

K-NFB
Reading Technology, Inc.

Kurzweil–National Federation of the Blind Reader™

The Personal Reader from
Ray Kurzweil and the National Federation of the Blind

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)



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KURZWEIL—NATIONAL FEDERATION OF THE BLIND READER

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

The questions in this FAQ may arise for you in using the Kurzweil—National Federation of the Blind Reader™. Answers are provided to help with troubleshooting a problem or to achieve best results. Please consult the User Guide and other documentation provided to obtain more details on how to use and care for the Reader. For problems requiring personal assistance, please call your dealer for technical support. If you need further assistance, contact K-NFB Reading Technology.

Send an email request to: support@knfbreader.com

Call K-NFB Reading Technology Reader Tech Support Line toll free at: 1-877-547-1500

Turning the System On

Q: Why does the system say "Camera is off" when I turn on the Reader?

A: This is exactly what the Reader should say. -- The power controls for the camera and the PDA are entirely separate and independent from one another. You can read documents just captured or previously saved on the Reader while the camera is turned off. In fact, doing so helps to conserve the camera battery. Consult the Quick Start Instructions or User Guide to learn how to turn the camera on after the system is on.

Q: How do I turn the camera on?

A: The on-off button for the camera is not on the PDA. -- This button is located on the left side of the camera portion of the Reader. The camera is the rectangular shaped box that is joined together with the wider and longer PDA portion of the Reader. The left side of the camera is the only side with control buttons.

Press and hold the small, flat, and textured button which you will find located near a larger, round and smooth button. The camera has been

switched on when you hear a chime from the camera, followed by a chime from the PDA. Do not release the button until the first chime sounds.

Press the same small, flat, and textured button to turn the camera off. The only chime you will hear will be produced by the PDA, followed by the statement, "Camera is off."

Q: When I turn the camera on after the system is on, why do I only hear one chime and no response from the PDA to say that the camera is on?

A: Here are the most likely causes and remedies:

The camera battery may be low. -- Try changing the battery in accordance with the User Guide instructions.

The camera may be disconnected from the PDA. -- To correct a loose connection, press and hold the camera and the PDA tightly together in the area of the battery access flap while turning the camera on again. Release and fasten the flap again until it is snug to maintain a tight connection between the camera and the PDA.

The PDA may need to be reset. -- Consult the User Guide for instructions.

The camera's mode switch may have been moved to the wrong position. -- Contact technical support for assistance with locating the switch and determining if it has been moved.

Q: What should I do if the Reader comes out of the box unresponsive?

A: The Reader may have lost most of its power, and may have locked up the system to save any valuable information. Recharge the PDA battery and reset the PDA. -- Consult the User Guide for instructions.

Charging the Batteries

Q: Why does the PDA not seem to recharge when I plug the system into an external power source?

A: Here are some possible reasons and remedies:

The power may not be flowing to the Reader through the wall outlet or power strip. -- Confirm that power is flowing to the Reader by pressing F1 twice when the system is on. The Reader will say "The system is connected to external power," when the cords are properly connected and the power is on. Proceed with the following steps if you do not receive this

confirmation. Make sure the small round connector on the PDA charging cable is completely inserted into the jack on the right edge of the Reader. Make sure that the power strip you are using (if any) is switched on and reset if necessary.

Q: How do I recharge the camera battery?

A: The camera battery cannot be charged while inside the camera. -- A camera battery recharging unit and extra battery are supplied with the Reader. Follow the instructions provided in the User Guide to remove the camera battery and replace it with a freshly charged replacement. The instructions also explain how to place the battery in the recharging unit. Recharging only takes about 90 minutes while the charger is plugged into external power.

Q: Why do both the camera and the PDA fail to chime when I try to turn the camera on after replacing the battery?

