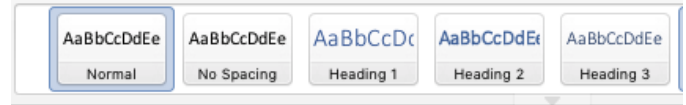


MS Word Accessibility - Quick Start Guide

Starting a document?

Include headings to provide a logical document structure. Heading 1 will be your document title. Heading 2 will be content sections. Heading 3 will be subsections.



To add headings, go to the Home ribbon and select the appropriate heading.

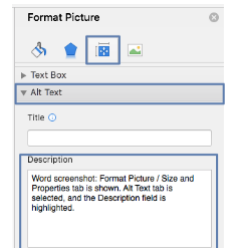
Note: To change the appearance of a heading type, select formatted text, right click the heading type in the Home ribbon, and select "Update Heading to match selection."

Adding images?

Include an alt tag describing the **content** and **function**.

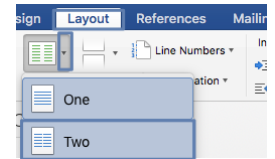
Right click the image > Select Format Picture > Select the Size and Properties icon > Enter alt text in the Description field.

Images should be placed in-line with the text. Right click the image > Select Wrap Text > Select In Line with Text. For more control over image placement, use columns.



Want columns?

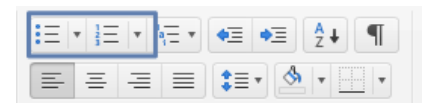
Tables should not be used for layout purposes. Similarly, columns should not be created using additional blank spaces. True columns can be added by going to the Layout ribbon > Selecting Columns > Choose the number of columns you'd like.



Note: To apply columns to a section of text, highlight it before selecting the column type.

Creating a list?

When creating a list, use a true list. Go to the Home ribbon and select either a bulleted or numbered list.



Adding a Table?

Keep tables simple, avoid merged cells. Tables with merged cells can often be split into two tables.

Populate blank cells with meaningful text or "----".

Mark table row and column headers. Select the table, go to the Table Design ribbon and check the appropriate Header Row and First Column boxes are checked.

If the table spans across multiple pages, select "Repeat Row Headers" under the Table Layout tab.

Checking Accessibility?

Run the Accessibility Checker before exporting your document. Remember, fixing the source document is easier than remediating the PDF later. To run the Accessibility Checker:

- Windows: File> Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility
- Mac: Review ribbon > Check Accessibility

Other Tips:

- Minimum font size is about 12.
- True headings can be used for a table of contents.
- Ensure text has a high contrast.
- Set the document title:
 - Mac: File > Properties > Summary tab
 - Windows: File > Info > Properties section

Common Accessibility Errors and Solutions

Errors

- **Missing alternative text** – See Adding Images?
- **Table has no header row** – Mark table row and column headers. Select the table, go to the Table Design ribbon and check the appropriate Header Row and First Column boxes are checked.
- **Image or object not inline** – Right click the image in question and select Wrap Text > In Line with Text. Note, this may move the image. To achieve the position you would like, use columns.
- **Missed heading level** – Ensure headings are nested correctly. Headings levels should not be skipped. For example, do not go from Heading 1 to Heading 4.

Warnings

- **Hyperlink text is meaningful** – Ensure your link text is descriptive of the destination.
- **Table structure** – Ensure tables don't have merged or blank cells. Consider splitting tables with merged cells into two tables. Blank cells can be populated with "---".
- **Repeated blank characters** – Delete the superfluous blank characters and use new lines or page breaks to control spacing.

Tips

- **No headings in document** – Use heading styles from the Home ribbon to break content into logical sections.

Note: With older documents you may encounter an error when trying to run the Accessibility Checker. The error will read "The Accessibility Checker can't check the current file type for accessibility issues." To repair this:

1. Go to File > Save As.
2. In the File Format field, select Word document .docx.
3. Re-run the Accessibility Checker.