Dictadroid

User Guide

Revision 1.1.4
August 2016

◎ Record anything   ⤳ Share with anyone

softeight

Contents

Introduction

Dictadroid turns your Android phone or tablet into a professional dictation device and voice recorder. You can use it to record voice dictations, notes, meetings, or any other audio and share it via Email, FTP, Box, Dropbox, Google Drive, or MMS. You can also have your recordings transcribed into text files by sending them to Quicktate right from Dictadroid.

This guide provides some basic information about how to use Dictadroid. You can find more information about it at http://www.dictadroid.com. If you have any questions / suggestions / comments, please contact us at http://www.dictadroid.com/home/contact.

What's New

Version 1.1.4

- Added adjustable voice activity detection sensitivity
- Added translation for German
- Bug fixes

Version 1.1.2

- Added 'Invite Friends' menu
- Updated for Android for Work
- Added option to include titles in email subject
- Fixed an issue with recordings not appearing when mounting device to a computer
- Other bug fixes

Version 1.1.0

- Bug fixes

Version 1.0.8

- Added support for Nexus 9 tablet
- Bug fixes

Version 1.0.6

- Added support for AAC compressed audio format
- Implemented home screen widget
- Bug fixes

Version 1.0.4

- Integrated with the Quicktate transcription service
- Added indicator for recordings uploaded via FTP
- UI improvements

Version 1.0.0

- Added the audio gain control
- Added the ability to lock recordings to prevent changes
- Added 'Select All' and 'Clear Selection' menus
- Added support for installation on external storage
- Updated filename to include title and time-stamp
- Made the keyboard appear automatically when needed
- Added online help menu
- Bug fixes

Version 0.9.8

- Added support for tablets
- Improved user interface
- Bug fixes

Version 0.9.6

- Added Voice Activity Detection
- Added FTP & FTPS support
- Added default Subject, CC, and BCC email settings
- Added a setting to have volume buttons operate as dictaphone
- Added the capability to "import" recordings
- Prevent accidental overwrites - place position at the end of opened file- Added support for tablets
- Added many user interface improvements
- Fixed a bug that sometimes caused email <u>app</u> not to be included in the share options
- Other Bug fixes

Version 0.9.4

- Integrated with Box OneCloud
- Setting to automatically put timestamp in file names
- Bug fixes

Version 0.9.2

- Volume control widget
- Setting to have volume buttons operate as FF/RW
- Setting to keep screen on while recording/playing
- Setting to change the default title
- File name now matches the title
- Allow save/share/delete while recording/playing
- Bug fixes

Version 0.9.0

- Initial version of Dictadroid

Managing Recordings

Recordings List

When you first launch Dictadroid you start with the list view, which lets you manage your recordings. This is where you see a list of your recordings. For each recording, you will see the title of the recording, the date and time of when the recording was created, duration of the recording, and an icon / photo assigned to the recording. You can tap on the icon / photo to select and then share or delete multiple recordings at a time. Each time you tap on the icon, it will turn to a check-mark ✓ to indicate that it is selected, and back to the icon to indicate that it is not selected.

Another way to select / un-select recordings is to tap on the ⋮ button and use the Select All and Clear Selection menus. This makes it easy to to delete/share all your recordings. You may also see a lock icon 🔒 next to a recording. This indicates that the recording cannot be modified. Finally, you may see a small triangle with a check-mark in the top-right corner of a recording ◣. This indicates that this particular recording has been uploaded (shared) to your FTP server. Please see the Sharing section for more details. Tap the recording you want to edit, and it will be opened in the recorder view described below.

You can browse the list of recordings even while recording or playing one of the files. If a particular file is being played while you are in the list view, you will see ▷ shown in place of the check box for that file. Similarly, if a particular file is being recorder, you will see 🔴 in place of the check box.

Menu Buttons

At the top of the screen, there are a number of buttons:

➕ Tap this button to create a new recording

◁ Tap this button to share the selected recordings

🗑 Tap this button to delete the selected recordings

⋮ Tap this button to get more options

Display Order

The order in which the recordings are displayed can be changed by tapping ⋮ button and then the Sort By menu. This will bring up the list of options. You can sort the recordings by date / time or alphabetically by selecting the appropriate option.

