

## **Customizing NaturallySpeaking**

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You can customize NaturallySpeaking to make it work better for your needs. The Options dialog box lets you change the spacing after periods, select what key turns the microphone on, and adjust other parts of the software. If more than one person uses NaturallySpeaking on your machine, you can create an icon that starts the program with a particular user's voice file already loaded.

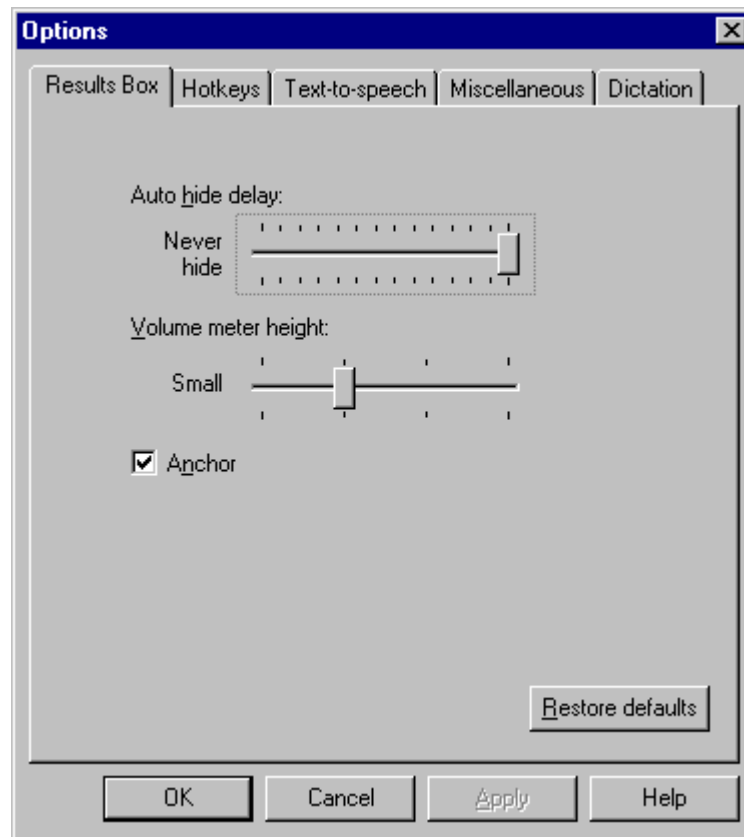
## The Options Dialog Box

From the NaturallySpeaking Tools menu, choose Options. The dialog box that opens lets you customize some features of NaturallySpeaking. The box is divided into five tabbed sections: Results Box, Hotkeys, Text-to-Speech, Miscellaneous, and Dictation.

### Results Box Options

Figure 18-1 shows the recommended settings for the Results Box tab.

Figure 18-1



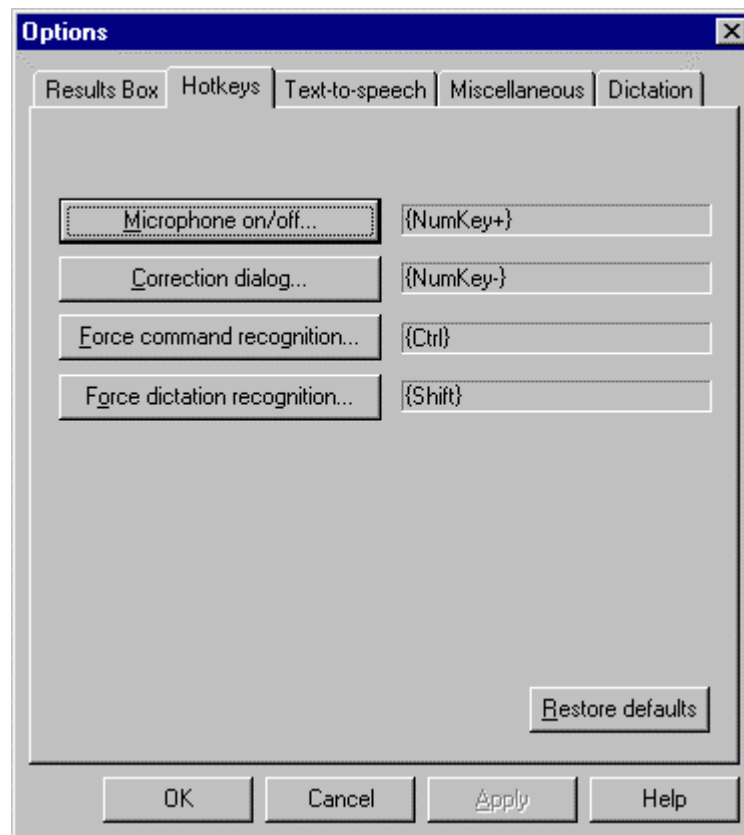
The Auto Hide Delay control affects how long the Results box stays on the screen after you finish speaking. The far right setting, Never Hide, keeps the Results box on the screen so you

