

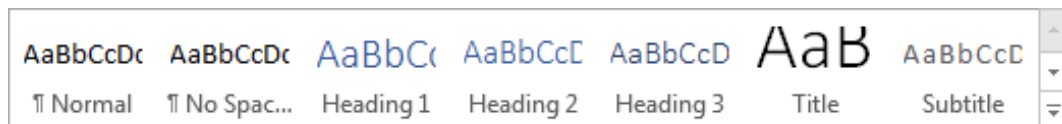


Creating Accessible Word Documents

A simple Word document is one of the easiest ways to create accessible content. Word also has an Accessibility Checker built-in to help you identify problems.

Accessibility Checklist

- Keep your documents as simple and as concise as possible
- Use a suitable font and font size (Calibri, size 12pt or larger)
- Use sufficient contrast for text and background colours
- Use and modify Word's built-in heading and paragraph styles



- Organise headings and subheadings logically and consistently
- Avoid fully-justified text as it can be difficult to read
- Use numbers and bullets to create ordered and unordered lists
- Introduce lists and tell the reader how many items are in it
- Add alternative text to every important image or object
- Make sure colour isn't the *only* way you convey information
- Use the **Table** tool on the **Insert** tab to organise and present data
- Use column headings to describe the contents of a table
- Try to avoid merging and splitting table cells
- Don't use tables for layout or formatting purposes
- Avoid blank lines and repeated blank characters (e.g. spaces, tabs, cells) which may suggest the end of a document
- Use meaningful hyperlinks which describe the link's destination instead of a simple "click here" or long URL
- Keep text 'in-line' and avoid placing it in floating textboxes
- Use Word's built-in Accessibility Checker to spot and correct easy mistakes



Creating Accessible Presentations

PowerPoint presentations are largely visual, but it's still possible to create accessible content. PowerPoint also has an Accessibility Checker built-in to help you do this.

Accessibility Checklist

- Keep your presentations simple and avoid ambiguous language
- Give every slide a unique and meaningful title so users can easily navigate to specific pages
- Use a suitable sans-serif font (18pt or larger for body text)
- Use bold to emphasize words and avoid excessive italics and underlining
- Keep slides clear, simple and uncrowded
- Use sufficient contrast for text and background colours
- Make sure colour isn't the *only* way you convey information
- Add alternative text to every important image or object
- Make sure slide contents are read in the order you intend



*People tend to read slide content in the order it appears on screen. However, a screen reader reads the content in the order it was added to the slide. To check reading order, click the **Arrange** button on the **Home** tab and select **Selection Pane**. Text is read in the order it appears on this panel.*

- When creating a new slide, use built-in slide designs to make sure the reading order is correct
- Use meaningful hyperlinks which describe a link's destination
- Use simple, well-structured tables to organise data
- Include subtitles or transcripts with video and audio
- Use PowerPoint's built-in Accessibility Checker to spot and correct easy mistakes



Creating Accessible PDF Documents

PDF files are a great way to distribute content. However, PDFs are not typically created in Adobe Acrobat – they are created in another program and then converted to PDF format.

Accessibility Checklist

- Consider accessibility *before* you convert to PDF (accessible PDFs are best created from accessible source documents)



*Using the **Save As** option in Microsoft Office allows you to save in PDF format. So long as your original file is accessible, the resulting PDF will be accessible too.*

- Make sure all images that convey useful information have alternative text *before* saving as a PDF
- Use Word styles to organise headings *before* saving as a PDF (these allow screen readers to navigate a document)
- Use standard templates in PowerPoint and check reading order *before* saving as a PDF
- Add alternative text to every important image or object *before* saving as a PDF



*Adobe Acrobat can automatically convert scanned pictures of text into editable, accessible text. You can find this useful feature in **Tools > Text recognition***

- Test your PDFs accessibility using Adobe Acrobat's built-in accessibility checker (**Tools > Accessibility > Full Check**)
- Test your PDFs accessibility using Adobe Acrobat and Adobe Reader's built-in screen reader tool (**View > Read out loud**)
- Use third-party "Print to PDF" tools cautiously. These may not maintain accessibility



Creating Accessible Blackboard Pages

Text-based content created using Blackboard's authoring tools will usually be accessible. However, there's a lot you can do to optimise and organise your content.

Accessibility Checklist

- Standard text size and colour contrast accessibility rules apply!
- Use a clear naming convention and be consistent throughout the module
- Ensure main menu options are meaningful and that the expected content is found within them
- Use the description field to briefly explain documents or to detail the content within a folder
- Format attached documents with appropriate headings to ensure they are clear to users who require a screen reader
- Use meaningful hyperlinks which describe the link's destination and clearly state that they will open in a new window
- Provide students with clear instructions and directions for assignments and tests
- Use the formatting options when creating content/descriptions using the built-in text editor
- Use tables wisely! Can a list be used instead?
- Include subtitles or transcripts with video and audio
- Make sure all images have meaningful alternative text