# Windows 7 (#4): Taskbar

## Text Version

### General Introduction

Hi, I’m Greg Gill from the Office of Learning.

Welcome to the Windows 7 operating system with JAWS Audio On Demand (or AOD) broadcasts. The AODs lay the groundwork for your smooth transition into the Windows 7 operating system using JAWS. There are multiple AODs for each of the following topics:

* Windows 7
* Microsoft Office 2010, and
* Internet Explorer 8

You may review the AODs in any order, but we have numbered the productions for each key topic so that they follow a logical order. For example, we highly recommend that you first listen to the AODs that discuss the Microsoft Office Ribbon before listening to the other Microsoft Office AODs.

For your reference, there are print materials available to accompany these AODs on the Office of Learning's [Visually Impaired Curriculum](http://learning.ba.ssa.gov/OL/ewd/VIcurriculum.asp) Web page, including a list and topic description for each AOD.

### Introduction and Purpose

Microsoft’s Windows 7 is the successor to Windows Vista. As such, it takes its place as the most recent desktop and workstation upgrade implemented by the Social Security Administration. Windows 7 (or “Win 7”) and Windows Vista operate very similarly.

In this AOD, we will discuss the Windows 7 Taskbar. In the default configuration, the Taskbar is located at the bottom of your screen to the right of the Start Button. Unlike the Desktop, which hides behind your open applications, the Taskbar stays at the bottom of your screen and remains visible. You can opt to change the position and visibility of the Taskbar through customization.

### Configuration

You may customize the appearance of your Taskbar to determine how your application icons display and how they group together when you have more than one item open in the application.

For information on how to customize your Taskbar, see “**Quick Task for JAWS, Customizing the Windows 7 Taskbar**.” This document is posted under **Commercial Applications – Microsoft Applications** on OL's [Visually Impaired Curriculum](http://learning.ba.ssa.gov/OL/ewd/VIcurriculum.asp) Web page.

### Moving to the Taskbar

When you press **ALT + TAB** to rotate through your open applications, only active windows display in the rotation. If you have multiple items open in the same application (for example, three Word documents), all items are included in the rotation.

When you move through the Taskbar by pressing the **arrow** **KEYS** or by holding the **WINDOWS KEY** and tapping the letter **T**, both active applications and applications that are pinned to the Taskbar, even if they are not active, are included in the list.

The following instructions are for moving through the Taskbar with JAWS and the keyboard. **Note**: Unless you have a large number of items open, it may be more efficient to use **Alt + Tab** to move to an active window.

If you have a large number of items open, using the **Windows Key** and tapping the letter **T** is an efficient way of cycling through open applications. Use the Task Switcher list box, discussed below, to select a specific item in the application.

### Navigation

You can move your focus to the Taskbar by pressing **Windows Key + T**. You can also move to the Taskbar from the Desktop by pressing **TAB** twice or you can move to the Taskbar from the Start Menu by pressing **ESCAPE** to close the Start Menu and then pressing **TAB** once.

You can customize the appearance of the Taskbar to determine whether each application appears as a single icon, regardless of the number of items open, or whether each item on the Taskbar appears as a separate icon. For more information on configuration, see “**Quick Task for JAWS, Customizing the Windows 7 Taskbar**.” This document is posted under **Commercial Applications – Microsoft Applications** on OL's [Visually Impaired Curriculum](http://learning.ba.ssa.gov/OL/ewd/VIcurriculum.asp) Web page.

If your Taskbar buttons are set to **Always combine, hide labels**, which is the default setting in Windows 7, each program in the Taskbar appears as a single icon without a text label. This is true no matter how many items are open in the application.

If your Taskbar buttons are set to **Combine when taskbar is full**, each item is an individual, labeled icon. When the Taskbar gets crowded, programs with multiple open items collapse into a single icon.

If your Taskbar buttons are set to **Never combine**, icons never collapse into a single program icon. As more windows open, the icons just get smaller, and smaller, and eventually they will scroll.

Depending on whether the application is active and whether a single item or multiple items are open in the application, JAWS reads the icons differently.

* As you press **Windows Key + T** to cycle through the Taskbar or use the **ARROW KEYS** to move through the Taskbar, JAWS announces the program name, followed by the word, "**Button**" if the program is pinned to the Taskbar, but not active. Press **Spacebar** or **enter** to activate the program.
* If a single item is associated with the icon, JAWS announces the program name, sometimes preceded by the name of a particular document or item, and followed by the words, "**Button menu**." Press **Spacebar** or **Enter** to move focus to the item.
* If multiple items are associated with the icon, JAWS announces the program name followed by the words, "**Button menu**." Press **Spacebar** or **Enter** to move focus to the Task Switcher list box. This feature is active if more than one item is open in the application. **Down arrow** through the open items in the list box. Press **Spacebar** or **Enter** to move focus to the item. Press **ESCAPE** to exit the Task Switcher list box and return to the Taskbar.

### Pinning/Unpinning

Pinning places an application icon on the Taskbar, which remains regardless of whether the application is open. Pinning is useful if you routinely use the Taskbar to open applications, although it has less utility for users who navigate strictly by keyboard, which includes most JAWS users. Applications pinned to the Taskbar do not appear in the **ALT + TAB** order if they are inactive.

To pin an item to the Taskbar, locate the application in the Start Menu (or identify the executable file on your C Drive). From the Search field of the Start Menu, **Up Arrow** to the All Programs submenu and press **Right Arrow** or **Enter**. Move to the item you wish to pin. Once you select it, press the **Applications Key**, which is the first key to the left of the **Right Control** **KEY**, or press **Shift + F10**. This opens the Context Menu. Select **Pin to Taskbar** and press **enter**.

To unpin an item from the Taskbar, move to the Taskbar, locate the icon, and press the **APPLICATIONS KEY**. Select, **Unpin this program from taskbar** and press **ENTER**.

### Opening and moving to Pinned Applications

If you have an application pinned to your Taskbar, you can use hotkeys to open the application based on its location. Press **Windows Key + number 1 – 9**, with the number being the location of the application on your Taskbar. For example, if you have Internet Explorer, Windows Explorer, Outlook, and Microsoft Word pinned to your Taskbar positioned from left to right, you can press **Windows Key + 1** to open Internet Explorer, **Windows Key + 2** to open Windows Explorer, **Windows Key + 3** to open Outlook, and **Windows Key + 4** to open Microsoft Word.

After you open a particular application, you can use the same keystroke to move to the open application. This is true even if you have opened multiple items in some applications. For example, if you open Outlook with **WINDOWS KEY + 3** and subsequently open several messages, you can still open Word with **WINDOWS KEY + 4**, move back to Outlook with **Windows Key + 3**,and then move back to Word with **WINDOWS KEY + 4**. The icons hold their position in the Taskbar even after you open multiple items or open additional applications.

You can change the order of the icons on the Taskbar, but it requires using your mouse to drag them to a different position in the order.

### Conclusion

This concludes the **Windows 7: Taskbar** AOD. The next AOD in the series focuses on **Windows 7: Jump Lists**.

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