

Accessibility Resources

General Information

What needs to be accessible?

- Any document that will be distributed electronically and is geared for general use
 - Syllabi
 - PowerPoint Slides
 - Assigned Readings – PDFs
 - Assignments
 - Class website (Canvas)

What is an accessible document and why is it important? ([Link to original website](#))

- An accessible document is a document created to be as easily readable by a sighted reader as a low vision or non-sighted reader.
- Making a document accessible is easiest when we are in the original stages of creating a document.
- To learn all of the aspects of accessibility can take several courses over several hours, however, a few basic principles will make every document you create more accessible.
 - **Document Properties:**
 - Whether you are using a word processing, spreadsheet, or presentation program, every document has an area where you can enter Document Properties.
 - Document Properties allow the creator to enter information about the Title, Author, Key Search Words, Language, and Subject Matter of the document.
 - Best practices for Document Properties is to include the Company Name, Address, and Phone Number in the Author field as contact information for the reader.
 - Also, strategically utilizing key search words, including common misspellings will assist in bringing the document higher in a search list.
 - Although many program installations take care of this automatically, it is important to check that the reading language is set to English.
 - **Add Alternative Text to Images, pictures, clip art, charts, tables, shapes, embedded objects, inked entries, signatures, video, or audio files:**
 - Alternative text provides an audible description of a non-text object when an individual using a screen reader hovers over an image with their cursor.
 - Alternative Text is also known as Alt Text or alt text.
 - In most programs, you can right click on an object and select format to enter alternative text.
 - Sometimes, you may have to press F1 or help to find how to enter alternative text.

- **Use styles in long documents:**
 - Use the program's built in or custom style menus to creating titles, headings, lists, and normal paragraphs.
 - Whenever possible, use heading styles in numerical order.
 - When creating lists, use only round bullets as very few fancier bullets are recognizable or read by today's screen readers.
- **Specify column header rows in tables:**
 - Design tables with as simple a structure of rows and columns as possible and specify which row is your column header or row title.
- **Use meaningful hyperlinks:**
 - When formatting a hyperlink, be as meaningful as possible.
 - For instance, don't use the following sentence with the word "here" as the hyperlink (e.g. "To apply click here.")
 - Use a hyperlink that describes the item such as "To apply go to the fillable College Application."
- **Avoid using blank cells for formatting or paragraph marks for spacing between lines or paragraphs.**
 - Blank cells in a spreadsheet and formatting marks in a word document create a stutter sound on the screen reader that can become annoying to a listener. It is better to use cell padding, cell spacing, and paragraph and line spacing when creating documents.
- **Avoid using watermarks that are images:**
 - Watermarks are typically defined as "background" which is not read by a screen reader so most things that are placed as a watermark in a document are lost on the reader using a screen reader.
- **Include closed captions for all audio files.**
 - Accessibility is as important to individuals with low or no hearing ability as it is for people with site challenges. Therefore, include closed caption for all audio files in a document or presentation.
- **Utilize Accessibility Check tools in the newer versions of most programs:**
 - You can learn more by taking a class or by utilizing the accessibility checker tools now present in most of the newer versions of office programs.
- **Add a space or small image or text box at the start of each document with an accessibility disclaimer:**
 - An accessibility disclaimer tells readers who and where to call for assistance with the document or presentation should they have difficulty reading or understanding it.

Accessible Fonts

The recommended fonts to use are sans-serif fonts. Sans-serif fonts are considered more legible than serif fonts (like Times New Roman). Try to avoid narrow or decorative fonts.

Recommended Fonts

- Arial
- Calibri
- Century Gothic
- Helvetica
- Tahoma
- Verdana

Font face resource – [Penn State Font Face Section under Accessibility](#)

Font resource from Recite Me - [Choosing an Accessible Font Guide](#)

- Choosing an accessible font
- What makes a font accessible?
- Specialist fonts
- Tips on fonts and web accessibility

Contrast or Luminosity/Brightness

Sufficient contrast between background and foreground. This is extremely important when working with PowerPoint presentations. The maximum contrast is black vs white, but there are other options available.

Optional color schemes

- Navy/white
- Cream/dark brown
- Yellow/black

Contrast resource – [Penn State Contrast or Lumosity/Brightness Section under Accessibility](#)

- Colors to Avoid
- Too Vivid
- Too Much Texture
- Too Subtle
- Beware Color Coding

Other School's Accessibility Materials

Loyola University Maryland – [Accessibility at Loyola, Getting Started](#)

- [Documents](#)
 - [Bulleted & Numbered Lists](#)
 - [Headings & Documents](#)

- [Hyperlinks](#)
- [Presentations](#) – comes with a video
- [Spreadsheets](#)
- [Tables](#)
- [Color & Contrast](#)
- [Multimedia](#)
 - [Image Alt Text](#)
 - [Audio Descriptions](#)
 - [Video Captions, Transcripts, & Formats](#)

Grand Rapids Community College – [YouTube Video on creating an accessible syllabus](#) (2015)

Portland Community College

- [Accessibility Quick Guide](#)
- [Web Accessibility Guidelines Handbook](#)
- [Complex Images for All Learners Handbook](#) (Alt Text)
- [Instructional Support on Creating Accessible Content Website](#)

Pellissippi State Community College – [Libraries Accessibility & Universal Design for Learning](#)

[PowerPoint Workshop](#) (5:42 Video)

[Excel Spreadsheets](#) (5:10 Video)

[Create Closed Captioning Using YouTube](#) (5:26 Video)

[Word Documents Workshop](#)

- [Word Accessibility for Syllabus 1](#) (7:23 Video)
 - Introduction, Set Up, and Overview
 - See the Lay of the Land
 - Example Reading of Screen Reader
 - Comparison of Inaccessible and Accessible Documents
 - Clear the Deadwood
- [Word Accessibility for Syllabus 2](#) (15:01 Video)
 - Zone and Enrich
 - Headings Overview

- Add Heading 1
- Add Heading 2
- Info About Heading 3
- Add Extra Spacing
- Headings as Menu and Navigation
- Increase Indent
- Ruler Tool Overview
- Hanging Indent
- Adding Lists
- Comparison of Accessible and Inaccessible Lists
- Page Break and Section Break Information
- [Word Accessibility for Syllabus 3](#) (10:17 Video)
 - Add Left Tabs
 - Remove Left or Right Tabs
 - Add Right Tabs
 - Alt Text for Images
 - Alt Text for Tables
 - Caution Using Tables
 - Save as PDF with Bookmarks
- [Word Accessibility for Syllabus 4](#) (2:02 Video)
 - Wrap Up
 - Master Syllabus Template

Grand Valley State University – [Disability Support Resources on Making Accessible Documents](#)

- [Microsoft’s Guidance on accessible Word document authoring](#)
- [Microsoft’s Guidance on accessible Excel document authoring](#)
- [Microsoft’s Guidance on accessible PowerPoint document authoring](#)

Penn State – [Accessibility](#)

[Microsoft Office – Word, PowerPoint, Excel](#)

[Webinar Archives](#)

- Basic Concepts

- JAWS Screen Reader Demos
- Courses
- PDF
- Video Captions and Audio Descriptions

[YouTube Playlist for Accessibility at Penn State](#)

[Charts and Accessibility](#)

- Text Description
- Using Tables
- Color in Charts

[Flowcharts and Concept Maps](#)

[Maps](#)

- Directions (with Google Maps)
- Historical Map Example
- Color Coding
- 3D Maps
- Video Webinar

[Math and STEM Content](#)

[PDF Files](#)

[PDF Issues and Recommendations](#)