Set microphone as default communication device in Windows

Why this is necessary

Windows keeps track of two default microphones: the **Default Device** for general audio and the **Default Communication Device** for calls. Communication apps, such as Claritalk, Teams and Zoom, use the second one. Claritalk Connect also uses the Default Communication Device by default. If these two are set to different devices, your PC might record via the built-in laptop microphone while you're speaking into your headset.

This article shows you how to set the correct microphone as Default Communication Device in Windows 11 and Windows 10. The menu names are in English, as they appear in an English-language Windows.

Icon in the list	Meaning
Green checkmark	Default Device: default for all audio
Green phone icon	Default Communication Device: default for calls

Before you begin

- Connect the microphone or headset and turn it on. A device that is not connected will not appear in the list.
- Close apps that use the microphone, such as Claritalk, Teams or Zoom. This ensures they will pick up the new setting.
- The fastest way, in both Windows versions: press **Windows + R**, type `mmsys.cpl` and press Enter. The **Sound** window opens immediately; then continue from the **Recording** tab.

Windows 11

Screenshots of each step: Digital Citizen: How to set the default microphone in Windows 11.

Via Settings

1. Press **Windows + I** and go to **System** > **Sound**. Screenshot in the source: "Click on Sound in the System section of the Settings app".
2. Under **Input**, click on the name of your microphone. The device properties will open. Screenshot in the source: "Click the box next to the microphone name to set it as default".

3. Under **General**, open the dropdown menu **Set as default sound device** and select **Use as default for communications**. If the microphone is already the default for audio, the option will be called **Also use as default for communications**. Screenshot in the source: "The menu allows you to set defaults for audio and communications".

Don't see the dropdown menu **Set as default sound device**? Then this microphone is already the default for both audio and calls, and you don't need to do anything.

Via the classic Sound window

1. Go to **Settings** > **System** > **Sound**, scroll down and click **More sound settings**. Or use `mmsys.cpl` from the previous section.
2. Open the **Recording** tab.
3. Right-click on your microphone and select **Set as Default Communication Device**. You can also do this via the arrow next to the **Set Default** button. Screenshot in the source: "Use the context menu to set the default microphone in the Sound window".
4. Click **OK**.

Windows 10

In Windows 10, you configure this via the classic Sound window. The Settings app only sets the general input device.

Screenshots of each step: Digital Citizen: How to change default sound devices in Windows 10, section "How to set a different communications device in Windows 10". A second source with the same steps: Windows Central.

1. Go to **Settings** > **System** > **Sound** and click on **Sound Control Panel** in the bottom right under **Related Settings**. Or use `mmsys.cpl`.
2. Open the **Recording** tab. Screenshot in the source: "Setting the default recording device in the Sound window".
3. Select your microphone, click on the arrow next to **Set Default** and select **Default Communication Device**. You can also do this via right-click > **Set as Default Communication Device**. Screenshot in the source: "Setting a default communication device in Windows 10".
4. Click **OK**.

Note: if you select **Default Communication Device**, the previous device will remain the default for all other audio. If you want to use the same microphone everywhere, also select **Default Device**.

Verify it works

1. In the **Recording** tab, check if your microphone has a green phone icon. Below the name it will say Default Communication Device. If it has a green checkmark showing only Default Device, it is the default for both audio and calls. Screenshot in the source: "The default communication device is marked with a phone icon" (Digital Citizen, Windows 10).
2. Say a few words. The green level bar to the right of the microphone should move.
3. Start a call in Claritalk, select the same microphone from the dropdown and check if the sound bar moves before you click **Confirm**.

Common issues

Issue	Solution
The microphone is not in the list	Right-click on an empty area in the **Recording** tab and check **Show Disabled Devices** and **Show Disconnected Devices**. Then right-click on the microphone and select **Enable**.
The microphone still isn't there	Check the cable, Bluetooth connection and battery. Also see the article Update audio drivers.
The setting reverts	Windows sometimes selects a newly connected device as default. Repeat the steps after connecting a headset or docking station.
The level bar doesn't move	Check if the headset is not muted. Also see Allow microphone use and No sound when using a Jabra headset.
Claritalk still shows the old microphone	Restart Claritalk Connect so the audio devices are read again. See Restart Claritalk Connect.

Need help? Use the support button in Claritalk or email support@claritalk.com, and we'll be happy to assist you.

Sources

- Digital Citizen: How to set the default microphone in Windows 11
- Digital Citizen: How to change default sound devices in Windows 10 (playback and recording)
- Windows Central: How to set up a microphone as the new default on Windows 10
- Microsoft Support: Fix microphone problems