CHAPTER 5

Using Headsets and Other Audio Devices with Cisco IP Communicator

This chapter describes how to use audio devices such as a handset, headset, and the computer speaker and microphone with the audio modes for Cisco IP Communicator (handset mode, headset mode, and speakerphone mode).

Obtaining Audio Devices

Your system administrator might supply you with audio devices. If you plan to purchase them, ask your system administrator for the most up-to-date list of supported devices.

Using a Headset

You can use a USB headset or an analog headset with Cisco IP Communicator.

- A USB headset has a flat, rectangular plug that connects to a USB port on your computer.
- An analog headset has rounded plugs that connect to the computer audio jacks.

Analog headsets work with the computer sound card and do not require device drivers.

This table describes how to use a headset to place and receive calls.

If you want to...	Then...
Use a headset to place and receive calls	Make sure that the **Headset** button is activated (lit) to indicate that Cisco IP Communicator is operating in headset mode. You can toggle headset mode on and off by clicking the **Headset** button or by entering the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + H**. If you use a headset as your primary audio device, you might want to keep the **Headset** button lit even after you end a call by clicking **EndCall** instead of the **Headset** button to hang up. When the **Headset** button is not lit, Cisco IP Communicator uses speakerphone mode as the default audio mode. Cisco IP Communicator responds to softkeys, speed-dial buttons, and other features by routing audio through the active mode. You can use a headset with all of the controls on Cisco IP Communicator, including the **Volume** button and the **Mute** button. **Note** An analog headset works in speakerphone mode, but you should use it in headset mode to improve audio quality.

If you want to...	Then...
Use an analog headset as your only audio device	Follow the guidelines described in the previous row. Be aware that the ringer is audible only through your headset speakers when the headset is plugged in to your computer. You must be wearing your headset to hear the phone ring.
Use AutoAnswer with a headset	Keep the **Headset** button activated (lit) by clicking **EndCall** to hang up. (Click the **Headset** button first, if necessary). When the **Headset** button is lit, Cisco IP Communicator operates in headset mode.
Switch to a headset during a call	Click the **Headset** button or enter the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + H**. If you were using a USB handset before switching, you can turn it off or hang it up.

Tip AutoAnswer is a special feature that your system administrator might enable for you if you receive a high volume of incoming calls or handle calls on behalf of others. When AutoAnswer is enabled, Cisco IP Communicator automatically answers phone calls and routes them through speakerphone mode or headset mode depending on your configuration.

Related Topics

- How to Handle Basic Calls, page 3-1
- How to Assign Audio Modes, page 4-9
- Using Your Computer as a Speakerphone, page 5-4

Using Your Computer as a Speakerphone

You can use the sound card on the computer to place and receive calls in speakerphone mode.

If you want to...	Then...
Use your computer like a speakerphone to place and answer calls	Make sure that the **Speaker** button is lit so that Cisco IP Communicator operates in speakerphone mode. Unlike other modes, speakerphone mode provides echo suppression. You can toggle speakerphone mode on and off by clicking the **Speaker** button or by entering the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + P**. By default, speakerphone mode is active. This means that many of the actions you take to place or answer a call (such as using a speed-dial button or a softkey) automatically trigger speakerphone mode. **Note** If you have an analog headset plugged in to the computer, you cannot hear audio through the computer speakers in speakerphone mode.
Switch to the speakerphone during a call	Click the **Speaker** button or the keyboard shortcut **Ctrl + P**. If you were using a handset before switching, turn it off or hang it up.
Use the computer speaker as a ringer to alert you to incoming calls	Make sure that your sound card is assigned to the ringer mode and that you have not muted the computer speaker. If you plug an analog headset into your computer, the ringer is audible only from the headset speakers.
Use AutoAnswer with speakerphone mode	Click the **Speaker** button to place, answer, and end calls, to open and close lines, and to switch from other audio devices to speakerphone mode. Because speakerphone mode is active by default, you do not need to keep the corresponding button lit as you do for headset mode.