Import Files

The recordings that are displayed in the list view are either those that were created with Dictadroid or files that were imported into Dictadroid. Dictadroid stores all recordings in a folder called *dictadroid*. To import files into Dictadroid, you can simply copy valid WAV format audio files to this folder, and launch Dictadroid. It will automatically recognize these files and display them in the list view along with other recordings.

Note: In order for Dictadroid to recognize imported files, they must be of the following format:
    Sample Size: 16-bit PCM
    Channels: Mono
    Sampling Rate: 8kHz to 44.1 kHz

The Recorder View

The recorder view is started whenever a new recording is created or an existing recording is selected to be edited. At the top of the screen, there are a number of buttons. These buttons function the same way as described in the Managing Recordings section.

Record

To start / stop recording tap the red record button. You can pause / resume recording as many times as you wish, and Dictadroid will pick up where it left off each time. If a new recording is created or the current position is at the end of the file when you start recording, Dictadroid will append the new audio at the end of the file. If, on the other hand, you are editing an existing recording and the current position is not at the end of the file, Dictadroid will either overwrite or insert the new audio depending on the selected recording mode.

The recording mode is set using the yellow toggle button. By default the button is deselected, which means that the record mode is set to *Overwrite*. When you start recording at a position other than the end of the file, Dictadroid will record over (overwrite) the existing audio from that position onwards. If the button is selected, then the record mode is *Insert*. In this case starting recording at a position other than the end of the file will insert the new audio at the current position.

While recording is in progress, you can go back to the list view by tapping on the Dictadroid icon or pressing the back button. This will not stop recording. As explained above, you will see ● next to the file that is being recorded. You can also exit Dictadroid completely or turn off the screen, and recording will continue in the background. This is explained in more detail in the Notifications section below.

Status

During recording or playback, the status is displayed above the seek bar. The status is one of the following:
- ***Inserting*** - the new audio is being inserted at the current position
- ***Overwriting*** - the new audio is overwriting the existing audio
- ***Recording*** - the new audio is being appended at the end of the file
- *Waiting* – recording is in progress but paused and waiting for speech
- **Playing** - the new audio is being played back

Also, the color of the title bar at the top of the screen turns red while recording is in progress and green during playback.

Audio Level

The audio level indicator indicates the "loudness" of the input audio.

While recording is in progress or is stopped, the audio level shows the level of the current audio input. During playback, on the other hand, the audio level shows the level of the file being played.

Play

To start and stop playback tap the green play button. Similarly to the record button, you can pause / resume playback as many times as you wish and Dictadroid will pick up where it left off. The playback continues until you either stop it or the end of the file is reached.

While playback is in progress, you can go back to the list view by tapping on the Dictadroid icon or pressing the back button. This will not stop the playback. As explained above, you will see ▷ next to the file that is being played. You can also exit Dictadroid completely or turn off the screen, and the playback will continue in the background. This is explained in more detail in the Notifications section below.

Seek
To change the current position of the file, you can either use the blue ◀◀ and ▶▶ buttons or slide the thumbnail along the seek bar to the desired position. When you tap the rewind / fast-forward buttons once, the current position is moved backwards or forwards by 2 seconds. You can also tap-and-hold these buttons to move the current position backwards / forwards continuously. The current position can be changed during playback or while the playback is stopped, but cannot be changed while recording is in progress.

You can also use the volume buttons to change the current position, if this setting is enabled. Dictadroid supports two modes where the volume buttons can be used to change the current position:
- *Buttons as Seek* – with this mode the *up* button fast-forwards and *down* button rewinds
- *Buttons as Dictaphone* - with this mode the up button alternates between record / pause and down button alternates between rewind / play

Please see Settings section for more details about the Volume Buttons.

Recording Capacity
Among several settings that Dictadroid provides, you can specify the maximum capacity for a single recording (see Settings section for more details). This specifies the maximum length (duration) any single recording can reach. Dictadroid Lite limits this setting to 5 minutes. The full (paid) version of Dictadroid does not limit the maximum recording capacity.