A: Here are the most likely causes and remedies:

The camera battery door may not be properly closed. -- Open the camera battery flap with one hand while holding the camera and the PDA tightly together. Examine the camera battery door to be sure that all edges are flush with the surrounding sides of the plastic case of the camera. Press down on the top of the camera battery door and slide the door toward the PDA on its track as far as it goes; then release the door and allow it to flip open. Examine the battery to be sure it is locked into place with the spring-loaded latch, and close the door down flat before sliding it back over the battery again. Be sure that all of the edges of the camera battery door blend in with the surrounding plastic case so no gap or protrusion can be felt; then fasten the camera battery flap snugly over the door to hold the camera tightly to the PDA. Finally, try turning the camera on again to see if it works.

The replacement camera battery may have lost its charge. -- Remove the camera battery and replace it with the other battery that has just been charged for about 90 minutes.

Solving System Failures

Q: Why does the Reader say "Picture one failed" every time I try to take a new picture?

A: The camera and the PDA are not communicating properly. -- Reset the PDA by long pressing F4, then releasing it when prompted and pressing F3. Try taking pictures again after the system resets. If the "Picture one failed" condition persists, reset the camera by removing the camera battery for about 10 seconds and then inserting it again. The camera battery may also be low. If this is the case, charge and inset a fresh camera battery.

Q: Why is the PDA failing to respond to key commands that I know are right?

A: This may happen when the Secure Digital card has been removed and then re-inserted. -- Reset the PDA.

Q: Why won't the PDA turn off when I press F4?

A: The Reader may have already been switched off, or the correct shutdown procedure may not have been used. -- First, press F1 to see if the Reader says "Help is on," which confirms that the Reader is on. To shut down the Reader, first turn off the camera, then long press F4 until you hear a chime, followed by the prompts. Release F4 and press it again to complete the shutdown process. If the PDA has not said "Good-bye," follow the instructions in the User Guide for a reset and try to turn the PDA off again. Remember to be sure that the camera is off as well.

Q: Why does the Reader keep beeping after I take a picture, yet it does not start reading the document?

A: This may occur because there is a large amount of text or graphics in the image, or if the image has very little or no text whatsoever. Press F4 to cancel processing if reading will not start. Reset the PDA if necessary.

Q: Why does the speech stutter or crackle, especially when the Reader has just been switched on?

A: This sounds like a problem, but it may be entirely normal. -- This results from interaction between the speech processor and the PDA's operating system. Software changes are expected to provide a remedy and will be included in future upgrades. Contact technical support if the problem persists for more than a few seconds and frequently recurs.

Q: How do I re-install or upgrade the software?

A: This procedure is virtually automatic. -- The software programs needed for the Reader are stored on a Secure Digital (S D) card that is provided. This card (or a new one issued to update the Reader) should be inserted following the instructions in the User Guide.

Accessing Command Buttons and Help

Q: What buttons do I need to know to operate the Reader?

A: All of the Reader control buttons are in a panel located on the flat, top side of the Reader toward the power end, just below the visual display screen. -- There are only nine Reader control buttons. Study the Command Summary and other instructions to learn the button functions. You can also press F1 once, followed by a single press of any other button to learn the function of that button.

Q: Other than the button descriptions, is any other help information available on the Reader?

A: Yes. -- The following documentation can be read directly on the Reader by long pressing F1 and following the prompts to navigate through Documentation Explorer:

- Quick Start Instructions;
- Command Summary;
- Frequently Asked Questions; and
- User Guide.

Long press Up Arrow to access the table of contents whenever the prompt indicates that a table of contents is present.

Using the Field of View Report

Q: Before I take a picture, do I just have to guess about how well the camera is aimed at the document?

A: No. -- Guessing works very well, especially with some practice; however, the Reader does have two optional features, which may help to take a better picture. These are the Field of View Report and the View Finder.

Press Up Arrow with the camera on and the Reader in Shooting Mode to hear an audible description of what the camera sees before you take a picture. This report tells you which of the edges of a document are seen and how large the image is in the viewing area, but does not read any of the text.

