

Deaf & Hear Alberta

Speech to Text Apps for Smartphones

Speech-to-text apps use voice recognition to provide “captions.” There are several options:

Google (for Android) Live Transcribe has a new name—Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications. It's an app that makes everyday conversations and surrounding sounds more accessible among people who are deaf and hard of hearing, using just your Android phone.

Using Google’s state-of-the-art automatic speech recognition and sound detection technology, Live Transcribe & Sound Notifications provides you free, real-time transcriptions of your conversations and sends notifications based on your surrounding sounds at home. The notifications make you aware of important situations at home, such as a fire alarm or doorbell ringing, so that you can respond quickly.

Otter.ai can be used for 1:1 conversations but is especially popular for other uses like webinars and podcasts. It’s available for both Androids and iPhones. It can also be used in a web browser. One feature now available is shared notes for classes, previously only offered with Microsoft Translator via OneNote Live Captions.

Ava markets itself as “live transcription for any conversation.” Perhaps the priciest of all transcription options, Ava has a tiered subscription plan. While it is free for the occasional user (five free hours/month), a premium subscription (\$14.99/month) has infinite captioning time and higher caption quality (90-95 percent). If Ava is being used for work or a board meeting, the Pro, Campus, Welcome or Event plan starts at \$99/month). This plan boasts the best caption quality and customized vocabulary. Live, professionally-reviewed 99% accurate captions can be requested with Ava Scribe for additional fees.

Works with the iPhone. The Phonak myCall-to-Text app allows you to read, in real time, what the person on the other end of the phone says. There is a subscription fee. There may be a reduced fee if you have purchased Phonak hearing aids.