Tip AutoAnswer is a special feature that your system administrator might enable for you if you receive a high volume of incoming calls or handle calls on behalf of others. When AutoAnswer is enabled, Cisco IP Communicator automatically answers phone calls and routes them through speakerphone mode or headset mode depending on your configuration.

Related Topics

- How to Handle Basic Calls, page 3-1
- How to Assign Audio Modes, page 4-9
- Using a Headset, page 5-2
- Using a USB Handset, page 5-5

Using a USB Handset

You should assign a USB handset to handset mode. This configuration allows Cisco IP Communicator to recognize if the handset is on-hook or off- hook, enabling you to end a call by hanging up the USB handset, for example. For more information about this assignment, see How to Assign Audio Modes, page 4-9.

If you want to...	Then...
Place or end a call with the handset	Enable or disable the USB handset. Many handsets have a hook-switch or on/off button. Lift or enable the handset to take it off-hook. You can use a USB handset with all of the controls on Cisco IP Communicator, including the **Volume** button and the **Mute** button.
Switch to the handset during a call	Lift (or otherwise enable) the handset.

Related Topics

- Installing Audio Devices Before First Launch, page 1-3
- How to Handle Basic Calls, page 3-1
- Using a Headset, page 5-2
- Using Your Computer as a Speakerphone, page 5-4
- Removing and Re-Installing Audio Devices, page 5-6

Removing and Re-Installing Audio Devices

If you use Cisco IP Communicator on a laptop, you might find that you often remove and re-install audio devices as you travel between locations. The following table provides information about re-installing an audio device when you are ready to use it again.

If you want to...	Then...
Re-install a previously tuned USB handset, USB headset, or sound card	1. Install the audio device (for example, plug in the USB handset) when Cisco IP Communicator is not running. 2. Launch Cisco IP Communicator. 3. Select and, if necessary, tune the device. You can manually access the Audio Tuning Wizard through Cisco IP Communicator (**right-click > Preferences > Audio** tab). 4. If necessary, assign the device to the desired audio modes.
Install a new device while the application is running and use it as the audio device for Cisco IP Communicator	1. **Right-click > Preference > Audio** tab, and select the device from the drop-down list for an audio mode. 2. Click **OK**. 3. Tune the device when the Audio Tuning Wizard automatically launches.
Set a specific device to be used in the next call	1. Make sure Cisco IP Communicator is running. 2. Configure it to use the default Windows device (**right-click > Preferences > Audio** tab, and select **Default Windows Audio Device**). 3. Connect a new device and set it as the default Windows audio device from the Windows Control Panel. 4. Manually launch the Audio Tuning Wizard (**right-click > Audio Tuning Wizard**) to tune this device before using it. If you do not tune the device and you restart the application, the Audio Tuning Wizard automatically launches so that you can tune this device, and Cisco IP Communicator uses this device in the next call.

Tips

- Each time that you launch, Cisco IP Communicator checks to see if the audio device that you used during your previous session is present. If the device is not found, Cisco IP Communicator prompts you to connect it.
- If you install an audio device that requires device drivers (a USB handset, USB headset, or a sound card) *after* launching, Cisco IP Communicator does not recognize the device until you relaunch the application. The Audio Tuning Wizard automatically launches so that you can tune the device.
- If you are using Cisco IP Communicator over a remote connection, establish VPN connectivity before launching Cisco IP Communicator.
- If you are re-installing a USB handset or headset on a Microsoft Vista workstation, ensure that the operating system detects the USB device. Otherwise, Cisco IP Communicator will not be able to find it.

Related Topics

- Installing Audio Devices Before First Launch, page 1-3
- Using the Audio Tuning Wizard, page 1-6
- How to Assign Audio Modes, page 4-9
- Removing and Re-Installing Audio Devices, page 5-6