can view it easily. Setting the Volume Meter Height control to Small, as shown, lets you see the volume meter color easily but takes up little space on the screen. The Anchor button should be checked so that the Results box stays in the same place on the screen instead of moving as you speak. This makes it easy to glance at as you dictate. Clicking the button Restore Defaults restores the original installation settings.

### Hotkey Options

The microphone hot key lets you turn the microphone on and off. You can change it and three other hot keys using this dialog box (Figure 18-2).

Figure 18-2



For the Microphone On/Off key, the default (automatically installed) choice of “+” on the numeric keypad is a good one.

That key is physically large and easy to find. The Correction Dialog key, which opens the Correction window, has the default setting of “-” on the numeric keypad, which is also a good choice.

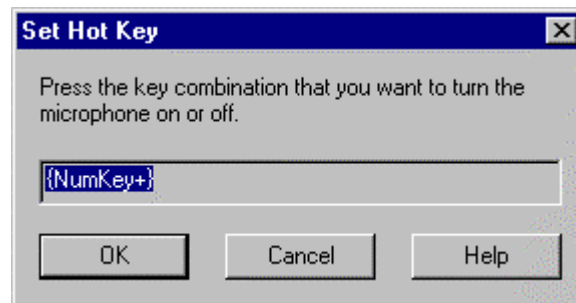
To force NaturallySpeaking to recognize what you say as a command, not dictation text, hold down the Ctrl key as you speak. To force NaturallySpeaking to type what you say as dictation (even words that are also commands), hold down the Shift key as you speak. These are the default key settings, and there’s no need to change them.

If you have a laptop or if you use a keyboard with no numeric keypad, you should change the hotkeys for Microphone on/off and Correction dialog. Change them to any keys that are easily accessible—try F12 (microphone) and F11 (correction).

To change a hotkey, click on the button with the hotkey’s name. A dialog box appears (Figure 18-3). Type the new key and click OK.

Clicking the Restore Defaults button restores the original installation settings.

