

Speaking Clock help contents

Version 1.2 - released 1998-08-29

Welcome to the Multilingual Speaking Clock! This program is freeware, but please read more about [distributing and using](#) the program. The latest info is always available at <http://www.abc.se/~m8501/spclock/>

The Speaking Clock is very straightforward to use, but you can read more about all settings by clicking on the subjects below.

- [Basics](#) – Using the clock.
- [Alarm setup](#) - How to set up the alarm and announce modes.
- [Settings](#) - Miscellaneous display and system settings.
- [Languages](#) - How to install additional languages.
- [Troubleshooting](#) – When you run into problems.
- [Credits](#) - Thanks to those who gave their voice for different languages.

Want to add your language? Click [here](#) for more information - the author welcomes help for making more language modules available!

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Basics

The Multilingual Speaking Clock is extremely easy to use. Just start the program, watch the time, and press the **Speak** button to announce the time in the language of your choice (assuming that language is available and installed).

The language selector reflects the languages you have installed. There is more information available about [installing additional languages](#).

You can also set up the clock to announce the time regularly, read more about it in the [Alarm setup section](#).

The popup menu

If you right-click the application window, a small popup menu appears. From the menu you can access the settings dialog, the alarm setup dialog and this help file. You can also switch the display from normal to minimized and back again (not to mix up with minimizing the application).

Minimizing the application/using the system tray icon

When you minimize the application, there will be no minimized window in the taskbar. To restore the application, double click the system tray icon with the clock face in the lower right corner. You can also access most functions of the clock by right clicking the system tray icon.

All settings are saved

All settings are saved when the application exits, including minimized state. This means you can put a shortcut to the clock in your Autostart folder and have the clock appear in the system tray every time you start your computer.

Controlling the clock using the keyboard

A talking clock can be a useful utility for blind people. Since the toolbar is graphical, it will not be visible for those using a screen reader, a fact that a blind friend from California kindly made me aware of. The following shortcuts makes it possible to access the toolbar with the keyboard:

Ctrl-A	Alarm setup
Ctrl-S	Settings
Ctrl-H	Help/About
Alt-S	Speak

The application popup menu also contains these commands, except for the speak command.

Distributing and using the program

The Multilingual Speaking Clock is released as freeware, which means you are free to use it and distribute it to others - as long as you do not modify any of the files. You are not allowed to sell the program!

Encourage me!

If you like the program, please let me know by sending me a greeting or a postcard. I do not charge money for using this program, but any financial contribution will of course encourage me to continue development of the program.

Bugs/problems or suggestions for improvements

As is usual, I accept no responsibilities for problems that may occur as a result of running the program. If you find a bug in the program, I would appreciate if you report it, see contact info below. I also welcome any suggestion for improvements.

Please do not write me and ask when this or that language will be available because the simple answer is "I don't know". New languages will be added when someone sends me recordings for that specific language.

Distributing on shareware CD/disc

If you want to include the program on a shareware/freeware CD or disc, please contact me by email prior to including it.

Address: Leif Porsklev
Peterson-Bergers v 88
SE-756 49 Uppsala
Sweden

Email: leif.porsklev@abc.se

Website: www.abc.se/~m8501/spclock/

Alarm setup

When you press the alarm setup button, you will be presented with a dialog box with a few settings. You can also access this dialog using the system menu.

Alarm settings

Under the **Alarm** label you can set the alarm on or off, and enter the time for the alarm. The alarm time is always set using the time format (12/24 hr) chosen. When the alarm is activated the *ALARM* sign is lit in the display (or the text *ALARM ON* is shown if you have the graphic display turned off).

There is also a setting for the alarm sound, either a system beep or a wave file of your own choice (press Browse to choose a file, or type the path and filename directly into the edit box).

Announce settings

Under the **Announce** label you can activate the announce mode, which means the clock will tell the time at the specific interval you set. If you for example set the announce interval to 60 minutes, the time will be announced every hour on the hour, and if you set it to 17 minutes it will announce the time at every whole hour, 17 minutes past, 34 minutes past and 51 minutes past the hour.

