# July 2025 BT Speak Update Release Notes

## Introduction

Blazie Technologies is happy to provide a new update for your BT Speak. This update introduces an enhancement to NFB Newsline, allowing you to automatically download your favorite content each morning for convenient, offline reading. We have also introduced the first version of a new app that allows you to listen to podcasts. Our agenda calendar can now provide reminders for today’s appointments. Keep reading for all of the details.

## Quick Instructions for Updating Your BT Speak

1. Ensure that your BT Speak is connected to a Wi-Fi network and that your battery level is at 40% or higher.
2. Type O-Chord for the Options menu.
3. Type M for the BT Speak Management menu.
4. Type U to Check for Software Updates.
5. Your BT Speak should tell you that a new update is available and will ask if you’d like to install it. Press the letter Y to begin the installation. The BT Speak will download and install the update.
6. Once BT Speak restarts, you will be able to start enjoying the new update.

## Calendar Reminders Feature

The agenda calendar now lets you set reminders for any event, whether new or existing.

### Setting a Reminder For a New Event:

When adding a new event in the calendar (shortcut: A), you will be prompted with “Add a reminder?”. If you press Y for yes, you can select when you would like to be reminded. The available options are:

* at device start-up
* 3 hours before
* 1 hour before
* 30 minutes before

### Setting a Reminder For an Existing Event:

To add or change a reminder for an existing event, press enter on an existing event while browsing events in the Today, Weekly or Monthly views. This opens the Edit Event menu. From there, choose the option “Edit reminder”. You will then be able to select when you would like the reminder to occur.

### Reminder Notification Behavior

If BT Speak is powered on at or before the scheduled reminder time, you will hear a tone followed by a spoken message with the event details. If BT Speak was powered off at the scheduled reminder time, the reminder will be announced the next time the device is turned on, along with how much time is left until the event starts.

### Viewing Today’s Reminders

Use the Today’s Reminders option from the Calendar menu (shortcut: R) to quickly review the appointments you’ve set reminders for today. This will display a simple list of the event and its reminder setting. Note: The Today option in the calendar still shows all events scheduled for the day, whether or not they have reminders. The new Today’s Reminders option shows a shorter list of only events containing active reminders.

### Toggling Reminder Notifications

Want to silence reminder notifications? You can turn reminder notifications on or off at any time from the Calendar Options menu. Just select “Enable Reminders” to toggle the setting.

## NFB Newsline Daily News Delivery

Your BT Speak can now automatically deliver your favorite newspapers every morning! The NFB Newsline application now includes a Daily Download feature that fetches the latest editions of your favorite publications at 6:00AM, as long as your BT Speak is powered on. During the download, BT Speak will emit two or three gentle pulses to let you know the download is occurring. The articles are saved in the Library/Newsline folder and you can access them anytime using the Read Downloaded Publications option in the Newsline app’s main menu.

### How to enable or disable Daily Download:

1. Open the NFB Newsline main menu.
2. Navigate to Daily Download Setting (shortcut: W).
3. Choose either On or Off. When enabled, BT Speak will automatically download new issues of all your favorite publications each morning.

## A New Podcasts App

The BT Speak now offers the ability to search for, subscribe to, download and listen to your favorite podcasts! If you’re new to podcasts, think of them as radio shows you can listen to any time on-demand. In fact, some podcasts are broadcasts you may already know, while others are independently produced. Topics range from news, comedy, and storytelling to science, interviews, personal advice, and more. Episodes vary in length from quick 10 minutes updates to hour-long deep dives.

### How to open the Podcasts App

From the Options menu, navigate to Applications, then Media, and finally Podcasts (shortcut: O)

### First time use

You will be placed in the help file for this app until you subscribe to your first podcast. Feel free to read this help file to learn more about the app. When you’re ready to exit the help file, press Z-chord to return to the Podcasts application’s main menu.

### Main Menu Options in the Podcasts App

The main menu options and their respective shortcut keys are:

* Now Playing: N
* Downloaded Episodes: D
* Update Feeds: U
* Manage Feeds: M

### Steps for Subscribing, Downloading and Listening to a Podcast

The Podcasts app on BT Speak makes it easy to find, subscribe to, download, and listen to your favorite podcast shows. Here’s how to get started.

#### Manage Feeds

To subscribe to a podcast, choose Manage Feeds from the main menu. A feed is like a subscription source for a podcast. Once subscribed, the last few episodes of the podcast will be delivered to your BT Speak. To subscribe, you can either search for a podcast (Search Podcast Index option) using keywords or enter a URL for the podcast feed (Add Feed option).

#### Search Podcast Index

Select Search Podcast Index to look-up a podcast by title or topic. BT Speak will say “search term for podcast index?”. Enter a search term or phrase to search and press Enter. You will receive a list of matching podcast titles. Use Dot 4-chord to move forward and Dot 1-chord to move backward through the list. When you find a podcast you like, press Enter to bring up the following options:

* Subscribe: add the podcast to your subscription list
* View Info: learn more about the podcast

#### Add Feed

Pressing enter on this option prompts you for an RSS feed. If you have the address of a podcast feed, you can type or paste it in this field.

*Important Note: Podcasts consume disk space* Just like any device, your BT Speak has a limited amount of internal storage. Downloading podcast episodes uses up some of that space, especially if you subscribe to shows with frequent or long episodes. We encourage you to be mindful of this as downloading many podcast episodes may consume a large amount of space on your BT Speak. If your internal storage ever gets close to full, BT Speak will let you know with a friendly warning. If that happens, you can easily free up space by deleting episodes you’ve already listened to or no longer need. To check how much space your podcasts are using, go to Manage Feeds and select Check Storage. This will tell you how much space is used overall, how much is left, and which podcasts are using the most.