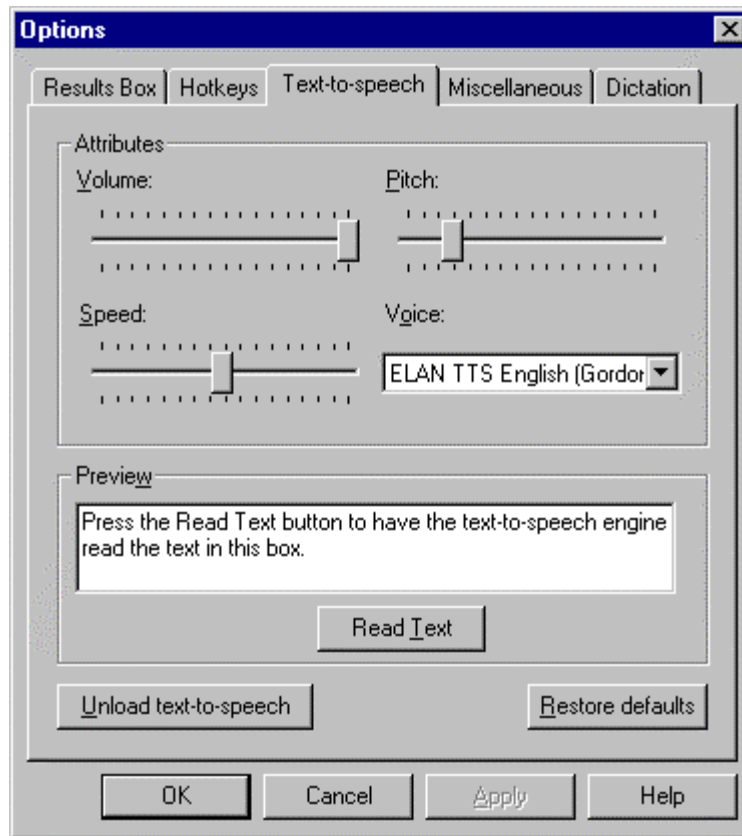
**Figure 18-3**



### Text-to-Speech Options

The Text-to-Speech tab (Figure 18-4) affects how NaturallySpeaking reads text to you in its mechanical voice. See page 144 for instructions on using this feature.

Figure 18-4



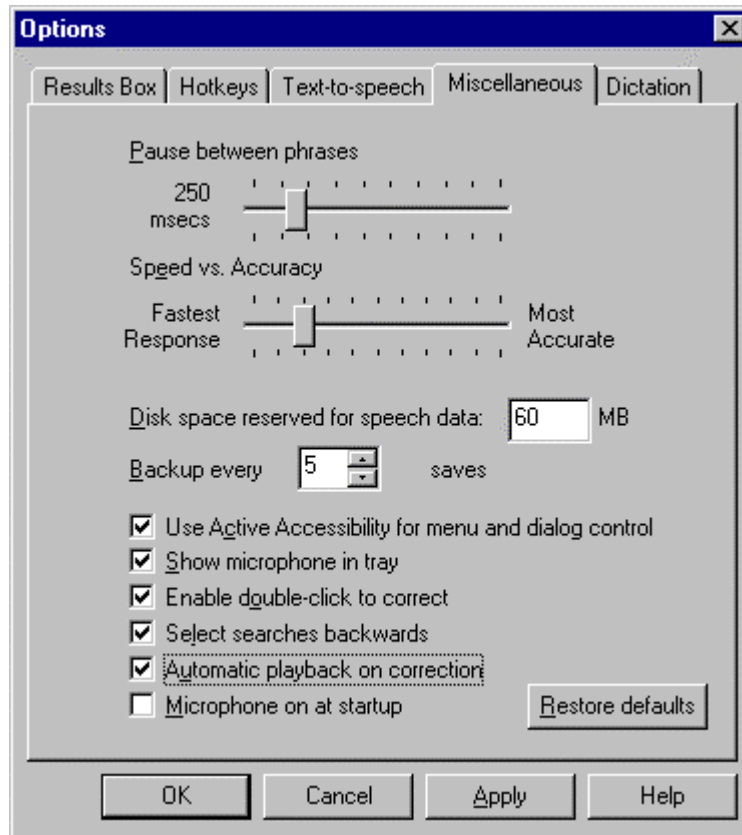
Move the Volume, Pitch, and Speed controls to change the sound of the computer's voice. Click the Read Text button to have the computer read the text in the Preview box. You can edit the Preview box text if you want to hear the mechanical voice say other words instead, like your name or "I'm stuck inside this computer!"

The Unload Text-to-Speech button lets you temporarily remove this feature from memory. Having text-to-speech loaded does not affect NaturallySpeaking's transcription performance. Clicking the Restore Defaults button restores the original installation settings.

