# Use JAWS with the Canvas Learning Management System

The Canvas learning management system is widely used in schools, colleges, and other learning institutions. This web-based platform is accessible with screen readers such as JAWS.

Accessibility in Canvas depends on the accessibility of the platform itself and of course content. You can navigate Canvas with JAWS using standard navigation commands, JAWS Quick Navigation commands, and keyboard shortcuts native to Canvas.

JAWS Quick Navigation keys enable you to navigate web elements such as:

* Regions
* Links
* Headings
* Tables
* Buttons

Visit the [Canvas accessibility](https://www.instructure.com/canvas/accessibility) page for accessibility tips, a list of native keyboard commands, and additional details.

## Accessibility Considerations

Ensure course layout is simple, clean, and uncluttered. This means correctly labeling each item, so it makes sense to the user. One way to do this is to link URLs to words that describe their destination pages rather than displaying just the web addresses. For example, link the Freedom Scientific blog URL to the text “Freedom Scientific blog” instead of displaying the URL.

Organize content in short paragraphs so it is easy to scan. Include section headings so the content is easy to navigate using JAWS Navigation Quick keys. Users can locate sections quickly by pressing the letter **H**.

Use alt text to describe images. Include headings for columns and rows in tables.

When in an individual discussion, an announcement, or in the Rich Content Editor, press **ALT+F8** to display a list of native keyboard commands. When on the pages for assignments, modules, and grades, press **SHIFT+/** to display a list of available native keyboard commands.

## Read Announcements

Access announcements from the Dashboard.

1. Press the JAWS Quick Navigation key **H** to navigate the announcements by heading. The announcement heading is also linked to the announcement.
2. Press **ENTER** to access an announcement.
3. Locate the “Reply” button by pressing **B**.
4. Press **ENTER** to activate it.
5. Press **E** to navigate to the edit box to type a reply.
6. Type your reply and press **TAB** to navigate to the Post Reply button.
7. Press **ENTER** to submit your reply.

## Participate in Discussions and Collaborate with Others

Access discussions from the Dashboard. To do this:

1. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links.
2. Press **D** until you locate discussions.
3. Press **ENTER** to activate the link.

Turn off threaded replies when creating or editing discussions to make them easy to navigate and follow. Search discussions by title or author. Use tools like Google Docs to enable collaboration among students.

## Access Messages

To access your inbox from the Dashboard:

1. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links.
2. Press **I** to locate the inbox link.
3. Press **ENTER** to activate this link.
4. Navigate the inbox and read messages using standard navigation and JAWS Quick Navigation commands. For example, press **H** to navigate through the message headings, and **DOWN ARROW** to read a message.
5. Press C to navigate to the Filter Conversations by Type combo box.
6. Press ENTER to access the options, which include:

* Inbox
* Sent
* Archived
* Unread
* Starred
* Submission Comments

1. Press **ENTER** on an option to select it and filter the messages.
2. Locate the Compose a New Message button by pressing B.
3. Press the **SPACEBAR** to activate it.
4. Press **TAB** to navigate through the fields.
5. Press the **SPACEBAR** to expand the Select a Course menu, which is collapsed by default.
6. Press **DOWN ARROW** to navigate through your courses, then press **ENTER** to select a course. You must do this before selecting message recipients.
7. Once you type your message, press **TAB** to locate the Send button and press **ENTER**. If you are no longer in the body field, you can also locate this button by pressing **B**.

## Access the Class Syllabus

When in a course, use JAWS Quick Navigation keys to locate the link for the class syllabus. Press **INSERT+F7** to access a list of links on the page, then press **S** to locate the link for the syllabus. Press **ENTER** to activate the link and navigate to the syllabus page.

## Access and Navigate Rubrics

When on an assignment page, press the JAWS Quick Navigation Key **H** to navigate to the Rubric heading. Press **DOWN ARROW** to read the name of the Rubric, and to navigate and read the table containing the information.