



- Mandatory
- Informational
- Best Practice
- Other

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Date: 01/24/2024

Contact: EO@dwd.in.gov

Program: DWD Equal Opportunity

Subject: DWD Technical Assistance 2023-06
Document Accessibility Tips

Purpose

To provide accessibility guidance and resources for DWD staff to improve document accessibility for agency generated documents.

References

See **Attachment A**.

Content

DWD Accessible Document Guidance

An **accessible document** is a document created to be easily read by both sighted and low vision to non-sighted readers.¹ Making a document accessible is easiest when the document is in the initial stages of development.

Key strategies to implement when creating accessible digital documents include using:

- **Alternative (Alt) Text:** Ensure meaningful images (data tables, charts, and other informational images) have alternative text and decorative images (borders, separators, or pictures that are only used to make the document more visually appealing) are marked as “decorative.”
- **Accessible Fonts and Colors:** Select an accessible font size/style and high contrast color combinations.
- **Accessibility Checkers:** Use available Accessibility Tools to run an accessibility check of the document.

DWD’s Communications Division has developed an introductory training module that provides basic accessibility instructions for Word and PowerPoint and introduces PDF documents.² This module is

¹ See **Attachment B** for information on federal guidance supporting document accessibility.

² *NOTE: A Pro Version of Adobe Acrobat is needed to edit PDF documents.*

available to all DWD staff and can be accessed by clicking on the following link: [Access the DWD Document Accessibility Training Webinar](#).

Webinar Highlights

- MS Word
 - Accessibility check
 - Headings/Bookmarks
 - Tables
 - Alt Text
 - Exporting/Saving as a PDF
- MS PowerPoint
 - Accessibility Check
 - Setting Slide Titles
 - Ordering Objects
 - Alt Text
- Adobe PDF
 - Accessibility Check
 - Common Accessibility Panel Review

Implementing Key Strategies for Creating Accessible Documents

Alternative Text

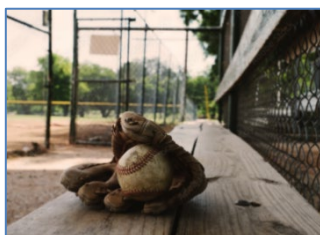
Alt text is detailed, hidden information that provides a description of a digital image. It is read aloud to users by screen reader tools. Alt text must be added to all non-decorative images to pass an accessibility check. Examples of images that could include alt text are pictures, clipart, diagrams, flow charts, charts, videos, and tables.

When screen readers such as Microsoft Narrator, JAWS, and NVDA reach digital content with alt text, they will read the alt text aloud, allowing users to better understand what is on the screen. Well-written, descriptive alt text dramatically reduces ambiguity and improves the user's experience.³

Alt Text Tips

- Ensure alt text descriptions are concise.
- Identify the purpose, i.e., why the image is being used in the document.
- Use proper punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure.
- Include any text within the image as part of the alt text.

The image and table below provide examples of when to use alt text.



Purpose of Visual	Alt Text Example/Options
The image contributes to content meaning, provides an example, or supports a point being made.	Image of an empty baseball field and dugout illustrating the decline in participation in summer sports.
Page decoration only. (Borders/shapes/etc.)	Mark as ornamental or remove image.

³ [Everything you need to know to write effective alt text - Microsoft Support](#).

Accessible Font Style and Color Usage

An accessible font is one that is simple, clear, and legible. Utilizing an accessible font improves the legibility and readability of the document.

Contrast and color use are vital to accessibility, as they affect a user's comprehension of the content. The text in any document should be readable in a high contrast mode. For example, it is best to use bright colors or high-contrast color schemes on opposite ends of the color spectrum.

Accessible Font Format Tips

- Use Sans Serif fonts.
- Avoid using all capital letters and excessive italics or underlines.
- Use white and black schemes, as this makes it easier to distinguish text.
- Use a free color contrast analyzer app.

The table below provides examples of font styles and color combinations that should be avoided.

