THE BRAILLISTS FOUNDATION

BRAILLECAST PODCAST EXTRA 40

Braille on iOS, Part 3

1st March 2022

Matthew Horspool: Welcome back to Braillecast Extra. This episode was recorded on Tuesday, 1st March 2022 and introduced by Dave Williams.

Dave Williams: Hello and a very warm welcome back to the Braillists Foundation. This is Part 3 of 3, with Scott Davert and Braille on iOS, how to get the most from using a refreshable braille display with your iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch. Do people still have iPod Touches? Anyway, I think tonight we are going to be taking on that request of how do we go about customising commands on the braille display in iOS. So, without any further ado, I'm going to hand you over to Scott Davert.

Scott Davert: Welcome back, everybody, to Masterclass 3 of using braille displays on iOS devices. This time we're going to talk about using Safari with a braille display on iOS, how to set up customised keyboard commands, and we'll also look at a couple of other examples where having these keyboard commands can come in handy.

So, it will be a packed Masterclass, as the other two were, and, of course, we will give you time to ask questions at the end. So, I hope you will stay tuned and also that you'll learn something.

So, Apple has done a lot of things over the years, in terms of VoiceOver development and braille display development, but one thing that was always sort of frustrating to me as a long time braille user, was I would keep asking them to add braille display commands for specific things, because they did not have that function available on the braille display by using a keyboard command, from the Perkins keyboard.

So, I would constantly say, "Oh, well, you know, it would be nice to do a double tap and hold on the braille display." "It would be great to have 3D touch on the braille display." And so on and so forth. To a large extent now, you can do a lot of this customisation on your own. This came about in iOS 11, for those who care, a little over four years ago now.

Apple basically, I think, said, "You know what? Here's all the VoiceOver functions or a majority of them anyway. You pick your own. We don't want to mess with that anymore." And, well, I said, "Okay, that's what I'll do." And that's a lot of what I've done.

What I'm going to show you today, specifically if you are someone who likes to browse the internet, I think that probably includes everybody here, there are a few keyboard assignments that actually sped up my ability to browse the web tremendously with a braille display.

It's important to keep in mind, for those who use Bluetooth keyboards and those who are on Mantis displays, that many of these commands are already available and are already part of the key map of using a QWERTY keyboard. So, the thing to keep in mind with the Mantis is that this actually will not apply to you. If there's time, I will go through how to add new commands to the Mantis as well.

Let's get into it, shall we? The first thing we want to do is set up a few customisable commands and these are not reassignments. There are many options for possible keyboard commands that don't have anything assigned to them right now, as you'll see when we go into this menu.

I'm going to use one which I already set up a while ago and that is backspace with the letter V which will take me to VoiceOver Settings directly.

Synthesised Voice: Settings, Accessibility, back button.

Scott Davert: Now that I am on the Settings page for VoiceOver, I need to find braille. I'm going to hit space with F.

Synthesised Voice: Enter search text.

Scott Davert: Type in B-R-L, enter.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, braille, TRI20X output, contracted, button.

Scott Davert: There it is. Now what I'm going to do is go down and find the braille display to which I'm currently connected.

By the way, it might be important for you to know that if you have, say, for example, an Orbit Reader 40 and you have another device like a Focus display or a Brailliant or any other display, when you set these up, they only apply to the display that you're currently using. So, if you have, say, a Focus and an Orbit Reader, you would need to, unfortunately, set up a separate set of commands, even if you make them the same and I would recommend doing that, but you will have to go in and configure them for each braille device.

The reason that is done, as far as I know, is because each of those displays have things that make them unique. For example, the Focus has all kinds of buttons and switches on the front that are not present on the Orbit Reader or the Brailliant, so Apple has decided to separate those out and to make it so that you can do further customisation. So, for example, if you want to hit the right rocker bar up and assign that to a function, well, it doesn't really apply to what you're doing on the Orbit Reader or a Brailliant, so you would then have a bunch of things that were not applicable. So, I'm guessing that was why they came up with that, but I really don't know.

Now, I am going to, as I said, find the braille display that I have currently connected. So, I am going to hit space with dot 4 to go through the menu to get to where I need to be.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, status cells, button.

Scott Davert: I'm pressing it a lot of times.

Synthesised Voice: Sh-- Word wrap, bra-- ignore-- choose-- AP-- selected, braille, TRI20X, 650.

Scott Davert: So, that is the braille display which I currently have connected. From here, I have to hit space with dot 6 to go to more info. Space with dot 3 will also do it. It really doesn't matter which you use.

Synthesised Voice: More info.

Scott Davert: I'll select that. Space with dots 3 6.