At the bottom of the recorder view, the remaining recording capacity is shown. When a new recording is created, the remaining capacity is equal to the maximum recording capacity setting. As you start recording, you will see the remaining capacity decrease. Once the recording reaches the maximum capacity specified in the settings, the recording automatically stops.

Note: Once a file reaches the maximum recording capacity, you can still record over (overwrite) the existing audio, but you cannot insert or append new audio.

Audio Controls
At the bottom of the screen, (or on the right if you are holding your phone horizontally) there is a slider that can be expanded to reveal a drawer that contains volume and audio gain controls.

The volume control indicates the current volume level 🔊 and allows you to increase or decrease the volume by sliding the knob to the desired position. This is especially useful when the hardware volume buttons are used to rewind / fast-forward (see Settings section for more details on how to enable this).

The audio gain control allows you to increase or decrease the gain applied to the recording audio. By default, it is set to 0dB, which means no gain is applied. The gain level can be set to any value from -30dB to +30db. To increase the loudness of the audio, you can slide the gain control to the right. To decrease the loudness, you can slide the gain control to the left. As you slide the gain control, pay attention to the audio level indicator to find the proper gain level.

Dictadroid can automatically detect when the user starts or stops speaking and pause / resume recording as needed. The voice activity detection control allows you to enable and adjust the sensitivity of this feature. When enabled, you can tap the record button and Dictadroid will start waiting for you to start to speak. While you are speaking it will record the audio. When you pause, it will pause the recording and wait for you to start speaking again. This can greatly reduce the length of the files and the amount of space they require on your phone or tablet. By default, this feature is disabled. You should slide the voice activity detection control to the right to the desired sensitivity level, depending on the level of your background noise.

Note: Voice activity detection works best in an environment with little background noise. If you are recording outside or where there is a lot of background noise, you may have to disable this feature.

Photo

Each recording has an icon associated with it that is shown at the top of the recorder view as well as next to each recording in the list view. When a new recording is created, it is assigned a default icon. You can change this default icon and assign a new or existing photo to the recording. To do that, tap the icon in the recorder view and you will be presented with a menu.

Select **Take photo** if you want to take a new photo using the camera.

Select **Pick photo** if you want to pick an existing photo from your gallery.

Select **View photo** to view the assigned photo in the full-screen mode.

Select **Remove photo** to deassign the photo and revert back to the default icon.

Title and Description

At the top of the recorder view, next to the icon, a title and a description of the recording is displayed. By default the title is set based on the Default Title setting (see Settings) and the description is empty. The title and description can be set by tapping on the title area at the top.

Detailed Information

Next to the recording title, there is a button that can be taped to get a detailed view of the recording parameters. The detailed view shows the file name of the recording, the date and time the recording was created, the sampling rate of the recording (see Settings), the file size, the date and time the recording was last uploaded to the FTP server, and other information.

Lock

Each recording can be locked to prevent any further changes from being made by taping on the button found next to the recording title. You can click on this button repeatably to toggle between locked and unlocked states. When the recording is locked, you will not be able to change the title, change the photo, or modify (insert / overwrite / record) the audio file. As mentioned above, for recordings that are locked, you will see a lock icon next to a recording in the Recordings List.

Sharing

There are a couple of places in Dictadroid where you can share your recording(s). You can select one or more recordings in the list view using the check boxes and tap the share button in the title bar. You can also tap the share button in the title bar of the recorder view to share the current recording file. In both cases, you will be presented with a menu containing a list of options. The exact list of options will depend on the apps that you have installed.

Starting with version 1.0.6, you can share your recordings as uncompressed WAV files or compressed AAC files. The option to have the recordings compressed is available with the full (paid) version of Dictadroid only. If you choose the compressed format, the recording(s) will automatically get compressed prior to being shared / sent via whatever option you select below. Recordings are compressed using the AAC (Advanced Audio Coding) audio compression, and have m4a file extension. This is the same audio compression used by iTunes and YouTube. The file size of the compressed recordings is about 10 times smaller than the uncompressed counterpart. A 5 minute recording is only about 0.4 Mb when compressed, as opposed to about 5 Mb when uncompressed. Enabling compression greatly reduces the time and the bandwidth needed to share the recordings. To enable/disable compression of the recordings, you need select the Share Recordings As setting. Please refer to the Settings section for more details.

