

## Voice Recognition, Translation, Duolingo, Language Learning



Voice Recognition come a long way fast and is one of the more popular applications of modern technology.

Phones and computers are now capable of recognising people's voices with surprising accuracy. People are now talking to their phone and asking it for the latest weather report, to set alarms and timers, to convert measurements, to play music, open emails, to search the internet or to answer a difficult question in order to solve a dispute. It saves the frustration of having to type on a tiny screen with fat fingers.

Voice-to-text software lets you use your voice to create documents faster than typing (a lot faster if you type at my speed). You can speak into your phone to make notes that you can read back later. Now you can dictate your novel instead of writing or typing it. If you have an Android or Apple phone, chances are this function is already available on your device.

Translating language when in a foreign country is now made much easier with quality of voice recognition and translation software. You can type or merely speak into your phone and it will translate that into another language in either text or speech. With your phone you can even take a picture of foreign text, say, at a train station and it can be translated into English. Travelling has now been made a little bit easier. Expect further improvements on this in the next few years.



Another great language service, which you can install on your Android or Apple phone, or use on your Windows PC, is **Duolingo**.

This is the worlds most popular way to learn a new language and it's completely free. Users report it as being just like playing a game. You get little rewards as you move through the language - it will test you and advance your stages as you go. We are planning to fully review this useful and neat application in a future Karri Pigeon.

## Most Mobile Device Anti-Virus Apps are a Scam – plus some Android Security Tips

The most basic rule of Android device security is: Don't sideload apps! On an iPhone or iPad 'sideloading' is not possible so you have a bit less to worry about there. So: What does 'sideloading' mean?

'Sideloading' is installing an app from a downloaded file (usually found somewhere on the internet), outside of the Google Play Store.

Most reputable apps are available on the Google Play Store. Apps on the Play Store have been tested for viruses. This shouldn't give you 100% confidence but it is very good start. For instance, an app which says it is from 'Facebook' on the Google Play Store, has been checked that it really is from Facebook. A Facebook app for your android phone which you found on an internet page is more than likely to be bogus.

Sideloading can severely compromise your phone's (or tablet's) security, cause it to misbehave or stop working. To 'sideload' an app you have to change a setting 'Allow installation of apps from Unknown Sources' (for Android 7.0 and below). For Android 8.0 and above you will be warned when you download an apk (an app), or when an app wants to install another app from an unknown source. You will have to give it special permission to do so. While it is great that Google has allowed installation of apps outside of the Play Store, in most cases it is best avoided.

### Anti-Virus on Mobile Devices...

People used to Windows Computers often assume that they should install an anti-virus program on their phone. Our experience is that this is wrong. Android and Apple phones are secure by design, in a way in which Windows isn't (especially not the older Windows versions). Poor user security practices (and 'zero day vulnerabilities' will compromise your security but in most cases an anti-virus program isn't going to help you with those.

Research in January 2019 found that 70% of Android anti-virus checkers are useless or worse (worse would mean they are scams containing malware and viruses themselves).

So you could make the choice to not install one or, if there is one already installed, to remove it. If you feel you **MUST** get anti-virus protection for your Android device visit:

[av-comparatives.org/tests/android-test-2019-250-apps/](http://av-comparatives.org/tests/android-test-2019-250-apps/)

Slide down to 'Test Results' and pick one of the 23 products with a 100% result. Now: Visit the Google Play Store and find a copy of the app there. Check out the features and whether there are ads or payments required. Read some app reviews. Check you have the right app from the right vendor.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday 10 am to 5 pm • Thursday 10 am to 6 pm • Friday 9 am to 6 pm