Synthesised Voice: Braille commands, button.

Scott Davert: Here we have braille commands, and you can also come in here to disconnect or forget the device, but this is what we're looking for, which is braille commands.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, button.

Scott Davert: We have a series of categories. The first category is braille and I'll just go through them all.

Synthesised Voice: Device, button. Interaction, button. Keyboard, button. Navigation, button. Rotor, button. VoiceOver, button. Reset all braille key assignments, button.

Scott Davert: Reset all braille keyboard key assignments. So, if you really mess things up, and I've seen people do it, in fact the first time I started doing this, when iOS 11 came out, I went pretty crazy myself and then I was thinking, "Well, I know I programmed something in for that." I was kind of lost, so I had to come in here and reset everything.

So, that's just something to keep in mind. You do have the reset option there to return everything to factory default, if you find that you completely messed things up. It's always great to have the option to go back to where you were originally.

Let's take a look at a couple of these categories. I think we might actually look a little bit at all of them. I'll go back to the top with space and L.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, TRI20X, six.

Scott Davert: Now, I'll hit my space with dot 4. I almost said right arrow, because I'm still sort of in Mantis mode.

Synthesised Voice: Braille commands, heading, braille, button.

Scott Davert: So, the braille category, and I don't know why some of these were put into the category they were, I also don't know why there is no search field. By the way, there is another menu, within VoiceOver, called Commands, but if you want to set braille display commands, you actually have to do it in here, and there is a search feature in that version of it. The problem is that braille display commands don't show up when you search for them. You'll get a keyboard command, you'll get all these other things, but braille display commands, for whatever reason, you still have to come in to the braille menu, go to More Info under the device that you have connected and then go to braille commands.

So, let's look at some of the things that you can customise here in the braille menu.

Synthesised Voice: Decrease auto advance speed, button.

Scott Davert: If you would like to set up a command to decrease the amount of time, if you have the auto scroll or auto advance function turned on, you can set up a specific keyboard command to do that. There's also one for enabling it.

Synthesised Voice: Enable auto advance, button.

Scott Davert: So, if you would like to enable auto advance through a simple keyboard command, you can come in here and set that up.

This is what I mean. There's all these things that don't have any commands currently, that we're looking at, and it really can open up a whole new world or productivity. It certainly has for me.

If I go with space and dot 4 to the right one more time.

Synthesised Voice: Increase auto advance speed, button.

Scott Davert: Then we have the increase auto advance speed.

Synthesised Voice: Next input mode, dot 2 plus dot 3 plus dot 6 plus spacebar, button.

Scott Davert: I went to the right one more time and you'll notice it said, "Next input mode," and then gave me the command space with dot 2 plus dot 3 plus dot 6. Actually I think it said space last. Anyway, whatever, the point is that if there's already a command associated with that particular function, it will tell you. So, you can actually use this not only as a way to set braille display commands, but you can also come in here and browse, if you want to study, for example, a list of the commands which you currently have.

Synthesised Voice: Next output mode, dot 1 plus dot 2 plus dot 4 plus dot 5 plus spacebar, button. Pan left, dot 2 plus spacebar, button.

Scott Davert: So, all of these items that we are going through, by the way, are things that you can change. So, for example, let's just go with the next one, which I believe would be pan to the right.

Synthesised Voice: Pan right, 65,793, button.

Scott Davert; That's a weird one. That's a Brailliant issue, that Apple hasn't addressed. But anyway, it is space with dot 5 to pan forward to use your panning keys on your braille display. I don't know of any that don't have panning keys.

You can, for example, reprogram the space with dot 5 to pan forward, to something else, if you wanted to. You get the idea.

There are a lot of commands in here. All the other categories have a lot of commands. But I wanted to come in here and we're actually not going to change anything here. We're going to go to a different section, but I just wanted to give you a general idea of some of the other menu options that are out there and to tell you that each category has several options underneath it that you can set up.

Since this is a demonstration slash class on Safari, I think one of the things we're going to want to look at are commands to navigate the web. I'll hit space with B to escape this menu, or submenu, or whatever you want to call it.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, button.

Scott Davert: Then I am going to go and find these commands, because, again, there's no search, so you really have to move around if you don't know what you're looking for.

Synthesised Voice: Device, button. Interaction, button. Keyboard, button. Navigation, button.

Scott Davert: I hit space with dot 4 several times. I am now on Navigation. I'm about 99% sure that will have what we're looking for. Space with dots 3 6.

Synthesised Voice: First item, dot 1 plus dot 2 plus dot 3 plus spacebar, button.

Scott Davert: There are, again, all kinds of, in this case, navigation options, like going to the first item, which we have talked about already, space with L.

