Smooth Talker AAC App Help

Thank you for purchasing the Smooth Talker AAC app from Pretorian Technologies. So far as possible we have made the app intuitive in operation but this manual is provided to give hints on best practice and to answer frequently asked questions. Should you be unable to find the answer to your question in this document, please email our support team at support@pretorianuk.com
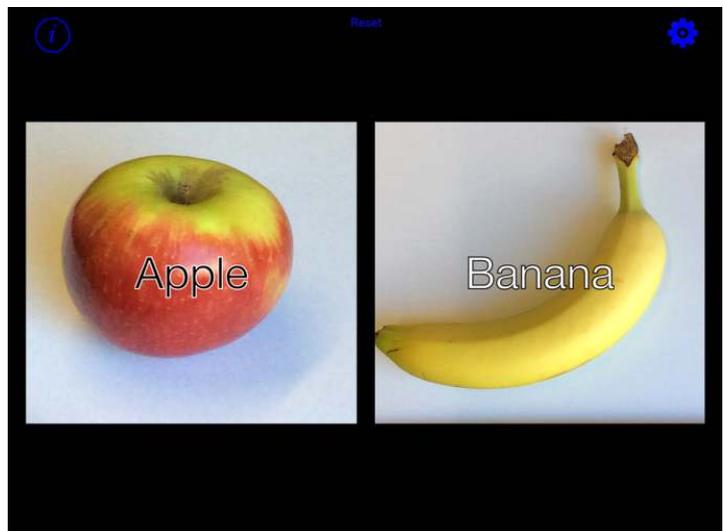
Introduction

Smooth Talker AAC is a speech recording and playback app for alternative and augmentative communication applications. It allows any number of messages to be recorded either by the user or (in most cases) by a teacher, parent, therapist or other carer and subsequently played back in many different ways. The app is designed for one or two users with most two-user settings aimed at encouraging team work and turn-taking.

The app supports external switches over Bluetooth, improving access by users who have difficulty using the touch screen. When external switches are used, the screen may still give visual prompts.

Each message has its own unique set of attributes, allowing the colour of the on-screen buttons to change on a per-message basis. The buttons may be either round or square and may be substituted with a photograph, again on a per-message basis, allowing message specific visual prompts to be used throughout.
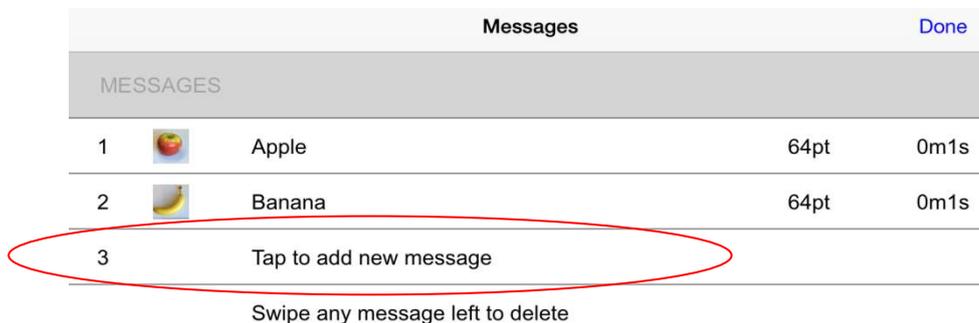
Two examples of the Playback Screen is shown below- one single-user (one button) and one two-user (two buttons). Along the top of the screen are three icons for the carer's use. The ⓘ icon is used to record messages and set the attributes of each; the ⚙ icon allows the playback mode, Bluetooth switch settings and other similar settings to be changed and the Reset icon is used to reset the playback sequence back to the beginning at any point. The large on-screen button is the playback button.
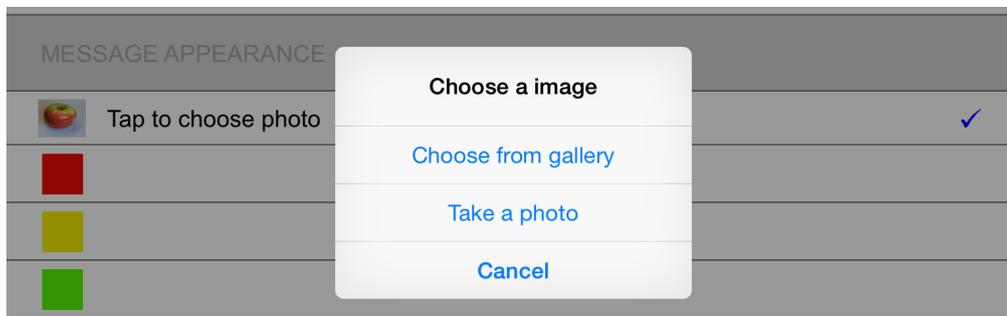
Recording Messages

