If you're not getting a signal, skip to the last section for troubleshooting tips. Advertisement 1 Power on both your computer and your Bluetooth microphone. A Bluetooth microphone can be connected to your computer without any cables at all. Make sure both devices are powered on to get started. If your computer does not support Bluetooth technology (most newer computers do), you may need to purchase and use a Bluetooth dongle instead. 2 Put your microphone into pairing mode. This often involves tapping or holding the Bluetooth button on the device. Consult your manufacturer's guide to learn how to put your microphone into Bluetooth pairing mode (sometimes referred to as discovery mode). 3 Open your computer's Bluetooth settings. On Windows, find the ^ icon on your toolbar and click on the Bluetooth icon. On a Mac, click on the Apple icon in the top-left corner of your screen and click System Preferences…. Then, click Bluetooth in the sidebar.[4] 4 Pair the devices. On Windows, click Add device to pull up a list of available devices, where you should find your microphone waiting to be paired.[5] On a Mac, you should already see a list of available devices.[6] It may take a moment for your microphone to appear as an option. Advertisement 1 Check your sound input settings. If you're not getting a signal, navigate to your computer's sound settings and make sure that the correct device is selected, and the levels are appropriate. On a mac there are no drivers to get in the way, so the only other thing you need to do is to go into System Settings and click on "Sound," then select "Input." Make sure that the microphone is checked, rather than the built-in microphone. On a PC, go into the Control Panel and clicking on "Hardware and Sound," then click on "Sound" and it should pop up another window. At the top, click on "Recording" and you should see your microphone listed. If it doesn't have a green check mark next to it, it isn't selected. Click on it and click properties. You can then change the settings at the bottom to "Use this Device" and it will automatically use it next time it is plugged into your computer.[7] 2 Set the input level. On most computers, you'll be able to control the level of the input volume. With lower quality mics, it'll usually need to be set somewhat high to get a half-way decent signal, but you don't want to blow out the levels, either. It's usually best to set it somewhere in the default range, about 50%. On a Mac, you can do this in the System Settings, under "Sound." On a PC, you can do this in "Hardware and Sound," under "Sound." 3 Check your speaker and computer volume. If you have external speakers, or have headphones plugged in, you need to double-check and make sure that the volume levels are adjusted properly, as well as the settings on your desktop, or you may not be hearing anything. 4 Check the settings on the microphone. Obviously, you need to make sure the microphone is switched on, the cable is plugged in flush, and that you've got any other settings adjusted correctly, depending on the microphone. Some condenser mics, and speaking microphones will have a variety of toggle settings, some of which might be louder, or feature a wider range of sound than others. Switch between them to get a sense for what sounds best for your purposes. 5 Check the setting in the specific program that you're using. Different audio processing programs will have a variety of input settings as well, that you need to check. Some recording software may still be set to pick up internal mics, or audio from other sources, even if you changed it in your system settings. 6 Try restarting your computer. Sometimes, you'll need to close the program you're trying to use at least, or even restart to get some computers to recognize a new piece of hardware you've plugged in.[8] If the microphone still doesn't work then try using another microphone or try using the microphone on another computer. This should help you figure out whether it is the computer or the microphone which is at fault. Advertisement Add New Question Question How do I improve the recording quality of my microphone? Timothy Linetsky Music Producer & Instructor Timothy Linetsky is a DJ, producer, YouTuber, and music educator based in San Francisco, California. He has been making music for over 15 years, and is known for his YouTube channel You Suck at Producing, in which he does music production tutorials for over 330,000 YouTube subscribers. In addition to teaching music production, he releases his own music as Underbelly. He has taught at schools such as Beat Lab Academy and Pyramind. He is also an Ableton Certified Trainer, and has worked closely with the company to produce tutorial videos and educational content. His original productions have garnered millions of plays on Spotify, and in 2020, he released his debut album Machine Yearning as Underbelly to critical acclaim. Make sure you cut down the amount of the reverb in the room where you're recording. Try recording in a closet surrounded by clothes to dampen the echoes. Question Where can I hook up my mic if I don't have a mic jack? You can purchase an adapter. There are adapters that allow you to plug your mic into a USB port. Question Is it necessary to use phantom power for a mic connected to a desktop PC? Phantom power is only needed on XLR condenser microphones that connect to a preamplifier. Most likely if you do have a condenser microphone for USB, it's already running phantom power. See more answers Ask a Question Advertisement Thanks Advertisement A microphone to connect to your computer. A computer with a sound card or chip. A converter if you have an XLR or 1/4" TRS jack. Co-authored by: Music Producer & Instructor This article was co-authored by Timothy Linetsky and by wikiHow staff writer, Cory Stillman. Timothy Linetsky is a DJ, producer, YouTuber, and music educator based in San Francisco, California. He has been making music for over 15 years, and is known for his YouTube channel You Suck at Producing, in which he does music production tutorials for over 330,000 YouTube subscribers. In addition to teaching music production, he releases his own music as Underbelly. He has taught at schools such as Beat Lab Academy and Pyramind. He is also an Ableton Certified Trainer, and has worked closely with the company to produce tutorial videos and educational content. His original productions have garnered millions of plays on Spotify, and in 2020, he released his debut album Machine Yearning as Underbelly to critical acclaim. This article has been viewed 760,395 times. Co-authors: 33 Updated: April 4, 2025 Views: 760,395 Categories: Computer Peripherals Print Send fan mail to authors Thanks to all authors for creating a page that has been read 760,395 times. "Great, quick knowledge for some basic things I am trying to do and learn more about. I am trying to get a mic going for my computer at home. "..." more Share your story