Synthesised Voice: Last item, dot 4 plus dot 5 plus dot 6 plus spacebar, button. Move In, button.

Scott Davert: so, you see there, Move In does not have a command associated with it. That has to do with flat navigation versus group navigation. We're not going to get into that. That's really not a feature ready for prime time yet, in my opinion, anyway. So, I have a lot of commands here and I would guess there are probably 40 or 50 in this menu alone. We can't go through them all. So, what I'm going to do is I want to set up a keyboard command to jump to the next heading.

To quickly find it, I'll hit space with F for Find.

Synthesised Voice: Enter search text.

Scott Davert: I'll just type in "Heading" and press Enter.

Synthesised Voice: Next heading, button.

Scott Davert: It found it and you see there it does not have a keyboard command associated with it.

Let's change that.

Synthesised Voice: Braille keys, heading, no assigned braille keys, dimmed.

Scott Davert: I'm just moving to the right. If I go one more to the right with space and dot 4, we have the assign new braille keys button.

Synthesised Voice: Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: When I hit this, I have to press the keyboard combination immediately. If you don't hit it immediately, sometimes it doesn't register and you have to back out and do it again. So, before you hit that button to assign a new braille keyboard command to it, it's important to know what you want to set it as, before you go ahead and do that.

I have a specific set of commands that I set up, regardless of the braille display. As somebody who runs a research facility, I'm bouncing between braille displays a lot. So I want to come up with something that's going to be universal. Dot 8 with the letter H, for example, is available on all the displays with a Perkins keyboard, so I'm going to do that.

First I need to activate this button. Again, it's Assign New Braille Keys, that's the title of it. So, I'll hit space with dots 3 6, followed by dot 8 with the letter H.

Synthesised Voice: Selected, alert, press braille keys, assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: And it was successful and I know that because I'm back in the previous menu, but if I wasn't sure, I just hit dot 8 with H.

Synthesised Voice: Heading not found.

Scott Davert: It said, "Heading not found."

Synthesised Voice: Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: But if I get out of here, again space with B.

Synthesised Voice: Next font change, button. Next form item, button.

Scott Davert: That's another one we're going to change. We're going to assign a command to that. Let's go ahead and do that. Next form, I use for the next form item, dot 8 with F.

Synthesised Voice: Braille keys, heading, no assigned braille keys, dimmed. Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: I'll hit space with dots 3 6 here on Assign New Braille Keys.

Synthesised Voice: Select, alert, press braille keys.

Scott Davert: Enter with F.

Synthesised Voice: Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: And there we go. Space with B gets me out of here.

Synthesised Voice: Next different item, button.

Scott Davert: I think these are in alphabetical order, so if I do space with dot 4 again, probably at least twice, let's see.

Synthesised Voice: Next font change, button. Next form item, button. Next heading, button.

Scott Davert: At this point, they are not showing or vocalising those keyboard commands, even though they have been assigned. That's how it works, for whatever reason, but if you go back again, and come back in, you will see that they are here.

Conversely, previous heading, I probably want to set that up. That would be, for me, dot 7 with the letter H.

Synthesised Voice: Next image, button.

Scott Davert: So, let's do space with F.

Synthesised Voice: Enter search text.

Scott Davert: P-R-E-V-I-O-U-S space H-E-A-D-I-N-G, enter.

Synthesised Voice: Previous heading, button.

Scott Davert: Excellent. Once again, space with dot 3 6, cursor routing button or Select if you're on an Orbit product.

Synthesised Voice: Braille keys, heading. No assigned braille keys, dimmed.

Scott Davert: I'll go to the right one more time.

Synthesised Voice: Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: Space with dots 3 6 and then follow that up with dot 7 and H.

Synthesised Voice: Select, alert, press braille, assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: I think "Previous form item", again, because we are looking at things in alphabetical order here, would be a couple of items to the left, once I hit space with B to get out of here.

Synthesised Voice: Previous character, button.

Scott Davert: And you'll see there that it doesn't put you exactly where you were in the menu. Instead of going backwards with space with dot 1, now we have to go forward, or I could do a Find for form, but it's only a couple of options.

Synthesised Voice: Previous colour cha-- Previous container. Previous different item, button. Previous font change, butt-- Previous form item, button.

Scott Davert: There it is, and, by the way, I'm doing it this way to also give you some idea of other commands that we aren't going to assign, that perhaps you might want to.

So, Previous Form Item, you might be able to guess from the other commands what I'm going to set that up as. Backspace with F. So, let me select this.

Synthesised Voice: Braille keys, heading.

Scott Davert: Go to the right a couple of times.