### Miscellaneous Options

The Miscellaneous tab controls several unrelated but important settings. Recommended settings are shown in Figure 18-5.

Figure 18-5



The Pause Between Phrases control affects the length of the pause required before and after commands. Leave this at the default setting of 250 milliseconds. If your commands are being recognized as dictation, or if NaturallySpeaking is not recognizing commands, these problems may be related to pause length. See troubleshooting suggestions in Chapter 21.

The Speed vs. Accuracy control affects how much computer processing NaturallySpeaking uses as it recognizes your speech. The default (automatic) setting varies from computer to computer. For most users, better accuracy is more important than slightly faster recognition. When you begin using NaturallySpeaking, leave this setting at the default. After a few weeks, try moving it one notch to the right. Then spend another week using the software to see if this setting improves accuracy and keeps an acceptable level of speed. Continue making adjustments if you

desire. For best results, change the control only a small amount at a time, then use the program for awhile to see if the change makes a difference. On most computers, the default setting or a notch or two to the right of it is best.

The Disk Space Reserved for Speech Data control affects how much disk space NaturallySpeaking uses to record the sound of your voice as you speak. It uses this recording to play back what you said during proofreading and corrections. Unless you are short on disk space, change this setting to 60 MB or higher. One megabyte can store about 48 seconds of sound. To turn off speech recording, change this setting to zero.

The Backup control changes how often NaturallySpeaking backs up your speech files. There's no need to change this control. To back up your speech files more reliably, store them apart from your computer on a Zip disk, tape, or other computer on the same network. See "Backing Up Speech Files," page 164, for backup instructions.

The setting Use Active Accessibility... controls how NaturallySpeaking understands menu names and dialog box controls. Leave this box checked for best results.

Show Microphone in Tray shows a small picture of the microphone in the corner of the screen next to the clock. Leave this setting checked to make the mic easy to turn on and off by mouse (click once on the small mic picture).

Enable Double-Click to Correct brings up the Correction window when you double-click on a word. Start with this control checked and see how it works for you.

Select Searches Backwards makes NaturallySpeaking look backwards in your document when you say "Select" plus some words on the screen. Start with this control checked; change it if you desire.

Automatic Playback on Correction plays your recorded voice through the speakers whenever the Correction window opens. Leave this control checked—hearing your voice played back makes it easier to learn how to speak more clearly and how to correct NaturallySpeaking's mistakes. After becoming familiar with making corrections, you may wish to uncheck this control.

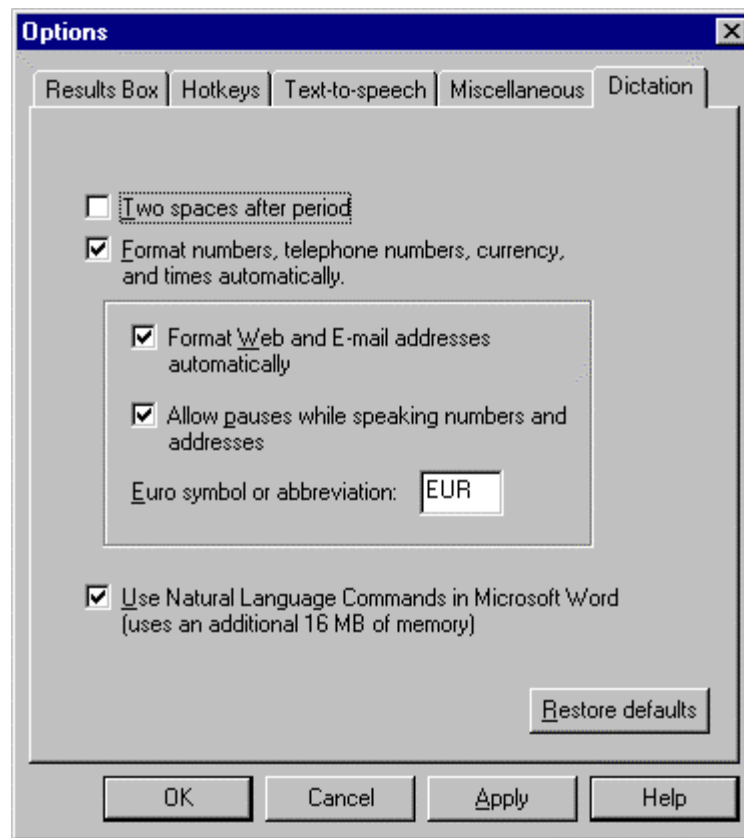
Microphone on at Startup makes NaturallySpeaking start up with the microphone on, but sleeping. This is useful if you have physical limitations that prevent you from using the keyboard or mouse.