Examples of Font Styles to Avoid	Examples of Low Contrast Color Combinations to Avoid
<i>Blackadder JTC- This is hard to read</i>	Yellow background/blue font
Bodoni MT Poster- This is hard to read.	Grey background/white font
<i>Baguet Script- This is hard to read.</i>	White background/yellow font
<i>Waldi - This is hard to read.</i>	Red background/green font

Color Vision Deficiency

The use of color when developing visually accessible documents requires consideration of how users may perceive those colors. Some specific combinations of hues and shades can practically be indistinguishable for people who are affected by color vision deficiency, more commonly known as color blindness. There are different types of color vision deficiency. Two of the most common types are red-green color vision deficiency and blue-yellow color vision deficiency.⁴

Red-green color vision deficiency is the most common type of color vision deficiency and makes it difficult to differentiate between red and green. There are four types of red-green color vision deficiency:

- **Deuteranomaly** is the most common type of red-green color vision deficiency. It makes certain shades of green look more red.
- **Protanomaly** makes certain shades of red look more green and less bright.
- **Protanopia and deuteranopia** both make someone unable to differentiate between red and green.

Blue-yellow color vision deficiency is a less-common type of color vision deficiency that makes it difficult to differentiate between several different color combinations. There are two types of blue-yellow color vision deficiency:

⁴ <https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/color-blindness/types-color-vision-deficiency>.

- **Tritanomally** makes it difficult to differentiate between blue and green and between yellow and red.
- **Tritanopia** makes someone unable to differentiate between blue and green, purple and red, and yellow and pink.

Accessible Color Usage Tips

- When possible, avoid using the following color combinations:
 - Red/green, Blue/green
 - Yellow/red, Purple/red; and
 - Yellow/pink
- Do not rely solely on color to convey meaning.

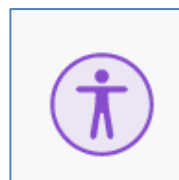
Accessibility Checker

The Accessibility Checker is a tool that reviews content and flags accessibility issues. It provides an explanation on why each issue might be a potential problem and suggests a resolution. Before publishing a Word document, Excel spreadsheet, Adobe PDF document, or PowerPoint presentation, launch the program's Accessibility Checker to ensure that the content is accessible. The icons provided below can assist with identifying the tool for each application.⁵

Microsoft Accessibility Checker Icon



Adobe Accessibility Checker Icon



Additional Document Accessibility Tips

Use meaningful hyperlinks. When formatting a hyperlink, be as meaningful as possible. For instance, do not state “To apply click here” and mark “here” as the hyperlink. Instead, use a hyperlink that describes the item such as “To apply go to the fillable Training Program Application.”

Tables. Tables should arrange data into rows and columns in a way that makes the information they provide easily understandable and searchable. It is important that tables are created with a consistent structure and easily identifiable header rows and columns.

- Avoid creating tables with merged or blank cells.
- Although adding table titles and descriptions using alt text is possible, it is a best practice to add a heading or table caption before the table itself to explain the data that the table holds.

The example below displays what to avoid when creating tables.

⁵ See **Attachment C** for instructions on locating the icons.

Table 1¹

WorkOne Staff Schedule ²	Staff 1 ³	10:00am ⁴
	Staff 2	3:00pm
	Staff 3	8:00am

Explanation of table issues:

- Issue 1 – No title or description.
- Issue 2 – Merged cell.
- Issues 3 and 4 – No table titles.
- Issue 5 – Color usage. The yellow/pink color combination (Tritanopia, a type of blue-yellow color vision deficiency).

Lists. To make it easier for screen readers to read a document, organize information into small chunks such as bulleted or numbered lists. Design lists so that there is no need to add a plain paragraph without a bullet or number to the middle of a list. If the list is broken up by a plain paragraph, some screen readers might announce the wrong number of list items.

Footnotes. In Microsoft Word, use the **Insert Footnote** tool located under the **References** tab on the main ribbon when adding footnotes to ensure they are tagged properly.

Headings. Document headings provide structure. They separate blocks of text into coherent sections. Utilize the built-in title, subtitle, and heading style tools when working with headings.

NOTE: See Attachments C and D for additional guidance and resources for creating accessible documents.

Attachments

Attachment A - References

Attachment B - Federal Accessibility Guidance

Attachment C - Locating the Accessibility Checker Icon

Attachment D - Accessible Document Training Resources

Additional Information

Questions regarding the content of this publication should be directed to EO@dwd.in.gov.