Synthesised Voice: No assigned braille keys, d-- assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: There we are. And I'll hit space with dots 3 6, followed by dot 7 with the letter F.

Synthesised Voice: Select, alert, press braille-- assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: Now, we have those particular things set up.

I'll show you a few more though, even though this is a podcast about working with navigation in Safari, there are certainly a ton of commands here that you can use.

I'll hit with space with B to back out of here.

Synthesised Voice: Previous character, button.

Scott Davert: Space with B to back out of this submenu, which is the Navigation category.

Synthesised Voice: Previous form item, button. Previous form item, previous form item, button.

Scott Davert: VoiceOver has lost Focus. So, because we're not actually in that menu anymore, I hit space with L, in this case. That usually brings Focus to the top and also make it so that I can actually see what's on the real screen.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, TRI20X, si-- braille commands, heading.

Scott Davert: Okay, we are where we are supposed to be and I had to hit space with L to bring Focus back.

Let's look at what else we have here real fast.

Synthesised Voice: Braille, button.

Scott Davert: Let's say I want to go to VoiceOver. I can hit space with F, of course.

Synthesised Voice: Enter search text.

Scott Davert: V-O-I-C-E, enter.

Synthesised Voice: VoiceOver, button.

Scott Davert: Let's see what we have in here.

Synthesised Voice: Copy speech, dot 1 plus dot 4 plus dot 7, button.

Scott Davert: Now, that is not a command that Apple has set up. It's one I set up previously, but it does come in handy, for example, if you get a phone number that you quickly want to export to somewhere else, you can use the Copy Speech thing and it will copy the last thing that was spoken, verbatim, by the way. So if there's punctuation in it, even if the punctuation is not vocalised, it'll copy that as well. So, that's another handy thing for many different reasons.

Synthesised Voice: Item chooser, dot 2 plus dot 4 plus spacebar, button.

Scott Davert: And we have here a lot of things that are set up by default and you can change them, if you'd like,

Synthesised Voice: Next search result, button.

Scott Davert: Next search result, that is something that can come in handy if you use the Find function a lot. I just haven't bothered to set it up on this device.

Synthesised Voice: Open quick settings, button.

Scott Davert: Open quick settings, does not have a braille display command but if you wanted to set one, there you go.

Synthesised Voice: Open VoiceOver Settings, dot one plus dot two plus dot three plus dot six plus dot seven, button.

Scott Davert: And there we have Open VoiceOver Settings.

So, let's take a look. Let's say I wanted to change this, or maybe I wanted to add another command, because you can have multiple commands that do the same thing.

Let me select this.

Synthesised Voice: Braille keys, heading. Dot one plus dot two plus dot three plus dot six plus dot seven. Actions available.

Scott Davert: And you heard there that actions are available. You can hit space with 3, or space with 6.

Synthesised Voice: Delete.

Scott Davert: And you can delete it.

Synthesised Voice: Activate default.

Scott Davert: See, that's the only option. Now, if I go forward one more, or to the right, I should say, with space and dot 4.

Synthesised Voice: Assign new braille keys, button.

Scott Davert: I can do the process we did previously and assign it yet another command, if I want.

So, those are a few things that you might find handy, that we haven't assigned here on the class, but I think, since I did four of them, that should give you a good idea of how to customise them and feel free, definitely, to browse all of the categories and see all the things that you can use and set up. I will say that they don't always all work as advertised. For example, to go to the next bolded text, say, if you have a document with some sections that are bolded and some that are not, I found that that one did not work reliably. Underline, when you set one up for that, that works reliably, as far as I can tell, but, for whatever reason, bold doesn't seem to.

Let's quickly go into the mail app, before we do Safari, so that I can quickly show you why the heading keyboard command can be helpful in mail as well.

I'll hit space with H twice to go to the App Switcher.

Synthesised Voice: App Switcher, settings, active, actions available.

Scott Davert: There it is. I'll go to:

Synthesised Voice: Safari, active, actions available.

Scott Davert: Mail, which is space with dot 1 again to go to the previous item.

Synthesised Voice: Mail, active, actions available.

Scott Davert: Here’s the Mail app.

Synthesised Voice: Mail, message content. Top ten table, email, newsletter header.

Scott Davert; I hit space with P to pause speech. This email has headings in it, which allow you to jump quickly from article to article.

Now, you'll recall I set up dot 8 with H to go to the next heading, so if I press that now:

Synthesised Voice: Top tips for Thursday February 24th 2022, volume 840, this week's featured advertisement, no s--

Scott Davert: And I can quickly jump from item to item if I have the newsletter set up this way.

