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# Digital Accessibility Essentials

**Participant Resources**

# University IT Accessibility Policy

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**IT Accessibility Policy**

**Policy Number:** IT-26  
**Date Drafted:** 05/17/2011  
**Version:** 1.0

**Approved Date:** 10/31/2011  
**Version:** 1.0

**Revision Date:** 04/09/2019  
**Version:** 2.0

The University of Iowa is committed to ensuring the accessibility of electronic and information technology resources used by members of the university community and general public. This commitment supports the university's mission of teaching, research and service, and is maintained in accordance with relevant federal and state laws.

"Accessible" means that individuals with disabilities are able to independently acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services within the same timeframe as individuals without disabilities, with substantially equivalent ease of use.

**Scope**

1. This policy applies to all electronic and information technology used by the university. This includes, but is not limited to, the contexts of teaching, learning, research, service, employment, and other official functions of the university.
2. This policy applies to materials hosted or provided by the university or by third parties, whenever these materials are used in official functions of the university.

**Policy statements**

1. In order to maintain equal opportunities for all individuals, the goal of this policy is to achieve accessibility as a proactive need, rather than a reactive response. While timely accommodation is required whenever accessibility is not achieved, an accommodation-only strategy is insufficient under this policy.
2. The university will maintain processes for evaluating accessibility as part of the procurement process.
3. All individuals will have access to education on the expectations, knowledge and skills related to accessibility. Information about these opportunities will be posted on the IT Accessibility website.
4. The Information Security and Policy Office (ISPO) will oversee coordination and implementation of this policy. The ISPO will publish and maintain technical standards for implementing IT accessibility, including standards for web-based and non-web technologies.
5. Exceptions to the policy are permitted only when full compliance would impose an "undue burden;" when an accessible format constitutes a fundamental alteration to the nature of the program, service, or activity; or when an accessible version of the materials does not exist. In all cases, the requesting individual or unit will be required to document and obtain approval(s) for the exception. The processes for documentation and approval will be found on the IT Accessibility website.

**Standards**

1. The technical standards for measuring compliance with this policy will be maintained on the IT Accessibility website.

- Approved 2011, rev. 2019
- Applies to all technology used in support of UI functions
- Housed in IT Security policy site

<https://itsecurity.uiowa.edu/itaccessibility>

# Regents IT Accessibility Policy Requirements

- Guidelines for the procurement, design and development, management, and use of accessible electronic and information technologies
- Establishment of technical standards for accessible on-site and online learning and work environments
- Accessible web sites (e.g., Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)
- Accessible document and media types
- Campus awareness programs and support services



# Accessibility Standards and Recommendations

- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, Version 2.1 (WCAG)
- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Authoring Tool Accessibility Guidelines (ATAG)
- Guidance from DoJ and OCR outcomes



# IT Accessibility Group

- Located in Information Security and Policy Office
- Day to day support for IT Accessibility policy and practice
- Maintains technical standards for accessible technology
- Leads IT Accessibility Technical Standards Committee
- Provides a variety of accessibility services



# IT Accessibility Services

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## Training

Document/web development

Media captioning and management

Inclusive trainings and presentations

DIY accessibility testing

## Consultation

Accessibility strategy

Technology Review for purchasing

Vendor engagement

## Assessment

Web and application accessibility testing

Enterprise reporting

Capacity and maturity assessment

# Campus Partners in IT Accessibility

- [Student Disability Services](#)
- [Faculty/Staff Disability Services](#)
- [Office of the ADA Coordinator](#)
- [Division of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion](#)
- [UI General Counsel](#)
- [Center for Disabilities and Development](#)
- [Council on Disability Awareness](#)
- [Information Technology Services](#)