Settings

To access the settings dialog box, press the settings button (the one with gears on it). These settings effects the way the display looks and how often the time is updated. You can also access this dialog using the system menu.

Display settings

The look of the display can be changed in some ways. First of all you can choose between a graphical display (resembling the look of a LC display) and a more simple text display. The reason for providing a text display is that the graphical display needs a display driver capable of showing more than 256 colors (which usually means 65K or 24-bit color).

You can also choose between 12 and 24 hr format. This function has no meaning in text mode, as the time is displayed using Windows preset time format, which means the display will adapt to your local Windows settings. It will however change the time format for the alarm setting.

There is also an option to turn off the date. Why would you want to do that? I really don't know, but the options is there anyway...

You can set the display font, if the text mode is enabled (i.e. you disabled the graphical display). Just press the Change button, and choose your preferred font and size. These settings are of course preserved for the next time you run the program.

Update interval

The program uses a timer to update the clock display and to check if the alarm sound alert you at your chosen time. This timer is set to do these things every 100 milliseconds (one tenth of a second). If this setting slows down other programs on your computer, you can change the setting. The maximum setting is 1000 milliseconds (or one second), but please be aware that this setting makes the time display sometimes update strangely, like skipping a second every now and then.

Adding languages

You can easily add more languages, just download the DLL-file for the language and put it in the directory where Speaking Clock is installed. The file LANG.DAT should also be downloaded, as this file contains information on the available languages (if it's outdated, your new language will not be loaded by the program).

Language files can be download from the Speaking Clock website at <http://www.abc.se/~m8501/spclock/>

Do you miss a specific language, a language that you can speak? Then please the section about [contributing with languages](#).

Troubleshooting

If you have problems with the program, you might find the solution in this section. If the problem still persists, please report the problem to the author (click for [contact information](#)).

Problem: The display colors look all wrong

The graphical display needs a display driver capable of showing more than 256 colors (i.e 65K or 24-bit modes). If you cannot set your display to show more colors, use the text display instead (by disabling the graphical display in the [Settings](#) dialog box).

Problem: There is no sound when I press the Speak button

You need to have the Microsoft ADPCM sound compression scheme installed (the sound resources are compressed to save disk space and download time). This compression driver is available as part of the usual Windows 95 distribution, although it's not always installed as default. Use the Add/remove icon in the control panel, choose Windows setup and check if sound compression is installed. Due to legal reasons, this compression driver cannot be distributed with the clock.

Problem: An error message appears when the clock tries to speak

Please see above. If this doesn't solve the problem, there is a compatibility problem between your sound card and Windows (the Speaking Clock uses standard Windows functions to play back the sounds).

Problem: I downloaded a new language, but the clock doesn't show it

You need to have the latest version of the file LANG.DAT. This file is available for download at the Speaking Clock website.

Problem: The clock makes other programs slow down

Try to adjust the Update interval in the [Settings](#) dialog box. The default value is 100 ms, but you can change it to a maximum of 1000 ms.

Contributing with languages

Want to make the Speaking Clock tell the time in your own language, that is not available to download? Then I welcome you to help me make that language available to all users of the clock.

What you need to do is to provide me with recordings of all necessary numbers and words, together with specific instructions on how to tell the time in that language.

If you are interested, send me an email. I will get back to you with more information. The address is **leif.porsklev@abc.se**.

Please note that the only reward you will get is that your name will be mentioned in the credits section of this help file (not counting the fact that your voice will be heard on computers all over the world).

Credits

A special thanks goes to those who gave their voice for me to use in this program.

Arabic:	Abraham Abyad
Chinese:	Miranda Chang
Dutch:	Heidi Ochsner
English and Russian:	My wife and life companion Irina Blagotchinkova
French:	Gaëtan Gladu
German:	Ulrike Schleier
Polish:	Witold Tulodziecki.
Swedish:	Myself, although I give no credits for that