Synthesised Voice: Dear Scott, one, two, three, four, five. The top ten breakthrough technologies of 2022, vertical line, MIT technology rev--

Scott Davert: Because I set it up this way, I can hit dot 7 with H.

Synthesised Voice: Four, U3 dot 2, FT clears the fir--

Scott Davert: And I can quickly skip backwards.

Now, let's say I was going to do this with the rotor. Let me set the rotor to Headings.

Synthesised Voice: Characters, Wor-- Blinds. Text selection, braille table, headings.

Scott Davert: I can hit space with dot 6. That will be the equivalent of flicking down one time on the touch screen, and space with dot 3 is the equivalent to flicking up.

Synthesised Voice: Three, JAWS tip, getting help in JAWS, heading level four.

Scott Davert: That's a little off topic for this class, but it will allow me to show you what happens.

So, let's say I'm interested in this particular item. I can do any number of things to have it continue reading in speech or braille, such as space with dot 4 or just continue panning forward. I'll do that.

Synthesised Voice: Current, Freedom Scientific, actions available. ATTPS calling, slash, slash W.

Scott Davert: Okay, I hit space with P to make it be quiet, and now, you'll remember, I had the headings highlighted or selected in the rotor. Let's see what happens now when I hit space with dot 6.

Synthesised Voice: Archive.

Scott Davert: The actions rotor comes back. So, anytime you're not on a heading in the mail app, because VoiceOver and Apple seem to think that that's what you want most of the time, the actions rotor is going to follow you around. That can be kind of frustrating, but if I wanted to go to the previous heading again, it doesn't matter where I am on the email, dot 7 with H.

Synthesised Voice: Three, JAWS tip.

Scott Davert: Now I'm back to item number three in the list. So, that's really, I think, a very handy function, not only in the email app but also in Safari, which is what we're going to talk about next.

So, let me get out of the mail app, space with H twice.

Synthesised Voice: App Switcher. Mail, active. App, settings, active, actions available.

Scott Davert: Moving left with space and dot 1.

Synthesised Voice: Safari, active, actions available.

Scott Davert: Here's Safari. Let's go ahead and go into Safari.

Synthesised Voice: This Tuesday at 7:30pm, Braille on iOS, part three, link, list start.

Scott Davert: Hm, that seems a little familiar, doesn't it, to you guys? I think perhaps we might know a little bit about that.

So, again, all of the commands that I normally have, space with L will take me to the top, space with dots 4 5 6 would take me to the very bottom, and of course all of the custom commands which I set up, dot 8 with H, for example, will, again, take me to the next heading.

Synthesised Voice: Our aims, heading, level two.

Scott Davert: Now, let's say, we would like to read an article. What I'm going to do for this one is two things. One, if I know I want to go to the address bar, I don't think there are any form fields on this part of the page before, so let's do Enter with the letter F.

Synthesised Voice: Page settings, button.

Scott Davert: So, now that we've found page settings, we are down into the bottom area, if I hit it again.

Synthesised Voice: Address, braillists.org secure, text field.

Scott Davert: There is the address bar. Space with dots 3 6 will allow me to do whatever I want, for example, go to another website.

Synthesised Voice: QuickNav off.

Scott Davert: I'll hit dot 7 to erase the address that's currently in there.

Synthesised Voice: Selection deleted, https://www.braillists.org.

Scott Davert: I'm going to go ahead and pull up the page for the Research Centre that I run, so I'm going to type in "hknc.org/tric" followed by dot 8.

And it did load. VoiceOver didn't really give us any speech feedback and the address bar just shows where I'm at.

So, let me go ahead and hit space with L.

Synthesised Voice: QuickNav on. Skip to main content in page length. Actions available.

Scott Davert: And, of course, I can jump to the first header again, with dot 8 and H.

Synthesised Voice: Welcome to the Technology Research and Innovation Centre, heading level one, main, landmark.

Scott Davert: Let's say, for example, I want to find something specific on this page. There's a series of articles that are listed here and the one I guess I'll go with is the article that talks about comparing five different 40 cell braille displays and a lot of their different features.

Of course, because this page has a lot of headings on it, I can skip through them and finally get there, or if I know a word in the title, say, "fortify", I know is one of the words in the title of that particular article, I can hit space with F once again.

Synthesised Voice: Enter search text. 40 Cells To Empowerment: A Comparison of Five Braille Displays To Fortify Your Success, heading level two.

Scott Davert: And that is that particular article. Now, it is not a link, so we have to go forward with space and dot 4 a couple of times.

Synthesised Voice: To help decide which is best for your specific needs, this article will provide the following information for each device: price, internal functions, battery life.

Scott Davert: I hit space with P to make it be quiet. So, to get to the actual link, the Read More link.