# Accessibility Resources

IT Accessibility Policy

<https://itsecurity.uiowa.edu/itaccessibility>

IT Accessibility Guides

<https://itaccessibility.uiowa.edu/guides>

Technology Review Process

<https://its.uiowa.edu/campus-software-program/technology-reviews>

Accessibility Resources for Faculty

<https://itaccessibility.uiowa.edu/faculty>

Schedule an Accessibility Consultation

<https://itaccessibility.uiowa.edu/consultation>



# Headings: Dos and Don'ts

## Do:

- Use real, machine-readable text for page content
- Use headings to introduce topics and sections in a document
- Nest headings properly by levels (e.g. H1, H2,H3)
- Use headings with approved styles to provide consistent formatting

## Don't:

- Use images of text *only* for important information
- Use heavily formatted text to introduce topics and sections
- Skip heading levels for appearance (e.g. H2-H4)
- Use headings to provide emphasis, style, or format for stand-alone elements (e.g., links)

# ALT Text: Dos and Don'ts

## Do:

- Include descriptive ALT text for images that convey information
- For images like wordmarks or buttons, use the image text or message for ALT text
- Provide links to long descriptions for complex images
- Use empty ALT or presentation role for decorative images

## Don't:

- Use file names, extensions, or paths as ALT text
- Use “Link to...”, “Image of”, “Button”, or similar constructions for ALT text
- Exceed 140 characters in an ALT attribute
- Use background images to convey important information

# Color: Dos & Don'ts

## Do:

- Use color consistently throughout your site
- Include color as a means of differentiating between objects
- Use textures, shapes, text, and other properties in addition to color

## Don't:

- Mix and match too many colors in a single page or site
- Use color as the only means of distinguishing objects

# Hyperlinks: Dos and Don'ts

## Do:

- Use meaningful, relevant text for all links
- Use consistent text for links to the same resource
- Use ALT text for images that are used as links
- Use links to allow users to move from one place to the next

## Don't:

- Use generic text (More, Click Here) for link text
- Use links as buttons to activate or control interface elements
- Use background images, scripting, or CSS to create links
- Open links in a new window unless necessary

# Accessible Tables: Dos and Don'ts

## Do:

- Use tables to present data and tabular information
- Use header and data cells to establish table structure
- Use SCOPE to associate headers with columns and rows
- Provide meaningful caption and summary

## Don't:

- Use tables for layout or positioning
- Create table rows for labeling and information
- Use header cells for formatting or style
- Span (merge) cells unless absolutely necessary

# Microsoft Word Accessibility

- Headings, sections, pagination, table of contents
- Alternate text for images and non-text content
- Best practices for data tables and lists
- Color for identification and contrast
- Meaningful, descriptive link text
- Columns, not text wrap, for position and layout
- Prepare Word document for export to PDF





# PowerPoint Accessibility

- Slide master: layout, placeholders, designs
- Content reading order
- Alternate text for images and non-text content
- Best practices for data tables and lists
- Color for identification and contrast
- Meaningful, descriptive link text
- Export to PDF

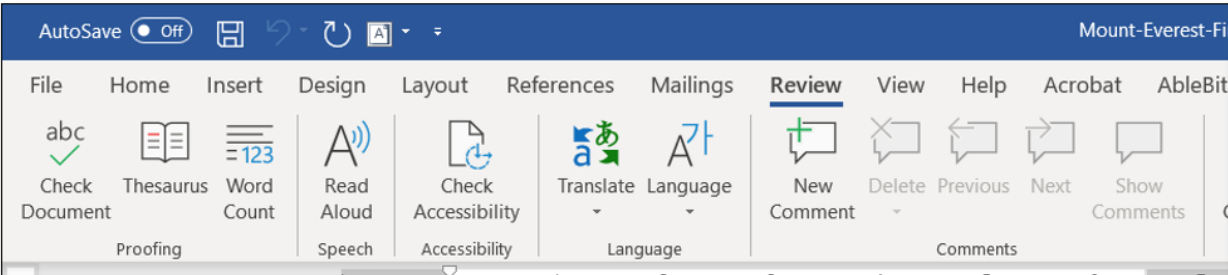
# PDF Accessibility



- Exported from accessible source documents
- Machine-readable text: NOT scanned or image-only
- Logical reading order
- Semantic and structural tags (e.g., lists, tables, etc.)
- Navigability: appropriately nested headings, bookmarks
- ALT text for images
- Sufficient color contrast
- Document properties and security