The Restore Defaults button restores the original installation settings.

### Dictation Options

The Dictation tab (Figure 18-6) controls the spacing after periods and how NaturallySpeaking interprets some spoken commands.

Figure 18-6



The Two Spaces After Period control puts—you guessed it—two spaces after each period when you dictate. If this box is not checked, NaturallySpeaking types one space. Change this setting as you prefer.

When the Format Numbers... setting and the two settings below it are checked, dictating numbers, web address, and other commonly spoken items is much easier.

The Euro symbol box lets you change what's typed when you say "euro" or "euro sign" during dictation.

The setting Use Natural Language Commands in Microsoft Word controls whether these commands are loaded into memory, using an additional 16 MB of RAM. If you have 64 MB of RAM or less, un-checking this box will probably improve NaturallySpeaking's performance in Word. This box is not available if you don't use Word 97 with NaturallySpeaking or if you've created any custom macros.

The Restore Defaults button restores the original installation settings.

## **Open with a Particular User or Vocabulary**

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If more than one person uses NaturallySpeaking on the same computer, or if one person has several speech files, NaturallySpeaking will ask which voice file to open each time you start it. You can create a special NaturallySpeaking icon to open a particular user immediately, bypassing NaturallySpeaking's opening question. You can also create a shortcut that loads a particular vocabulary. This saves time if more than one person routinely uses NaturallySpeaking on your computer, or if you often use more than one vocabulary.

### **Shortcut to a User**

To create a shortcut to a particular user on the Windows desktop, follow these steps:

1. Start Windows Explorer. Go to the NatSpeak directory and open the Programs folder. Right-click on the file "Natspeak" and choose Copy. Close Windows Explorer, right-click on the Windows desktop, and choose Paste Shortcut (not Paste). This will create a new icon called Shortcut to Natspeak.
2. Right-click on the icon and choose Properties. Click on the Shortcut tab.
3. In the Target field, add "/user" plus the user name to the end of the field. Leave a space before the slash, a

space after the word “user,” and put the name of the user in quotes. The Target field should look like this:

```
C:\Natspeak.exe /user "Tim Brown"
```

4. Click OK to finish.

To use the shortcut, double-click on it. NaturallySpeaking will open with that user’s voice files loaded. Optionally, you can put the shortcut in the Start menu by dragging it to the Windows Start button.

### **Shortcut to a Vocabulary**

The Deluxe, Professional, Legal, and Medical editions of NaturallySpeaking allow one user to have several vocabularies. You can create an icon that opens NaturallySpeaking automatically to the vocabulary you want. To do this, review the instructions above for creating a shortcut to a user. Instead of adding “/user” in the Target field (step 3, above), add “/vocabulary” plus the name of the vocabulary you want to open. The Target field should look like this:

```
C:\Natspeak.exe /vocabulary "business writing"
```

You can specify a user and a vocabulary in the same shortcut. For example:

```
C:\Natspeak.exe /user "Tim Brown" /vocabulary "business writing"
```