Synthesised Voice: Read More, visited, link.

Scott Davert: I hit space with dot 4 again. Now, I will select this with a cursor routing button, space with dot 3 6, or Select.

Synthesised Voice: Read More, visited, link.

Scott Davert: And VoiceOver doesn't fully confirm it, which is something that's been going on for me here in this particular release. Space with L takes me again to the top.

Synthesised Voice: Skip to main content in page length, actions available.

Scott Davert: Now, of course, I can go heading by heading, because I set it up that way, with dot 8 and H.

Synthesised Voice: 40 Cells To Empowerment: A Comparison Of Five Braille Displays To Fortify Your Success, heading level one, main, landmark.

Scott Davert: Now, in this particular case, there's no advertisements on the page. There's not a ton of clutter. There's a little bit but it's not horrible. Let me go back to the top and show you what I mean. Space with L again to go to the top.

Synthesised Voice: Skip to main content in page length. Actions available.

Scott Davert: I'm just going to hit space with dot 4 a couple of times and let you hear what happens.

Synthesised Voice: HAS, link, list start, landmark, actions available. HKNS, link. HASB, link, open, link, viewing options, link, log-in, link, donate, link, Helen Keller National Centre for Deaf-- open, link, main, navigation, landmark. Actions available.

Scott Davert: So, you got the idea. There's a lot of stuff around this, but we are going to get rid of it and we are going to do that by enabling what Safari calls Reader Mode.

There are two ways you can do this. One is to go into the address bar and hit space with dot 3 or space with dot 6 until you get to it. Or, and this is going to be a couple of new commands for everybody, if you have been just sort of following along, I think I mentioned at one point, space with dots 1 and 7 will emulate the Command key, which it does. Space with dots 4 7 will activate the Shift key. The command I want to do here is command shift with the letter R. This has to be done pretty quickly, so I will hit space with dot 1 7, then space with 4 7 and then R.

Synthesised Voice: Comm-- Shift.

Scott Davert: If I hit space with L.

Synthesised Voice: 40 Cells To Empowerment: A Comparison Of Five Braille Displays To Fortify Your Success, heading level one, article by Scott Davert, coordinator to-- October 29th. Introduction, heading level two.

Scott Davert: There's the article, and there's nothing else on the page. It's only the article. If you have Reader View available, those are two ways you can get to it and if you go into Page Settings, you can actually set it so that certain sites always open in Reader View, but I don't recommend doing that, because it might be helpful sometimes when you're reading a specific article, but in other instances, you might not be able to find what you want, because you're not on the whole site. So, I only set that up for a handful of sites that I never do anything other than read the articles that are posted on Twitter anyway, so I'm not missing anything.

So, this is a toggle. I can again hit dots 1 with 7 and space, followed by dots 4 7 and space and then R.

Synthesised Voice: Command, shift, QuickNav off.

Scott Davert: I don't know why QuickNav turned off, but when I go back to the top of the page, it'll turn back on.

Synthesised Voice: Skip to main content, in page length.

Scott Davert: Hm, that's interesting.

Synthesised Voice: QuickNav on.

Scott Davert: There it goes. So, now the full site is there and you can read it just like you would before we turned Reader View on.

I think this is actually a good set of tools to get you started and some of the reasons you might want to use a braille display and have some of these commands set up that Apple does not.

I did want to talk very briefly, if you don't know, you can toggle things like Shift and Command on, so that you don't have a very short time limit. The drawback to that, of course, is that they're toggles, so, for example, if I wanted to hit Command and Shift, I wanted to toggle them on, I would have to hit dot 8 with spacebar and dot 1 to toggle on the Command key.

Synthesised Voice: Command on.

Scott Davert: I can toggle the Shift key on by pressing space with dots 4 and 8.

Synthesised Voice: Shift on.

Scott Davert: So, those two keys, it's like I'm holding them down on my keyboard right now. So, I've waited quite a while. Let me hit R.

Synthesised Voice: QuickNav off.

Scott Davert: I think it did what I wanted it to do, but now those two keys are still held down, so I need to unhold them, and it's a toggle, and also a good review, so, to turn the Command key off, I'm going to hit space with dot 8 and dot 1 again.

Synthesised Voice: Command off.

Scott Davert: Space with dot 4 and 8 to turn the Shift key off.

Synthesised Voice: Shift off.

Scott Davert: Now we are back to where we wanted to be. So, you don't have to necessarily work with something that is a race. The issue is that you'll have to press more keyboard commands to achieve it. So, there are various options there.