FTP

With the full (paid) version of Dictadroid you can upload your recordings to any FTP server. Dictadroid supports three types of protocols: FTP, FTPS (Explicit Mode), and FTPS (Implicit Mode). You can also setup Dictadroid to automatically try to determine the FTP settings, including the type of protocol and port number to use. To upload recordings to a FTP server, you need to specify the IP or host name of the server as well as username and password to use. FTP settings are described in more detail in the Settings section.

Once you select the FTP option from the share menu, Dictadroid starts the upload process in the background while letting you continue using the app. During the FTP upload process, Dictadroid will display the status of the upload in the notification are (see Notifications section of this document for more details). Once a recording is successfully uploaded to the FTP server, this will be indicated with a small triangle icon next to the particular recording in the main list view.

Quicktate

Starting with version 1.0.4, Dictadroid is integrated with the Quicktate transcription service. This means that with just a single click, you can send your recording(s) to Quicktate, have them transcribed, and receive the text file(s) back.

To use this service, you need to first sign-up with Quicktate. When you select the Quickatate from the share menu for the first time, you will be presented with a dialog window that allows you to sign-up with Quicktate. Once you sign-up, you may immediately submit files for transcription. You can check the "Don't show this again" check box and the next time you select the Quicktate from the share menu you will be taken to your phone's email app, pre-addressed to transcribe@quicktate.com. Make sure your Sent From address was used to create your Quicktate account or has been registered with Quicktate. You may register up to 10 (sender) addresses.

To ensure that your audio file(s) can be delivered to Quicktate via email, please limit each audio file to 5 minutes. Depending on the size of your audio file(s), you may email multiple files at one time. To ensure best results, please make sure your recording device is located near the person(s) speaking. Otherwise, your file may not be understood or successfully transcribed. After Quicktate receives your file(s), you will receive a confirmation email. After each transcript is completed, it will be emailed back to you. Transcription plans requiring a US transcriber or a Medical transcriber will have longer turn-around-times than plans using Global transcribers.

Email
This option lets you share your recordings by attaching them to an email that can be sent to one or more recipients. You can have the default subject and the default email address (along with optional CC and BCC) specified which will be automatically entered (see Settings).

MMS
This option lets you share your recordings by sending a multimedia message to one or more phone numbers. You can have the default phone number specified, which will be automatically entered (see Settings).

Box & Dropbox
With the full (paid) version of Dictadroid you can share your recordings by uploading them to your Box or Dropbox account. To have this option show up, you need to have the Box (or Dropbox) app for Android installed. Selecting this option, allows you to choose the destination folder for the recordings.

Google Drive
Similarly to Box and Dropbox, you can also upload your recordings to Google Drive. To have this option show up, you need to have the Google Drive app installed. Selecting this option, allows you to choose the destination folder for the recordings.

USB
In addition to the options above, you can also copy the recording(s) directly to your computer. This option does not require Dictadroid to be running. To copy the recordings, connect the phone or tablet to a computer via a USB cable. Once it is connected, you have to enable USB storage on your phone or tablet and locate the removable storage device on the computer. Dictadroid stores all recordings in a folder called *dictadroid*, so you can copy these files to you computer from this folder as you would from any other folder.

Box OneCloud
Dictadroid is now completely integrated with Box OneCloud, which makes it even easier to create and share the dictations. Dictadroid can be launched right from Box app for Android, by selecting "Add" then "Dictation" from the list. This launches Dictadroid with a new file created and ready to be recorded.

Once the recording is finished, you can select the button at the top and that will automatically save the recording back to Box.

Invite Friends

Besides sharing recordings, you can also share Dictadroid app with your friends and co-workers. Tap the button, select "Invite Friends" menu and select the people you want to invite to use Dictadroid. They will receive an email or a SMS message that contains your invitation.

Notifications

One of the nice benefits of using Dictadroid is that it allows you to start recording or playback and then exit Dictadroid to do other things while recording / playback continues in the background. To have Dictadroid work in the background, you can either use the home button or use the back button repeatedly.

