

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

A job aid for building digitally accessible documents from the start



TEXT IS THE GOLD STANDARD

All critical information is conveyed in text. Don't rely on color alone to convey meaning.



USE SEMANTIC HEADINGS & STRUCTURE

Use Word's built-in heading, list, and table tools—not just bold text—so your document is easy to navigate.



ALL IMAGES HAVE MEANINGFUL ALT TEXT

Alt text that describes the image and its purpose in a meaningful way to the user.



ENSURE STRONG COLOR CONTRAST

Don't use light text on light backgrounds.



USE CLEAR FONTS, 12PT TEXT, & LEFT JUSTIFICATION

Open Sans is an on brand supported font; Tahoma, Cambria, Verdana are also good. Avoid full justification - it does not scale well when magnified.



USE DESCRIPTIVE LINK TEXT

Avoid "Click Here"; instead give the link a meaningful title.



USE ACCESSIBILITY CHECKERS

These are great tools to ensure nothing is missed, but remember that good accessible design requires intentional human decisions.



EXPORT FOR PDF WITH DOCUMENT STRUCTURE CHECKED

Use the export for PDF and make sure to check the box to structure document tags for accessibility.



CHECK READING ORDER IN PDFs

Make sure the reading order is correct using Adobe Acrobat Pro or a screen reader. Make any adjustments as needed.



GET HELP

More than one person reviewing for accessibility is a great tool for ensuring our documents are accessible.



FACILITIES

UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON