ACCESSIBILITY 101

Accessibility and Documents

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Why is accessibility important?

- According to the CDC, 1 in 4 adults in the United States have some type of disability.

- Not everyone interacts with our website and documents in the same way. Some use a keyboard only or a screen reader to navigate information.

- As a public university, we are required under Section 508 of the American Disabilities Act to make all of our website and documents accessible.

- We can reach a wide range of audience by making things accessible. We all benefit from accessibility!

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Accessibility Guidelines

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

- WCAG is a set of guidelines the sets standards for website accessibility. These guidelines are set by World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)

- These guidelines have different levels of conformance from level A, AA, AAA. A is the easiest to meet, but least accessible. AAA has the highest standard, but the hardest criteria to meet.

  - Our website and its content (including documents) are required to meet WCAG 2.0 Level AA.

- Guidelines follow the principles of Perceivable, Operable, Understandable and Robust (POUR).

  - Perceivable – Is color contrast sufficient for color blind users?

  - Operable – Can user utilize only a keyboard to navigate?

  - Understandable – Are things easy comprehend?

  - Robust – Can a screen reader or other assistive technology be used to navigate the website?

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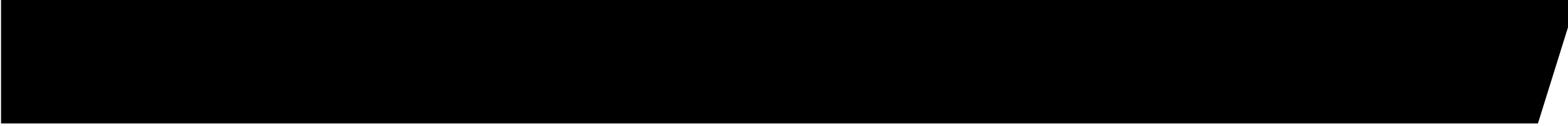
Word Accessibility: Headings

Use headings to organize your content into sections

- Headings are organized into six levels: 1-6.

- Heading 1 should be used for page titles and subheadings should use headings 2-6.

- Heading levels shouldn't be skipped. Heading level 2 should not be directly followed by heading level 4.

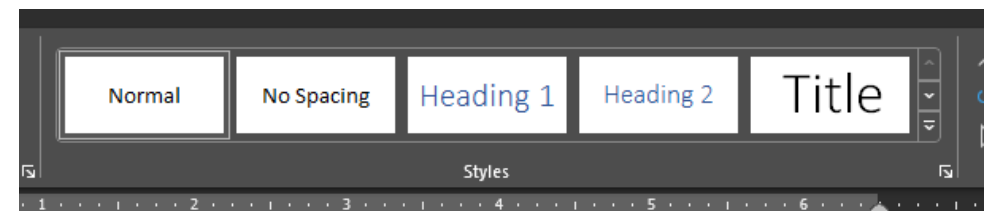- In Word, headings are labeled by using the styles section. **Home > Styles.**

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Word Accessibility: Tables

- Tables should be used for organizing data and not for content layout. Ex: using a table to put text into a 2-column layout.

- Tables should have a designated Header row with heading labels.

- Keep table structure as simple as possible. Headings should be in the first row and first column only.

- To set table headers, select your table and then **Table Design. Check Header Row.**

- Include a **Title** and **Description** for the table. **Right click** on your table and select **Table Properties**. This used by screen readers.

Michigan State University Example of too many table headers

Table 2: BAD EXAMPLE Multi-cell Subheadings

Year Make Model	0-60 MPH Time (Seconds)	Fuel Efficiency (MPG)
Cars		
1986 Yugo	16.8	27
2008 VW Rabbit	8.0	29
1999 Plymouth Neon	10.2	24
SUVs		
2011 Jeep Compass	11.5	32
2010 Cadillac Escalade	6.7	12

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Word Accessibility: Alternative Text & Images

Alternative text describes images, charts, graphics and other visual.

- Alternative text should describe what is taking place in the image.

- Alternative text should be short and concise. Don't need to say "image of"...

- If an image is decorative or is described in the surrounding text, no alt-text is needed.

- Complex graphics and charts should have a short alt text and be explained in the surrounding text.

Alt Text Ex: "John Purdue Statue covered in snow."

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Setting Alternative Text

▪ To add alt text to a picture, shape, chart, or SmartArt graphic, do one of the following:

• Right-click the object and select **Edit Alt Text...**.

• Select the object. Select **Format** > **Alt Text**.

Word Accessibility: Color Contrast

Color contrast is the difference between a foreground color and a background color.

- For normal text (less than 14 point) the ratio is at least 4.5:1. For large text the ration is 3:1.

- Purdue Marketing and Communications provides a color chart of good color combinations to use.

- Document text (print and digital) and text on images all need to have good color contrast.

- There are many good online color contrast checker tools available.

Bad Contrast

Good Contrast

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Word Accessibility: Links

- Avoid using URLs for the link text. Screen readers will read the entire URL.

  Bad: https://www.education.purdue.edu
  Good: College of Education website

- Link text should be descriptive and meaningful. Don't use "click here", "more info" etc.

- If using an image as a link, the alternative text should describe the link destination.

- To change the link text right-click on the link. Set the link text in the **Text to display field**.

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Word Accessibility: Other Things to Consider

- Don't use directional language or color to convey information:
  - **See box below for more information.**
  - **Click on the red button.**

- Make sure lists are formatted as a list and not just paragraphs with breaks.

- Break up large blocks of text with headers to better organize sections.

- Avoid styling text with color and underlines as that can be mistaken for links.

- The accessibility checker is a tool and should not be relied upon to catch potential accessibility issues.

- Scanned documents that are turned into PDFs will not be accessible.

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Word Accessibility: Accessibility Checker

- To use the accessibility checker in Word, go to **File > Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility.**

- Issues will be categorized into Error, Warning, and Tips.

  - **Errors:** Errors include things that are very difficult or impossible for people with disabilities to understand

  - **Warnings:** Warnings include things that could potentially be difficult for people with disabilities to understand

  - **Tips:** Word will provide some helpful tips to better organize your content to make it easier for people with disabilities to understand

  - To fix an issue within the document, click on the issue in the Inspection Results to see where the issue is. Below that you will see an explanation of why you should fix the issue, as well as how you can fix the issue.

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Word Accessibility: Additional Resources

- Document Accessibility

  - Creating Accessible Documents

  - Microsoft: Word Accessibility

  - Microsoft: Excel Accessibility

  - Michigan State University: Document Accessibility

- Branding – Marketing and Communications

  - Purdue Brand Colors

  - Purdue Accessible Color Combination Color Chart

- General Accessibility Resources

  - Office of Civil Rights Video Series

  - Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

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QUESTIONS?

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