

Creating Accessible Content

When creating public-facing or private content, consider accessibility. Accessibility ensures that all audiences are able to access materials in an equitable manner. While this is not an exhaustive list, here are some starter tips to consider when creating accessible content across platforms. Please also note when following these guidelines, this list does not negate the need to engage in an interactive process to determine what specific accommodations are best for an individual with a disability.

Videos

Consider the following practices when choosing or creating a video:

Closed Captioning

Closed captioning (cc) provides synchronous text for everything said in a video. Closed captioning not only helps the Deaf and hard of hearing community access the video content, but it can assist many other audiences with following along to the video content.

- Check that a video has [cc] as an option before presenting it.
- Check to make sure the videos captions are accurate.

Being Descriptive

Being descriptive of things that you present visually in a video will promote inclusivity of people who may not be able to see the content displayed.

- Consider descriptions for white-board, typed, or written content in a video.
- Consider descriptions of images or actions presented in a video.

Audio Description

Audio description refers to a form of narration for visual content presented in a video. Depending on the type of video content, consider adding audio description for inclusive accessibility.

- All public-facing videos should have an audio described version as appropriate.
- Consider the visual content being presented in the video when deciding to add audio descriptions.

Images

Alternative text describes an image to someone who uses screen-reading software. Alt text presents an image in a non-visual format. Remember to describe useful information of the image (i.e. the purpose of the image).

How to add alt text in Word or PowerPoint

- Right click on the image – select “Edit Alt Text” and add a 1-2 sentence description.

How to add alt text in Google Docs or Slides

- Right click on the image – Select “Alt Text” and add a title for the image and a 1-2 sentence description.

Links

When linking to websites within a document or presentation, consider how to display the link in an accessible way.

Hyperlink text

- Do not include links in full within your document. Hyperlink text so it is easier for a screen reader to navigate.

Make your hyperlinked text clear

- Unclear hyperlinked text can be challenging for someone using a screen reader to navigate. Instead of saying “Click here,” state what the link is referring to, such as “Registration form.”

Font Contrast, Style, and Size

Sufficient font contrast, style, and size are important for someone with low vision in order to distinguish various aspects of presented content.

Font Contrast

Contrast is the way text color differs from the background color in a presentation or document. Ensuring good contrast will increase clarity for the reader.

- Use a [contrast checker](#) to ensure you are meeting accessibility standards for your colors in the foreground and background of a presentation or handout.

Font Style and size of text

To ensure optimal readability, adjust your font style and font size appropriately.

- For body text, maintain a font size of at least 12pt-14pt.
- For font options, select a “Sans serif” font over a “Serif” font. Fonts that are more decorative can be harder to read. Accessible font options include Arial, Calibri, Century Gothic, Helvetica, Tahoma and Verdana.

Handouts

When creating handouts or documents in word, please refer to instructions for images and links when inserting those into the document in addition to the information listed below.

Headings

Headings assist with document navigation for a screen reader in addition to providing your audience with an outline for the information provided. Insert correct heading levels when formatting a document to promote logical reading order and navigation.

- Use the built-in heading structures within Word or Google Docs.
- The title of your document should be heading level 1.

Accessibility Checker

- Office products, including Word, have a built-in accessibility checker:
 - Navigate to “File”—“Info”—“Check for Issues”—“Check Accessibility”
 - A report will run and notify you of the issues found and how to fix them.
- Install [Grackle for Google Docs](#) to check your Docs for accessibility
 - After installing the Grackle add-on, navigate to the “Add-ons” tab—“Grackle Docs”—“Launch”
 - A report will run and notify you of the issues found and how to fix them.

Presentations

When putting together PowerPoint or Google Slide presentations, there are many components to consider for an accessible presentation. Refer to instructions above for adding alt text to images, links, and tips for video content.

Layout

Choose from one of the pre-formatted layouts in PowerPoint or Google Slides. These layouts typically meet accessibility standards. If you change items within your chosen layout, such as adding an additional textbox, you may run into issues with accessibility. Refer to instructions to follow for how to check for accessibility.

- Navigate to the “Design” tab in PowerPoint to select a pre-formatted layout.

Reading Order

For screen reader ease, make sure the content within your slide is arranged correctly for logical flow. Content in PowerPoint reads bottom to top in the Selection Pane. Follow these instructions to arrange the content on your slide correctly:

- Navigate to the “Home” tab — “Arrange” — “Selection Pane” — Check to make sure the information on your slide is arranged where the first thing you want to appear is at the bottom of the list and the last item you want to appear is at the top of your list.

Accessibility Checker

Similar to Word and Google docs, PowerPoint and Google slides also have options to check for accessibility.

- PowerPoint: Navigate to “File” — “Info” — “Check for Issues” — “Check Accessibility”
- [Google Slides](#): After installing the Grackle add-on, navigate to the “Add-ons” tab — “Grackle Docs” — “Launch”

Emails

As with documents, presentations and videos, it is also important to consider accessibility in emails. Consider the following:

- Contrast of text color
- Font size
- Avoid center aligned
- Create meaningful links
- Provide a clear subject line
- Insert alt text in images
- Don’t rely on color for detailing information
- Don’t have important information within an image that cannot be read by a screen reader

Use plain language

Using plain language will help readers understand the content you write and find what they need within your email, video, or document with ease. Here are tips to increase accessible language:

- Check readability by using the built-in checker in [Word](#) or an app like the [Hemmingway app](#)
- Avoid idioms
- Check out this [list of words to avoid](#) to increase readability
- Avoid jargon and use familiar terms
- Consider logical reading order of information
- Write with active voice
- Provide definitions for unclear content

References & Resources:

Augsburg-Specific Resources & References

- [Augsburg Captioning Guidelines](#)
- [Augsburg Accessibility & Inclusion Moodle Course Site Checklist](#)
- [Augsburg Guide to Creating More Accessible PDFs \(Faculty/Staff/Students\)](#)
- [Augsburg Guide to using Read and Write to create accessible documents](#)
- [Augsburg How to Install Read and Write Guide](#)

Other Online Resources & References

- [Top 10 Tips for Creating Accessible Course Content by Iowa State University](#)
- [University of Minnesota Heading structure Guide](#)
- [Google tips for making your document and presentations accessible](#)
- [Microsoft Office Accessibility checklist](#)
- [Font Size considerations by Penn State](#)
- [Choosing an Accessible Font Guide](#)
- [Plain Language Guidelines](#)
- [Plain Language Accessibility Guide by Harvard University](#)
- [Creating Accessible Emails](#)
- [Accessibility in Email](#)
- [Captioning Guide by the World Wide Web Consortium](#)
- [Video Description Guide by American Foundation for the Blind](#)
- [Audio Description Guide by the World Wide Web Consortium](#)

Last Updated by the CLASS Office August 2023