Record/Play Notifications
When recording is in progress, 🔴 is shown at the top of the screen in the notification area.

Similarly, when playback of a recording is in progress, ▷ is shown at the top of the screen in the notification area.

The notifications shown above serve two purposes. First, they remind you that recording / playback is in progress. This is especially useful when recording / playback in the background. Secondly, the notifications allow you to quickly get back to Dictadroid and bring it back to foreground. To do that, slide down the notification area and tap the notification with the record / play icon.

FTP Notifications
Dictadroid also uses the notification area to display the status of FTP file upload.

During the FTP upload, you will see ⬆

Once the FTP upload is successful, you should see ✓

If the FTP upload fails, for whatever reason, you will see ✕ . Expanding the status will give you a more specific description of the status or problem that occurred.

Home Screen Widget

Starting with version 1.0.6, Dictadroid supports widgets. The widget lets you start recording with a single tap, without having to launch Dictadroid app. As with most widgets in Android, Dictadroid widget allows you to perform only basic operations, such as start a new recording, record/pause, and launch Dictadroid. Dictadroid widget can be resized horizontally to any width.
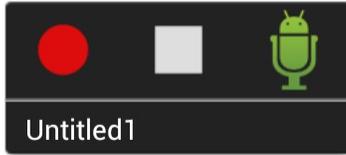
At the bottom of the widget, the current recording title is shown. If no recording is currently selected, then the bottom area is empty. The record button on the left let's you start recording. Tapping this button repeatedly pauses and resumes recording of the current file. The stop button in the middle stops the current recording. Once the stop button is tapped, the title at the bottom is cleared and subsequently pressing the record button starts a new recording. The Dictadroid icon on the right, simply launches Dictadroid app.

Note: Home screen widget is available in the full (paid) version of Dictadroid only.

Tablet Support

Starting with version 0.9.8, Dictadroid can be installed on tablet devices. All the features supported on the phone devices are also supported on the tablets. One advantage of using Dictadroid on a tablet is that you have much more screen space. Dictadroid automatically detects this and presents a layout that is specifically designed to take advantage of the larger screen on tablet devices. Specifically, the list view and recorder view described above are presented side by side on a single screen, as opposed to as two separate screens. This makes it easier to switch between recording and create new recordings without having to switch back and forth between views. Other than this difference in layout, all of the other views are more or less identical to the phone version.

Settings

There are several settings that allow you to control some of the default behavior of Dictadroid. To access the settings view, tap [image] button and then and select *Settings* from the menu.

Recording Capacity

This setting determines the maximum length a recording is allowed to reach. Dictadroid Lite allows the following capacities to be set:

- 1 minute
- 2 minutes
- 5 minutes

The full version of Dictadroid allows the following additional capacities:

- 10 minutes
- 30 minutes
- 60 minutes
- 120 minutes
- Unlimited

When setting the recording capacity to Unlimited, the recording capacity will be determined by the available memory of your external storage (SD card). During recording, once this length is reached, the recording automatically stops.

Note: When the recording has reached the maximum length, you may still record over (overwrite), but may not insert or record past the maximum length.

Sampling Rate

Sampling rate determines the quality of the recording. The higher the sampling rate, the better the quality. However, higher sampling rate also means larger file size. For speech, sampling rates of 8kHz and 11.025 kHz are sufficient. For other audio, such as music, higher sampling rates may be used.

The following sampling rates are supported:

- 8 kHz
- 11.025 kHz
- 16 kHz
- 22.050 kHz
- 32 kHz
- 44.1 kHz

Uninterrupted Recording

This setting determines whether or not the recording should automatically stop when receiving a phone call. If this setting is not enabled, then the recording automatically stops if the phone starts receiving a call. If this setting is enabled, then recording continues (does not stop) even when receiving a call.

Note: Regardless of this setting, recording and playback will automatically stop if the phone call is answered.

