



MS Windows

Getting Online: Screen Reader

Items on a Web Page: Basics

Here you'll learn about the various items that you're likely to find on a typical webpage. This way, you'll know just what to do when you encounter a link, an edit box, a button, or a form using a screen reader.

These instructions are for using the Google Chrome browser along with NVDA as a screen reader, but the concepts are pretty similar no matter which screen reader and browser you're using. **Try it out.**

Links

Tip: A web page is made of various types of building blocks, and one you're likely most familiar with is a link. Links are on just about every web page you open, and their purpose is to move you from one place to another on the web.

1. Open the panerabread.com website.

2. Press the down arrow to move through the page until you get to Menu Items.
3. If you want to go to the page for one of the links you encounter—say, the pastries and sweets link in Menu Items—just press the Enter key to open it.

Edit Fields

4. Another element you'll work with on a web page is the edit field. This is where you can type in information. In fact, the address and search bar that pops up when you first open your browser is an edit field. You type the website address you want to visit in this edit field.

Tip: You find edit fields when you're shopping online and need to search for something, and when you need to enter your shipping address for ordering something online.

Buttons

5. Another element you often work with is a button. An example is a login button, for sites where you need to provide a username and password to get in.

Forms

A form is a collection of elements, like an edit field and a button. So when you use edit fields to type in your username and password, and a login button to tell the computer to do something with the information you just entered, you're using a form.

6. Open the NLS BARD site where you can download lots of audio and braille books: nlsbard.loc.gov. You land on the edit field where you insert your email.

Tip: You hear a sound cue that tells you that the screen reader is in forms mode, so it knows you're filling out a form instead of exploring the web page.

7. While you're in forms mode, use the Tab key to move through the form and see which fields you need to fill out.

8. Press the Tab key and you'll land on the field where you enter your password.

Tip: You will see asterisks instead of the password you enter; this helps keep that information safe and private if someone is watching.

9. Press the Tab key again and you get to the login button. You hear a sound cue to tell you you're not in a form anymore.

Tip: The screen reader automatically puts you in forms mode when it encounters an edit field, but be aware there may be text instructions outside the edit field that you need to know about as well. You'll miss those text instructions if you're just using your Tab key to move from form field to form field.

10. Press the NVDA key, which is your insert key, plus the spacebar. Press it once to turn forms mode on and again to turn it off.

Tip: You can pay attention to the sound cues to tell you which mode you're in. When forms mode is off, you can explore the web page the way you normally would, and with forms mode on, you can work with your form fields on the page.

Now you know how to interact with a link, an edit box, a button, and a form. Try another workshop to learn more.