Press F3 when the camera is on and the Reader is in Shooting Mode to see an image of the document through the visual display screen. No verbal information is provided. Press F3 and then F4 to turn the display screen off.

Q: What does it mean when the Reader says, “Camera is X degrees relative to the page”?

A: The first portion of the Field of View Report is intended to provide feedback on the amount of rotation of the Reader as compared to the target document. The Reader will automatically rotate any image it sees, but you will get slightly better results if you have the Reader square with the document. Also you’ll get best results if the camera’s rectangular image is oriented in the same direction as the document’s rectangular image. Overall, 90 degrees means “turned one quarter.” Zero degrees means perfectly aligned. Try to get the image within 10 degrees of zero, or within 10 degrees of 90.

Q: What does it mean when the Reader says, “X percent filled”?

A: The percentage filled information is intended to help you adjust the distance from the target document. Best results will be obtained if the document fills more than 50% of the image. This assumes that the target document is a typical letter-size or smaller-size (A4) page. A long, narrow document will fill less of the image, but may still be read.

Q: When I use the Field of View Report, why can't I get the document to fill the entire screen and still see all four edges of the page?

A: Achieving this goal would be very difficult and is absolutely not necessary. -- For best results, the Field of View Report should say "Portrait" or "Landscape" orientation, which means all four edges are visible, and should tell you that the image is at least 50 percent filled. It is not necessary to have more than 75 percent of the image filled by the target document. You may also get an excellent result when the Field of View Report has not confirmed that all four edges are visible, or even when the Report says, "No text found."

Relying on the Field of View Report too much can actually slow you down in using the Reader successfully, but it can be of some help in some situations. Remember that the camera does not flash during the Field of View process, so the document may not be seen very well in low light or low contrast conditions, but taking the picture will still produce a good image of the text because the flash is on.

Using Shooting Mode

Q: When I know there is text on the page, why does the Reader still say "No text found" after I take a picture and the image is processed?

A: There are several conditions that can cause this. -- The color of the print or the background can definitely affect text recognition. Also, even if the text is black and the paper is white, which is ideal, there may only be a few lines of text at the top of the page. The best solution in either case is to try taking the picture again or possibly taking it several times.

Q: Why do I find too many characters detected incorrectly in the page?

A: There are several possibilities; however, the most common are the following:

- The Reader was too far from the page while the picture was taken.
- The Reader was tilted.
- The text has background images.
- The text size is very small.
- The text font has connected or uncommon characters.
- The camera flash was used in documents with a glossy finish without using the camera polarizers.

Q: What are the camera polarizers and what is their purpose?

A: The Reader comes equipped with optional filters called polarizers, which are installed on the camera to improve performance in reading documents with a glossy finish (such as magazines). The polarizers are installed over the camera lens and flash output. If they are not properly aligned, light from the flash will be reflected back into the lens, producing glare and text recognition errors. Realign the polarizers as needed in order to obtain best results.

Q: Why do I find too many reading errors in the page?

A: There are several possibilities; however, the most common are the following:

- Bills and Memos reading mode was used for multicolumn documents. Bills and Memos mode is only intended for single column documents. Try switching to Books, Articles and Labels reading mode in User Settings.
- Too many characters were detected incorrectly.
- The text has background images.
- The text size is very small.
- The text font has connected or uncommon characters.

Saving, Finding and Deleting Files

Q: How do I save files?

A: Long-press F2 to manually save files, images, and Voice Notes all at the same time. You can also go to User Settings to choose or change file saving options to automatic saving. Remember that you need to have a Secure Digital memory card inserted into the PDA slot for files to be saved.

Q: Why are all the pictures I take connected in a single document that I can't seem to get rid of?

A: Learning about document paging and saving files will help you. -- These subjects are covered in the User Guide and other documentation.