To record a message, first touch the ⓘ icon on the main screen and then touch 'Tap to add new message':

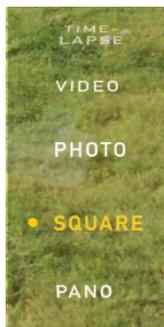| Messages				Done
MESSAGES				
1	🍎	Apple	64pt	0m1s
2	🍌	Banana	64pt	0m1s
3		Tap to add new message		

Swipe any message left to delete

Once in the Edit Message menu the message may be recorded, the colour of the button defined (or a photograph used) and any required text added to the button.

To record the message, touch the ⏺ symbol and speak after the short tone. Note that the microphone on an iPad is at the top of the device, adjacent to the camera lens. Once you have finished speaking , touch ⏸ to stop recording. You can listen to the message by touching ▶. If you are not happy with the recording, it may be re-recorded by touching ⏺ again.

Once the message has been recorded, you may wish to change the colour of the button by touching the chosen colour. Alternatively, if you would like to use a photograph, touch 'Tap to choose photo' and then select whether you would like to take the photograph now or choose one from the iPad gallery.

MESSAGE APPEARANCE		
🍎 Tap to choose photo	**Choose a image**	✓
🟥	Choose from gallery	
🟨	Take a photo	
🟩	Cancel	

Because the photographs are shown on-screen in a square aspect ratio, it is a good idea to set the camera to Square mode, as shown below. This will prevent distortion to the image that may result from beginning with a rectangular image.

TIME-LAPSE
VIDEO
PHOTO
• SQUARE
PANO

If you would like to add some text to the image, touch 'Message Text' and type it in, then choose the text size and colour (black or white). Note that black text has a white border (and vice versa) to improve readability against a photographic background, for example.

Show Text	
Message Text	Giraffe
Text Size	36pt
Text Color	Black

Once you have completed setting up the message, touch Done to store it. You will then be taken back to the Message summary menu.

If at any point you wish to re-record a message, simply touch on the message in the Messages summary menu. To completely delete a message, swipe the message summary to the left and then touch Delete . You will be asked to confirm the deletion since it cannot be undone.

Choose Playback Mode

Smooth Talker AAC has a comprehensive set of playback modes which have been carefully designed to introduce meaningful exercises to build the user's abilities and confidence. The following list summarises each mode along with when and how it might be used:

Sequential. Plays each message sequentially in the order they appear in the Messages menu. This is a single user mode and a single button is therefore shown on screen. Touch the button to begin playback of the next message after the last has ended. Touch Reset at any time to begin the sequence again from message 1.

Random. Plays messages in a truly random order. Repeats and omissions may occur making it suitable as a speaking dice or coin toss game, for example.

Random (No Repeats). Plays messages in random order but without repeats or omissions. This makes it ideal for turn-taking games to make sure everybody is included. Once all of the messages have been played back once, the entire group of messages will be played again with subsequent taps of the button, again without repeats or omissions.

Choice. Although this is a single-user mode, two buttons are shown on screen to allow the user to exercise a choice between two items or ideas. Message 1 is played back by button 1 and message 2 by button 2. Any further recorded messages are ignored. The messages may be simple responses such as 'Yes' or 'No' or may allow the user to exercise a choice between two items such as 'Hamburger' or 'Pizza'.

Conversation. A unique feature to both Smooth Talker hardware and app, this mode allows a conversation to take place between two users in a strict back-and-forth order no matter how the buttons are touched. This mode is very useful in teaching turn taking and the art of conversation. Record any number of messages with odd numbered messages 'belonging' to user 1 and even numbered messages to user 2. User 1 uses the button 1 and user 2 button 2. The conversation begins when user 1 touches his/her button for the first time. During playback of message 1, button 2 has no effect. At the end of message 1, user 2 touches his/her button to playback his/her response, then back to user 1 and so on until the conversation is complete.

Take, for example, the following messages:

1	'Hi my name is Joe'
2	'Hi Joe, my name is Katie'.
3	'We're going to the park- would you like to come?'
4	'Yes please, that sounds like fun!'