By the way, if you don't like some of these commands, like I showed you earlier, you can get rid of what's there or assign another command to it that would be easier for you. I don't know, maybe Enter with C, or Backspace with C for Command. The choice is really yours.

At this point, I think that's about all we need to cover. I think it's a great time to open up for questions and wrap this up. So, thank you, again, everyone, for allowing me to present and I hope that you've found some of the information in these three courses helpful for your use of braille displays on iOS.

Dave Williams: Scott Davert, thank you very much for your efforts over the last three sessions, putting together a wealth of information, certainly a lot to take in, plenty to think about and I'm sure there will be questions.

Ben Mustill-Rose: Thank you, Dave, and thank you, Scott, as well, really, really informative stuff. So, we're going to come to Jennie, you are good to go.

Jennie Facer: Can you tell me, you said that if you had time, you would talk a little bit about this bit? Can you tell where I can find the information and have it add braille commands for the Mantis?

Scott Davert: So, the Mantis information, where you'll find that and how you can re-assign commands to it, is to go to Settings, Accessibility, VoiceOver, and then Commands. But there's one other thing that I didn't know until very recently.

When you go to Keyboard Commands, which is where you'll go, because it's the Mantis, that will only show you commands that are already set up. If you want to have all commands listed, which don't have keyboard commands assigned to them, you need to stick with the main VoiceOver commands area, if that makes sense. So, instead of highlighting or selecting a specific category, and you can use the search box in that area, by the way, and it will allow you to set keyboard commands for the Mantis.

So, just remember, you don't go into Settings, Accessibility, VoiceOver, Braille. You'll actually go Settings, VoiceOver, Commands.

Jennie Facer: Is there a way to enable auto-advance with the Mantis then? Or not?

Scott Davert: No.

Jennie Facer: Oh, that's a bummer.

Scott Davert: I know. I've told Apple about it. Hopefully they'll address that.

Jennie Facer: I will too.

Dave Williams: Please do.

Scott Davert: Please do, as well, Jennie.

The only thing you can do, unfortunately, is contact them, because they did not take that into account when they were putting Bluetooth keyboard commands.

Dave Williams: I would loop HumanWare in on that conversation as well, in terms of the Mantis, because if they've got any levers that they can pull at their end as well, it can't hurt.

Ben Mustill-Rose: We're going to come to David Weston in a moment, but a question from the chat. Is it possible to create a custom command to jump to the next check box? Someone tried to do it, but they weren't sure if they could find it.

Scott Davert: I believe that is available. I don't know for sure though. If it's not available, the other thing you can do, though of course you'll have to deal with all the other forms, the fields on the page, but check boxes are considered form fields, so if nothing else, you can go in and set that, but I'm pretty sure there is one for check box.

Dave Williams: Is it Controls? Is that what they call the category, so you can jump to next control?

Scott Davert: Sorry, it is form control, not form field. But, yes, that will do it.

Ben Mustill-Rose: We're going to come to David Weston now.

David Weston: It's a double-headed question, because I presume that you were demoing with a braille display and an iPhone. Does the same command go with a braille display and my iMac? The other half of the question, I wasn't 100% sure on this one, was that, when you gave a command, you said, say, key stroke 8 plus H, do you do the 8 first followed by an H or do you do it all together?

Scott Davert: I need to start specifying that, so thank you for bringing it up again, because I meant to, and then I forgot. So, for example, when you have space with H, or space with F, that means hold down the spacebar and then add the keyboard command or the letter to it. So, hold down space and press F.

Then I think you had another question, are the commands on iOS the same as the Mac? The answer to that is some are, some are not. There's also a lot of additional commands that are on the Mac that are not on iOS, for things that you don't really need or use so much on the iPhone. One of them used to be interacting, to start interacting and stop interacting, although that's now on the iPhone, but before iOS 15, that wasn't a thing, so there weren't keyboard commands for it. Now there are.

To answer your question, by default, there are no keyboard commands set up on iOS to start interacting with a group or to stop, you have to set them up.

Ben Mustill-Rose: No hands at the moment. Dave, any questions, any comments from you?

Dave Williams: Yes. So, Scott, I wondered if you could just share a little bit about your contributions to AppleVis. I first became aware of you through those articles, your top ten tips and then there was, I think, a sequel to that, another top ten tips. I found them very, very helpful and I've delivered whole presentations off the back of those, so I really appreciate that, some good info there, that's really quite hard to find and is rounded up.

Could you just share a bit about that and I think you mentioned a little while that you were thinking of doing an update?

Scott Davert: Sure. So, I don't have one place where all my stuff is. I'll just start with that. I've done those articles. There are two of them on AppleVis that cover what Dave was talking about, with the ten tips, and I'm hoping to do a third one, hopefully by the summer. I have one article in the queue that's only really going to be helpful for people in the US, because it's examining captioning phone systems and their compatibility with braille or lack thereof, but behind that will hopefully be another ten tips article.