Attachment A References

- WIOA Section 188
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Title II
- Rehabilitation Act of 1973⁶ Section 508
- 29 CFR 38.13(b)
- 29 USC 794d
- IC 5-15-5.1-1
- TEGL 3-23 *Allowable Uses of Funds for Outreach Activities for Federal Formula and Competitive Grant Awards*
- U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, *Guidance on Web Accessibility and the ADA*⁷
- U.S. Department of Labor, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Administration & Management, *Promising Practices In Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide*⁸
- Indiana State Library, *Indiana State Documents*⁹
- Microsoft, *Support*¹⁰
- Regional Government Services (rgsipa), *What is an Accessible Document and Why is Accessibility So Important?*¹¹
- WebAIM Resources, *Contrast Checker*¹²
- National Eye Institute, *Types of Color Vision Deficiency*¹³

⁶ As amended.

⁷ [Guidance on Web Accessibility and the ADA | ADA.gov.](#)

⁸ [Promising Practices In Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#)

⁹ [Indiana State Library: Indiana State Documents.](#)

¹⁰ [Microsoft Support.](#)

¹¹ [What is an Accessible Document and Why is Accessibility So Important? | Regional Government Services Authority \(rgsipa.org\).](#)

¹² [https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/.](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/)

¹³ [https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/color-blindness/types-color-vision-deficiency.](https://www.nei.nih.gov/learn-about-eye-health/eye-conditions-and-diseases/color-blindness/types-color-vision-deficiency)

Attachment B

Federal Accessibility Guidance

The following federal guidance provides a framework that supports the best practices for creating accessible documents as described throughout this technical assistance.

Americans with Disability Act (ADA). Title II of the ADA prohibits discrimination against individuals with disabilities in all services, programs, and activities of state and local governments. State and local governments must take steps to ensure that their communications with individuals with disabilities are as effective as their communications with others.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973,¹⁴ as amended, ensures those with disabilities have equal access to government information as contained on information and communications technology (ICT), and thereby to the government employment, programs, and services to which all citizens are entitled.

All materials produced with federal funds must be accessible to individuals with disabilities, sometimes referred to as being “508-compliant” in a reference to the statutory requirements of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 sec. 508. Staff can refer to the Government Services Administration’s (GSA) website on electronic and information technology accessibility (www.Section508.gov) as a resource.¹⁵

Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)¹⁶ are a set of standards used by individuals, organizations, and governments worldwide to ensure text, images, sounds, and code or markup that define structure or presentation are accessible to all users.

WIOA Section 188 and its implementing regulations at 29 CFR 38 require that services and information about services be accessible to individuals with disabilities. The US Department of Labor’s Office of Disability Employment Policy, Civil Rights Center, and Employment and Training Administration have created a resource guide, *Promising Practices in Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide*.¹⁷ The Guide provides several examples of making materials, spaces, and services more fully accessible for individuals with disabilities.

All WIOA Title I-financially assisted programs and activities must be programmatically accessible¹⁸, which includes providing reasonable accommodations for individuals with disabilities, making reasonable modifications to policies, practices, and procedures, administering programs in the most integrated setting appropriate, communicating with persons with disabilities as effectively as with others, and providing appropriate auxiliary aids or services, including assistive technology devices and services, where necessary to afford individuals with disabilities an equal opportunity to participate in, and enjoy the benefits of, the program or activity.

¹⁴ 29 USC 794d.

¹⁵ TEGL 3-23.

¹⁶ <https://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/accessibility-intro/>.

¹⁷ [Promising Practices In Achieving Nondiscrimination and Equal Opportunity: A Section 188 Disability Reference Guide | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov/eo-12813/section-188-disability-reference-guide).