Joe is user 1 and Katie is user 2. Joe must begin the conversation and until he does, Katie's button does nothing. Once Joe's first message is complete it becomes Katie's turn and her button 'goes live' and Joe's is disabled. It is therefore impossible for playback to get out of sequence no matter how the buttons are pressed.

Note that the Reset icon may be used to begin the conversation over.

Auditory Prompt. This mode allows the teacher/carer/therapist to 'cue-up' a particular message at reduced volume for the user to then play back at normal volume. It is a way of empowering the user to make his/her own decisions and choices with discreet assistance. Take for example a trip to a fast food restaurant. Before the visit, the following messages are recorded:

1   Hamburger
2   Pizza
3   Chicken Nuggets
4   Cheeseburger

On arrival at the restaurant the carer discreetly enquires what the user would like to eat. He/she chooses Chicken Nuggets. The carer then uses button 2 (probably via a Bluetooth switch) to cue up message 3. The user may then approach the counter and make their selection at the normal volume level using button 1, the staff being unaware of the discreet selection process.

Kinesthetic Mode. This mode requires Kinetic for iPad to be connected to the iPad over Bluetooth. Six messages must be recorded (any additional ones are not used in this mode). Kinetic for iPad instructs the Smooth Talker AAC app to playback one of messages 1-6 each time its orientation is changed, allowing kinaesthetic learning activities to be devised. Please refer to the Kinetic for iPad product page on Pretorian Technologies' website for further information: www.pretorianuk.com/kinetic-for-ipad.

PLAYBACK MODE		
Sequential	ⓘ	
Random	ⓘ	
Random (No Repeats)	ⓘ	
Choice	ⓘ	✓
Conversation	ⓘ	
Auditory Prompt	ⓘ	
Kinesthetic Mode	ⓘ	

Working with Bluetooth accessible switches

Smooth Talker AAC has been designed to work with industry standard Bluetooth accessibility switches such as Pretorian's APPlicator and iSwitch. The app supports both the 'space and enter' and '~1 and ~3' *de facto* standards. Consequently either Space or ~1 may be used to activate button 1.

Because button 1 is always visible on screen, Button 2 menu is always available in Settings. You can choose between 'Tap Screen', Bluetooth 'Space' or Bluetooth '1'/'~1'. The latter two correspond to functions 7 and 9 on APPlicator and iSwitch.

If button 2 is used in the chosen playback mode, its menu will appear in Settings. You can choose between 'Tap Screen', Bluetooth 'Enter' and Bluetooth '3'/'~3'. The latter two correspond to functions 8 and A on APPlicator and iSwitch.

Please note that you can also choose whether button 2 is visible on screen in a playback mode that requires a second button. If you intend button 2 to be tap sensitive then of course it must appear on screen.

BUTTON 1	
Tap Screen	✓
Bluetooth 'Space'	
Bluetooth '1' or '~1'	
BUTTON 2	
Button visible on screen	🟢
Tap Screen	✓
Bluetooth 'Enter'	
Bluetooth '3' or '~3'	

When either of the Bluetooth settings is chosen, however, you can choose whether button 2 appears on screen or not. In many cases it may prove to be a distraction to user 1 if a button is present on screen that he/she can't use. In such instances it is best that button 2 is not visible on screen. However, if user 2 is using a Bluetooth switch but is reliant on the colour of the buttons or a photograph as a visual prompt then you may wish to have it appear on

screen. Similarly, if both users are using Bluetooth switches then it may be advantageous to have button 2 visible. Some experimentation may be necessary to determine the best configuration for particular users.

Button Shape

The shape of the button can be selected and may be either circular or square. Please note that if a photograph is used instead, it is always square.

BUTTON SHAPE	
Circle	✔
Square	

<div align="center">

Delayed Access

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Although the three menu icons at the top of the screen have been made as discreet as possible, they can pose a distraction to certain users. To prevent users who tend to play with these icons gaining access to the menus, they may be set to Delayed Access. When set this way, it is necessary to touch the icons for two seconds before gaining access to their respective menus.

DELAYED ACCESS		
Immediate	ⓘ	✔
Delayed	ⓘ	

The icons also turn dark grey, which has the added advantage of reducing their visibility:

Support

If, after reading this guide, you still have unanswered questions about the Smooth Talker AAC app, please contact the support team at Pretorian Technologies at the following email address: support@pretorianuk.com. We're here to help!