Once you install a microphone on Windows 10, you'll want to configure it. That means changing audio levels, input types, and making sure that it sounds crisp. If you're setting up for gaming or streaming, you might want to test some audio effects for your microphone, too. So, here's how to test your microphone on Windows 10 before you start using it. The first thing to check is the Windows 10 Sound Settings, a list of all things relating to audio and microphones. To open the Sound options: Input sound in your Start Menu search bar, then select the Best Match.After the Sound menu opens, scroll down to Input. Make sure your microphone is selected as the default input device. Use the dropdown menu under Choose your input device to make the change to a different microphone option. From here, you can change a small range of microphone properties. Select Device properties. From this menu, you can rename your device, disable the microphone, and adjust the microphone volume. Depending on your microphone type, you may also see the option to boost your microphone volume here. However, the microphone management and settings available from this menu are not as extensive as the "old" settings menu. So, if you want more options, check out the section below. Windows 10 began the switch from the old, tried and tested Control Panel, to the new Settings style. The new Settings menus are easier to use with touchscreen devices and streamline many options into easier to find menus. But there are still some settings that haven't made the full switch to the new Settings and, as such, you have to head back to the Control Panel to find them. From the Windows 10 Sound Settings menu, you can select Sound Control Panel from the top-right menu, then select the Recording tab. Alternatively, press Windows Key + R to open the Run dialog, then input mmsys.cpl and press OK. Now, right-click your microphone and select Properties. A new window will open with several tabs. Open the Enhancements tab. These options relate to microphone boosting, audio suppression, and other extra features. The enhancements you see depend on your microphone. Acoustic Echo Cancellation: Reduces echo noises within your local environment.Far Field Pickup: Can improve recording quality when further away from the microphone.Keystroke Suppression: Attempts to suppress noisy keystrokes.Beam Forming: Enhances input from the microphone, suppressing noises outside the range. You can also find options for different types of microphone boosts in this menu. Play around with the Enhancements until you find a suitable level of input for your requirements. The Sound Control Panel and microphone enhancements are a good fix for microphone sensitivity. From time to time, you might consider which apps actually have access to your microphone. You don't want any unexpected apps listening into your day-to-day activities, especially if you keep your microphone plugged in, on your desk. Input privacy in your Start Menu search bar and select the Best Match.Select Microphone from the left-hand list.Scroll down and assess the apps with access to your microphone. If there's anything you don't want to grant access to, tap the toggle to switch it off. Looking to upgrade your microphone? Check out the top microphones for live streaming and other recordings. If you want to fine-tune the way your microphone sounds, you'll need third-party audio software. While there are many options available, Equalizer APO is one of the easiest to use and is free to boot. However, Equalizer APO on its own is a command-line tool, but there are a number of free graphical user interfaces (GUIs) you can install, which makes using the program much easier. Download and install Equalizer APO. During the installation process, you'll select your Playback and Capture devices. For example, I choose Speakers from the Playback tab and Microphone from the Capture tab. The Capture tab will display the name of your microphone, so you know which option to select.Now, download and install Peace Equalizer. You can only install Peace after the Equalizer APO installation completes. If you attempt it first, it will fail. Once the installation completes, select Start Peace (otherwise, you can find Peace in your Start Menu). When Peace loads, you must choose either the Simple interface or the Full interface. The Full interface offers more customization options than the Simple version, granting greater control over your microphone output. Select your microphone input from the dropdown menu. Now, you can slide the equalizer levels up and down until you find the output levels you desire. There is also the option of increasing your volume output using the amplifier bar, found at the top of the window. When you find the microphone level sweet spot, select Save, give your configuration a name and select a tray icon to display when the configuration is in use. This final action isn't completely necessary but is handy when you want to check your configuration is on at a glance. Another way to test your microphone is by using Windows 10 Speech Recognition. Speech Recognition allows you to control your computer using your voice. The setup process also helps configure your microphone, which is a bonus. Input speech recognition in your Start Menu search bar and select the Best Match.Choose your microphone type from the list, then continue.Now, you'll speak a test sentence to configure the microphone. You may need to move your microphone around your desk to ensure it hits the correct level.The next page considers speech recognition accuracy. Windows 10 can analyze your documents and emails to improve speech recognition, tuning into your common phrases. If you don't want Windows to analyze your documents and emails, select Disable document review.Next, choose what happens when you say Stop Listening. If you select manual activation, you must manually switch on speech recognition whenever you want to use it. If you select voice activation, Windows 10 will listen for your Start Listening command before activating.Finally, choose whether you want to Run Speech Recognition at start-up. Switching this option on will allow speech recognition to load with the operating system, meaning it will always be available when you need it without having to switch it on manually. Speech recognition is a quick way to test that your microphone is working with Windows 10. You don't have to keep speech recognition switched on, or even complete the setup process past step 3 in the above list if all you want to do is check if the microphone is responding. You've seen five easy methods for testing your microphone configuration out. Some options are better for optimizing your output, while others test that the microphone is operating correctly. Either way, you now know how to test and configure your microphone before use. If your microphone isn't working at all, check out how to fix a microphone not working on Windows 10.