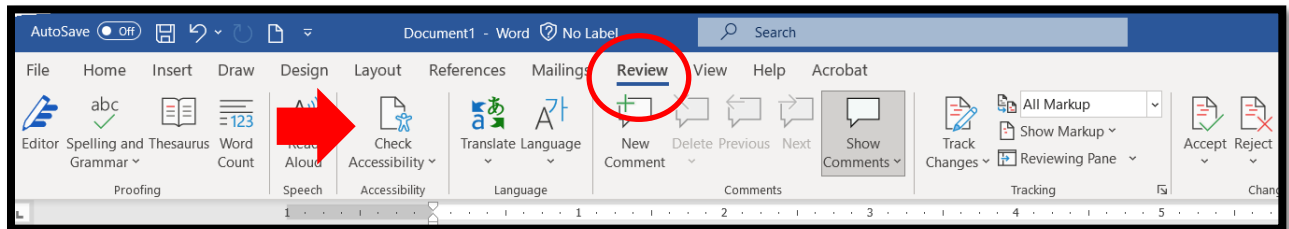
¹⁸ 29 CFR 38.13(b).

Attachment C

Locating the Accessibility Checker Icon

Word, Excel, and PowerPoint

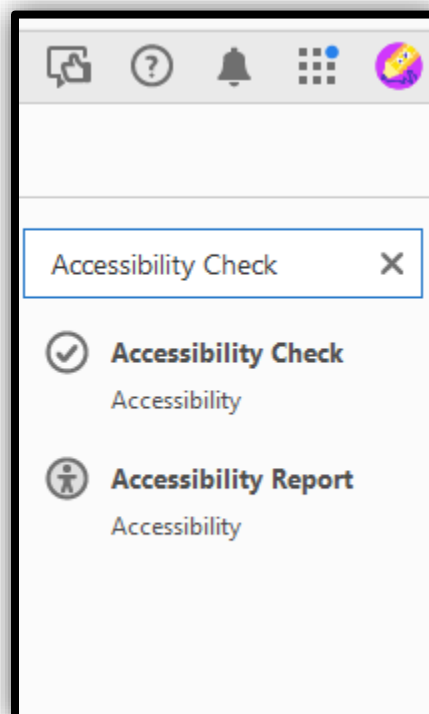
To locate the accessibility checker, click on **Review**.



Adobe PDF

NOTE: Users must have Adobe Pro or Acrobat Distiller to have access to the accessibility check tool. If a user does not have access to these tools, the document should be approved by the Webmaster prior to it being published.

Search for **Accessibility Check** in the tool search bar and click **Accessibility Check** in the results.



Please review the [DWD Document Accessibility Training Webinar](#) and the training resources listed in **Attachment D** for additional details on creating accessible documents.

Attachment D

Accessible Document Training Resources

[Click here to access MS Word training.](#)

Examples of Training Topics

- Best practices for making Word documents accessible.
- Checking accessibility while working in Word.
- Use built-in title, subtitle, and heading styles.
- Add alt text to visuals.
- Use accessible font format and color.
- Create accessible lists.

[Click here to access MS Excel training.](#)

Examples of Training Topics

- Best practices for making Excel spreadsheets accessible.
- Check accessibility while working in Excel.
- Create accessible tables.
- Add alt text to visuals.
- Use accessible font format and color.
- Create accessible charts.
- Test the accessibility of worksheets.

[Click here to access MS PowerPoint training](#)

Example of Training Topics:

- Best practices for making PowerPoint presentations accessible.
- Check accessibility while working.
- Create accessible slides.
- Add alt text to visuals.
- Create accessible hyperlink text and add ScreenTips.
- Use accessible font format and color.

[Click here to access Adobe training.](#)

Examples of Training Topics:

- Create and verify PDF accessibility.

Government Services Administration's (GSA) Training Videos

[Click here to access the GSA Word video.](#)

[Click here to access the GSA PowerPoint video.](#)

[Click here to access the GSA Excel video.](#)

[Click here to access the GSA Adobe video.](#)

LinkedIn Learning Training Options¹⁹

Click the link below to access the **Word** module.
[Make your document accessible \(linkedin.com\)](#)

Click the link below to access the **Excel** module.
[Accessibility features in Excel \(linkedin.com\)](#)

Click the link below to access the **PowerPoint** module.
[Create accessible presentations \(linkedin.com\)](#)

Click the link below to access the **Adobe** module.
[Accessible PDFs \(linkedin.com\)](#)

¹⁹ DWD is not recommending any specific module. LinkedIn Learning offers a variety of training modules designed for various skill levels. Staff may choose what best meets their needs.