Share Recordings As

With the full (paid) version of Dictadroid, this setting can be used to specify whether or not the recording(s) should be compressed prior to being shared or left as uncompressed WAV files. When this setting is enabled, the recording(s) are automatically compressed using AAC audio compression and shared (using whatever method you choose) as m4a files. This greatly reduces the size of the recordings (by a factor of 10) and reduces the time and the bandwidth needed to share them.

Note: Support for compressed audio format is only available on Android 4.1 (Jelly Bean) or higher. This setting is disabled on devices running older versions of Android.

Email Settings

These settings specify the default fields that will be used when sharing recording(s) via email. If any of these settings are not specified (left blank) then every time a recording is shared via email, they may need to be entered into the email app manually. If you specify some or all of these settings, then the corresponding email fields will be automatically entered for you when sharing via email.

The following default email fields can be specified:

- Subject
- TO Address
- CC Address
- BCC Address

Note: Even with these settings set, you will still have the option to change the corresponding email fields before sending the email.

One additional setting under Email Settings is "Title in subject". When this setting is enabled, the title(s) of the recording(s) being shared via email will be automatically induced in the subject line of the email.

Default phone number

This is the default phone number that will be used when sharing recording(s) via MMS. By default this setting is blank, and every time a recording is shared via MMS, the phone number needs to be entered manually. If this setting is set, then the phone number is atomically entered for you when sharing via MMS.

Note: Even with this setting set, you still have the option to change / add the phone number before sending.

FTP Settings

Dictadroid can upload your recordings to any FTP server via FTP or FTPS protocols. To upload recording to an FTP server the following settings need to be appropriately set. Dictadroid can attempt to automatically determine some of these settings, as described below.

Note: These setting is only available with the full (paid) version of Dictadroid.

Type

This determines the protocol to use when connecting to the FTP server. The following options are available:

- Auto Detect – Dictadroid will attempt to automatically determine the protocol
- FTP – File Transfer Protocol (non-secure)
- FTPS (Explicit Mode) - File Transfer Protocol (encrypted)
- FTPS (Implicit Mode) - File Transfer Protocol (encrypted)

Host / IP

This should be either an IP address or the host name of the FTP server.

Port

This is the port number to use when connecting to the FTP server. If left blank, Dictadroid will automatically use the default port number that will be determined based on the type of protocol used.

Username

This is the username to use to login to FTP server. If left blank, Dictadroid will use *anonymous* by default.

Password

This is the password to use when logging into FTP server.

Remote Directory

This is the directory on the FTP server where recordings will be uploaded to.

Screen Orientation

This setting controls the way the views are displayed in Dictadroid. By default, the views automatically rotate depending on the device orientation. You can change this default behavior using this setting to have the views constant in either portrait or landscape regardless of the device orientation. This setting can be set to one of the following:

- Portrait
- Landscape
- Default

Keep Screen On

This setting controls whether or not the screen remains turned on during recording or playback of files. If this setting is on, the screen remains on as long as recording or playback is in progress. When this setting is off, the screen will automatically turn off depending on your device's display settings.

Note: Enabling this setting may cause the battery to drain more quickly.

Volume Buttons Mode

Dictadroid allows users to choose what function the volume buttons should perform. The following options are available:

- *Default* – the buttons will operate as volume buttons
- *Buttons as Seek* – with this mode volume buttons can be used to rewind or fast-forward while in the recorder view: *up* button fast-forwards and *down* button rewinds
- Buttons as Dictaphone - with this mode the the volume buttons function similarly to a dictaphone: up button alternates between record / pause and down button alternates between rewind / play

Default Title

By default, when a new recording is created, it's title is set to "UntitledX", where X is a number that increases with each new recording. You can use this setting to change the default title to any other title, such as "Meeting". If you do, then each new recording will be titled as "Meeting1". This setting only affects the default title of each new recording. You can always change the title of the recording as described above.

Date/Time in Filename

By default, the name of the file that is created by Dictadroid matches the specified title. So if the title of a recording is Lecture, the name of the file will be "Lecture.wav". This setting allows you to change this behavior. If this setting is enabled, then the date and time of when the file was created is appended to the file name. So if the title of a recording is Lecture and it was created on June 25, 2012 at 11:21:01 pm, the filename will be "Lecture_6_25_2012_23_21_1.wav".