

Word Accessibility Checklist

Styles

- Edit Styles in order to control document formatting (“Update ... to match selection”)
- Style elements each have their own distinct look (i.e. headings are different from text)
- Headings are correctly used to organize and segment content
- Do **NOT** use formatting buttons alone to style text

Fonts

- Use 12 point or larger
- Text body:** We suggest Cambria, Palatino Linotype, or Times New Roman
- Headings:** We suggest Arial, Calibri, or Verdana
- Web:** We suggest Arial, Calibri, or Verdana
- Be consistent with what font(s) get applied throughout the document
- Avoid** using all caps

Colors

- Use highlighting in conjunction with other emphasis items (bold, italics, underline)
- Use contrasting colors
- Avoid** color-blind color combinations (red-green is most common)
- Avoid** flashing colors or animations

Spacing

- Start a new page:** Use Insert menu, Page Break OR Page Layout menu, Breaks
- Avoid** using Enter repeatedly to control spacing between paragraphs
- Adjust spacing through the Paragraph formatting menu

Headers & Footers

- Page numbers inserted through “Page Number” under Insert Header & Footer, **NOT** manually typed
- Footnotes created through Word Footnote linking

Lists

- Use Styles if list items are also Headings
- Use Bullets, Numbering, or Multilevel Lists from Paragraph Formatting
- Edit by using Paragraph formatting for bullets or numbering

Images

- Inserted correctly through Insert menu, Pictures OR Clip Art (Illustrations section)
- Text Wrap style:** Use Picture Tools menu, Wrapping, In line with text
- All images labeled and described using Picture Tools menu, Alt Text
- Avoid** text boxes or Word Art
- Avoid** background images or watermarks

Hyperlinks

- Title of link describes the purpose or target of the link
- Avoid** using “Click here” or “More” as a link title
- Best:** Provide full link URL (i.e. [Google http://www.google.com](http://www.google.com))

Tables

- Use Insert menu, then Table
- Use Table Tools menus to Alt Name and denote Header rows and columns
These menus appear when the table is selected.
- If table takes up multiple pages, heading row has been set to “Repeat as header row at the top of each page”
- Use correct table bookmarking
- Avoid** complex tables (i.e. merged cells)
- Avoid** using tab or indent to format table data

Columns

- Use Page Layout menu, Breaks (Section Breaks) to separate sections with different column numbers
- Avoid** using spaces or tabs to create the look of columns

Editing Marks

- Use correct hyphenation and punctuation
- Turn off editing marks for final document distribution
- Turn off Track Changes for final document distribution
- Remove comments for final document distribution

Document Properties

- Navigation Pane/Document Properties shows proper list of headings
- Fill out Properties under File menu
- Save document where you will remember it
- Keep document name simple, easy to remember, and free of special characters

Remember: Keep It Simple

The more complex a document is the more things that can go wrong with accessibility.