Pictures are appended to one another when document paging is set to multiple. You can change this setting to single paging in the document paging options under Document Reader. Also, if document paging is set to multiple, you can still start a new document with the next picture you take by long pressing Down Arrow under Document Reader to hear "New document," before you go to Shooting Mode to take the picture.

Also, you can only read previously captured documents again if you have saved them. You can set the Reader to save every document, or you can choose to save manually, one document at a time, by long pressing F2 after the image has been processed. Go to User Settings to choose or change file saving options.

Q: How can I find files and read them again when I have saved them?

A: This is the purpose of File Explorer. -- File Explorer gives you a directory of folders and files that are located on the Secure Digital card supplied with the Reader. The User Guide and Command Summary explain the organization of folders and files and how to read and delete files using File Explorer.

The main folder names are:

- Reader Documents -- used for storing documents;
- Reader Images -- used for storing pictures that can be processed and read again; and
- Reader Voice Notes -- used to record and save audio information.

The Reader creates a subfolder for each day you use it, provided that you save a document, image, or Voice Note on that day. Folders are automatically named by date.

Files are found in the date folders and are numbered one right after the other.

You can read saved documents or hear Voice Notes on the Reader, or you can remove the Secure Digital card from the Reader and review the files on another computer. Keep in mind that documents with no marked up text are also stored on the Secure Digital card in the folder called "Reader Text Files." However, this folder can only be accessed through a different computer. Files can be added to the card from another computer, but they must be TXT or RTF documents and must be stored in the Reader Documents folder.

Q: Once a file is stored on the Reader, how can I delete it?

A: Files can only be deleted by using File Explorer. -- You can delete a file when the file name has been selected under File Explorer, but you have not yet entered the file.

Long press Down Arrow to hear the confirmation prompt and press Down Arrow again to delete the file.

Q: Can I rename files?

A: You cannot rename files on the Reader. You can only rename files if you take the Secure Digital card out of the Reader and access the files from a PC.

Q: What are Voice Notes, and how can I use them?

A: Voice Notes are audio files that you create by speaking into the Reader. -- Voice Notes may be linked to document and image files to say something about the file, or they may be unrelated to any other file as stand-alone Voice Notes.

Long press F3 to start the Voice Note recorder. Recording stops automatically after 30 seconds, or you can stop the recording sooner by pressing F3. Follow the prompts to have the Voice Note linked to a document or image file or to have it stand alone.

Press F4 to cancel and not save a Voice Note.

Changing PDA Settings

Q: How can I increase the volume of the Reader, which seems to be very soft?

A: The Reader can be hard to hear in many situations. -- Earphones, which also have a volume control on the cord, are supplied with the Reader for private listening. The earphone jack is at the opposite end of the Reader from the control keys and just below the screen near the card slots. Small speakers available at computer or consumer electronics stores can also be used and plugged into the earphone jack.

Q: How can I change the date and time of the Reader?

A: The date and time of the Reader can be changed in User Settings under the option "Set Date and Time." Use Up and Down Arrows to change the current value (such as month), and Right and Left Arrows to switch to the next value (such as hour). Press Enter to save selections when finished.

Q: How can I change the idle time for turning the system off automatically?

A: The idle time can be changed in User Settings under the option "Auto Shut Down." Use Right or Left Arrows to change the current value. The default idle time is three minutes. It can be changed to 1, 3, 5, 10, or 15 minutes. It can also be disabled.

Useful Tips and Hints

Q: What should I do to reduce the curvature of a book?

A: Try holding the book with the target side flat on the surface, and the other side (being held by the hand) at angle a bit greater than 90 degrees. This seems to help with minimizing the curvature and reducing the tendency of the book to want to close.

Q: What should I do if the Reader is not reading everything on the page?

A: The Reader may not be reading everything on the page due to several factors. The page may have graphics or artistic text; there is white text over dark background; the font is too large or too small, etc. However, for regular text, you can try taking the picture from a smaller or greater distance. This will often bring a surprising change in the reading.