##### How to Delete Podcast Episodes

To delete an episode that has been downloaded, move to the main menu of the Podcasts app, which has Now Playing as the first option. Immediately after the Manage Feeds option, you will find the name of each podcast. You will hear the name of each podcast that you have subscribed to, followed by the number of episodes which have been downloaded to your BT Speak. Press enter on the name of the podcast. Next, you will find a list of available episodes for that podcast. Press enter on the episode name. In the resulting menu, move to the Delete option and press enter. The episode will immediately be removed from your BT Speak, giving you back additional space.

#### Delete Feed

This option allows you to unsubscribe from a podcast and presents a list of your subscribed feeds. Press Enter on any feed you wish to remove. This is the same as unsubscribing from a podcast.

#### Check Storage

This option shows how much space podcasts are using on your device. It includes total storage used by all episodes, how much space remains, and a breakdown by podcast feed.

#### Import OPML

If you have a special file (called an OPML file) containing a list of podcast subscriptions, you can use Import OPML to subscribe to all of them at once. This is completely optional, yet a convenient way for podcast veterans to efficiently import their podcasts to BT Speak. An OPML file contains a list of podcast titles along with the Web addresses or URLs for their feeds. This file needs to be written in a specific format. If you already have an OPML file, you can specify the name of this file and all of the podcasts contained in that file will be added to your list of subscribed podcasts.

### Downloaded Episodes

Once you have downloaded podcast episodes on your BT Speak, you are able to listen to them. This menu contains all episodes which have been downloaded. Pressing Enter on an episode allows you to play it, view the show notes or delete it. You can also check an individual feed listed from the main menu. Downloaded episodes can be played even when you’re offline. If an episode has already been played, its name will be appended with “(Played)”.

### Update Feeds

Once you have subscribed to one or more feeds, you can use this menu option to check for and download the latest episodes. The latest three episodes are automatically downloaded for each feed.

### The Now Playing Menu

The Now Playing menu displays the episode that is currently playing. When you enter this menu, your cursor is placed on the title of the episode. Navigate this menu using Dot 4-chord to move to the next item and Dot 1-Chord for the previous item. You can move to the top and bottom of the menu with Dots 1-2-3-Chord and Dots 4-5-6-Chord. Note: You cannot use the space key or the backspace key to move through this menu. This is because the space key is used for the play/pause toggle.

#### Now Playing Menu Options

* Time Played and Remaining Time: T
* Play or Pause: P or Space key
* Media Volume Controls: V (Once you activate the Volume setting, press dot 7-chord to lower the media volume and dot 8-chord to raise volume)
* Speed (playback rate): R (press dot 7-chord for slower speed, dot 8-chord for faster speed)
* Info: I
* Track Skim: S
* Skip Ahead 10 Seconds: 0
* Skip 30 Seconds: 3
* Skip Ahead 60 Seconds: 6
* Skip 5 minutes: 5

#### Notes

* If you adjust the rate or speed of your podcast, pressing enter will reset it to the default speed of 1.0.
* Press dot-8-Chord (space with enter) to increase the current item value or to move forward through your podcast episode. You can also press Dot 6-Chord.
* Press dot 7-Chord (space with Backspace) to decrease the current item value or to move backward through the podcast episode. You can also use Dot 3-Chord. For example, if you activate the item “skip 30 seconds”, pressing dot 8-chord will skip ahead by 30 seconds in the episode. Pressing dot 7-chord skips backward by 30 seconds. If you activate the “volume” option, pressing dot 8-chord will increase the media volume by around 5 percent. Pressing dot 7-chord will decrease the volume.
* Pressing the Space key pauses and plays your media from anywhere in the menu.

### Quick Single Key Commands

These commands can be used from anywhere in the Now Playing menu. They are not Chord commands, so they do not include the spacebar.

* Toggle Play/Pause: space or P
* Media Volume Softer: Dot 1
* Media Volume Louder: Dot 4
* Rate or Speed Slower: Dot 2
* Rate or Speed Faster: Dot 5
* Skip back 15 Seconds: Dot 3
* Skip Forward 30 Seconds: Dot 6
* Skip Back 1 Minute: Dots 2-3
* Skip Forward 1 Minute: Dots 5-6
* Skip Back 5 Minutes: Dots 1-3
* Skip Forward 5 Minutes: Dots 4-6
* Move to Previous Track: Dots 1-2-3
* Move to Next Track: Dots 4-5-6 Note: Some of these commands mirror the Speech Controls menu. For example, when you press S-chord to adjust speech, pressing dot 1 makes the volume of the speech softer and pressing dot 4 increases the volume of speech. In the Now Playing menu, pressing dot 1 decreases the volume of your podcast and pressing dot 4 increases the volume.

### Final Notes Regarding This App

This is the first version of our Podcasts app and it has some current limitations. We decided to release this app early, due to the level of user interest. We plan to add refinements to this app in upcoming updates. This means that menu items may change or provide different responses in future versions of the app. As an example, we are aware that shortcut keys for menu items in the Podcasts app are currently not being announced. Pressing a shortcut key moves you to a menu item but it currently does not open the menu. There are some issues regarding deleting old podcasts, we will be improving this in the next release. We are aware that a few podcasts are not able to be subscribed to in this first release. We have identified the issue and it will be resolved in the next update. The app currently does not track play positions for podcast episodes: Playing a different podcast episode, streaming or any other use of audio and performing a deep escape, Restarting your system will result in your playback position being lost. If you have suggestions for how we can improve the Podcasts app, please reach out to us with your feedback.

## Concluding Remarks

We hope you enjoy the new features contained in this update. As always, your feedback is welcome and appreciated. Feel free to email us at info@blazie.net or call us at (772) 214-1616. The Blazie Technologies Team