I post everything I do on Twitter, if that's helpful, and so whether it's AccessWorld, AppleVis or the blog here with the Research Centre, I post pretty much everything I do on there. In fact, I re-tweeted about this presentation.

I wish I had an answer as far as one simple place that you could go to get everything but applevis.com is one and hknc.org/tric is the other.

What I can do, if it would be helpful, we're going to have quite a handout here, but I can add some links to things that people might find of value.

Dave Williams: Please do. Put as much in there as you like, Scott, because we're always being asked for resources and I think that handout could end up being quite big, but if we structure it right and we index it right, then I think that could be potentially a very valuable resource and we'll try to make sure that goes out on the Braillists forum as well, because I know you're active on there.

Scott Davert: Yes.

Ben Mustill-Rose: We have a question from the chat. I think this is more of a clarification. When you were demoing Safari with your braille display comparisons, someone is asking where they can find that article. I think that's referring to the one that you wrote for your Research facility?

Scott Davert: Sure, I'll give the link just to the page that has all the articles on it, and I'll put this in the handout, if that's what we want to do. I have no problem doing that.

The website is Helen Keller National Centre, hknc.org/tric. I'll make sure to put that in the handout as well. It might take me another couple of weeks to get the handout done, because it's quite comprehensive, but I'm happy to do that and I think we can also post the handout on the Braillists forum itself, right? I think that might not be a bad idea.

Dave Williams: Yes, definitely. I've made a note and I'll shout that out again at the end of this session.

Scott, where do we find you on Twitter?

Scott Davert: Sure. My Twitter user name is just my name, scottdavert, and that's all one word. Pretty much anytime something new comes out that I've done, I put it on there.

Dave Williams: Why do you think it is, Scott, that you seem to have become a bit of a go-to person when it comes to braille on iOS? I've got some thoughts about that, but you've really kind of carved out a bit of a niche for yourself, I think, because it is an important area and it's often an area that is difficult to really find good information, things like the space with N command, for example, where you can review your history of VoiceOver announcements, which is a braille only command. There doesn't appear to be a way to do that with speech. Things like that are quite hard to find actually, unless you know where to look.

Scott Davert: That's the thing. Before iOS 11, whenever a new release would come out, I would try every possible combination. I would go into the Help menu, space with K. I know I mentioned that before. And I would just start hitting commands and see what new commands there are, as of that version. That was the only way I was able to really figure out, oh, okay, this command does this, this one does that.

Then, of course, now you can go into your commands area and see not only what commands there are, not only what you can add, but also when they add new things on there, and they do fairly regularly. So, with each new iOS release, I really have to go in there. I think I wrote in one of my articles, "Well, here's what Detective Davert figured out during this latest cycle of, I think it was, iOS 14 or 15." So that's really where it's come from.

Why? Well, it's all I pretty much use, if I can. Now, I have to use Windows, because of all the issues that we're having, particularly with mail, but as someone who can't really understand synthesised speech, I'm pretty much 100% dependent on braille. So, it's basically my livelihood and I realise, just like you did, there's no real resources on it, so that kind of became a thing that I started doing and continue to do, because it seems to help people who are in a similar situation. That's all I want to be able to do, is help other people.

Dave Williams: And necessity is the mother of invention. That's why we built the Braillists Foundation, because we realised that there was a gap there, and there needed to be a place where those of us who care about braille and want to be able to share information about braille, create a space where that can happen.

Well, Scott, you're always very, very welcome here at the Braillists Foundation and thank you once again. I know this has been our most popular event ever. We had the highest number of registrations for this series, so massive amount of interest around this subject. I'm sure there are going to be heaps of questions and lots of people really looking forward to that handout with all those links and keystrokes and everything. So, thank you so much for putting all of this together for us and hopefully we'll improve the braille experience of iOS.

I promised that I would give some of those addresses again, so I'll do that now.

The page that has the links to Scott's articles, that is hknc.org/tric. The other place where you'll find Scott's work is on AppleVis, so that's applevis.com, or if you're on Twitter, you can follow Scott on @scottdavert.

Thank you so much, Scott, really appreciate that and thanks to Ben as well for your help with the moderation and all the behind the scenes stuff, very much appreciate you being around. From all of us here at the Braillists Foundation, that's it for now. From me, Dave Williams, chair of the Braillists Foundation, and the rest of the team, until next time, bye for now.

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In the meantime, on behalf of everyone at the Braillists, thanks for listening and bye for now.

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