# Microsoft Word Accessibility Checker



**Accessibility Checker**

Inspection Results

Errors

- ▶ Missing alternative text (9)
- ▶ Image or object not inline. (67)

Warnings

- ▶ Check reading order (16)
- ▲ Hard-to-read text contrast  
Campus-wide Paradigm Shift from "Diversity"  
to Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Keep accessibility checker running while I work

**Additional Information**

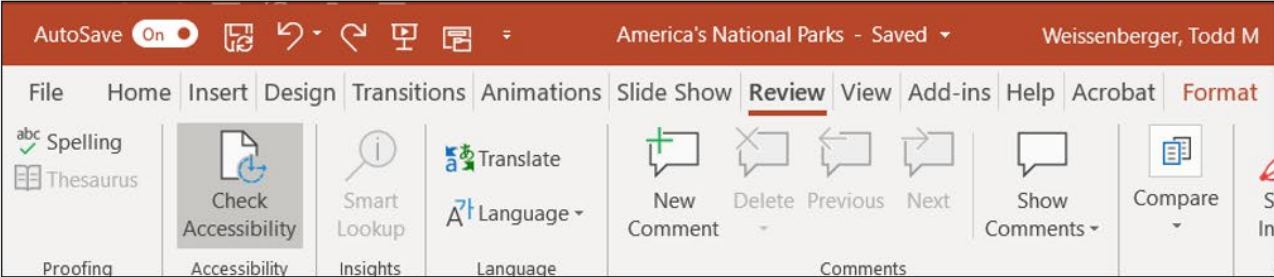
**Why Fix?**  
Text becomes difficult to read when its color is too similar to the color behind it. Increasing contrast makes text easier to read, especially when viewing documents in bright light.

**Steps To Fix:**  
Increase contrast by changing the color of the font (Home tab) or by changing the background color (Design tab).

[Read more about making documents accessible](#)



# PowerPoint Accessibility Checker



### Accessibility Checker

Inspection Results

Errors

- Missing alternative text
  - Picture Placeholder 8 (Slide 6)
  - Content Placeholder 8 (Slide 7)
- Table has no header row
  - Content Placeholder 3 (Slide 11)
- Missing slide title
  - Slide 8

**Additional Information**

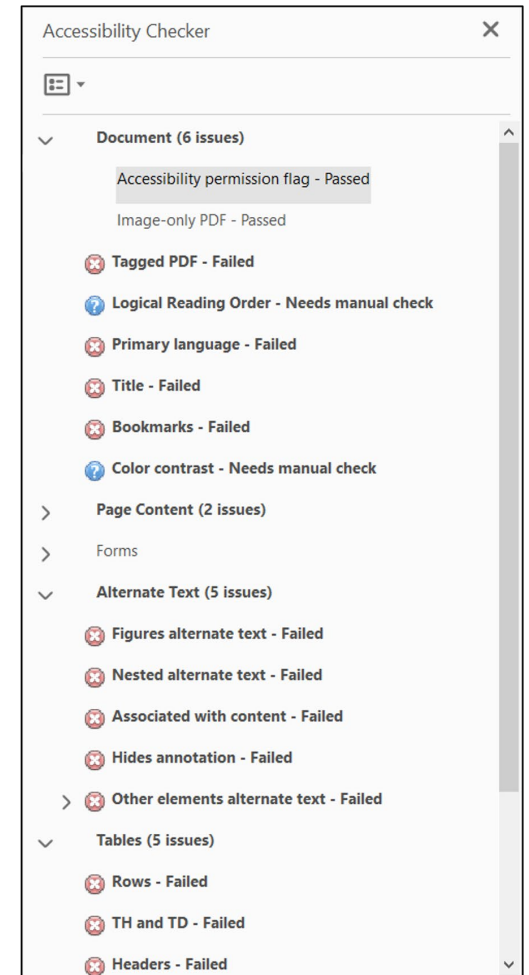
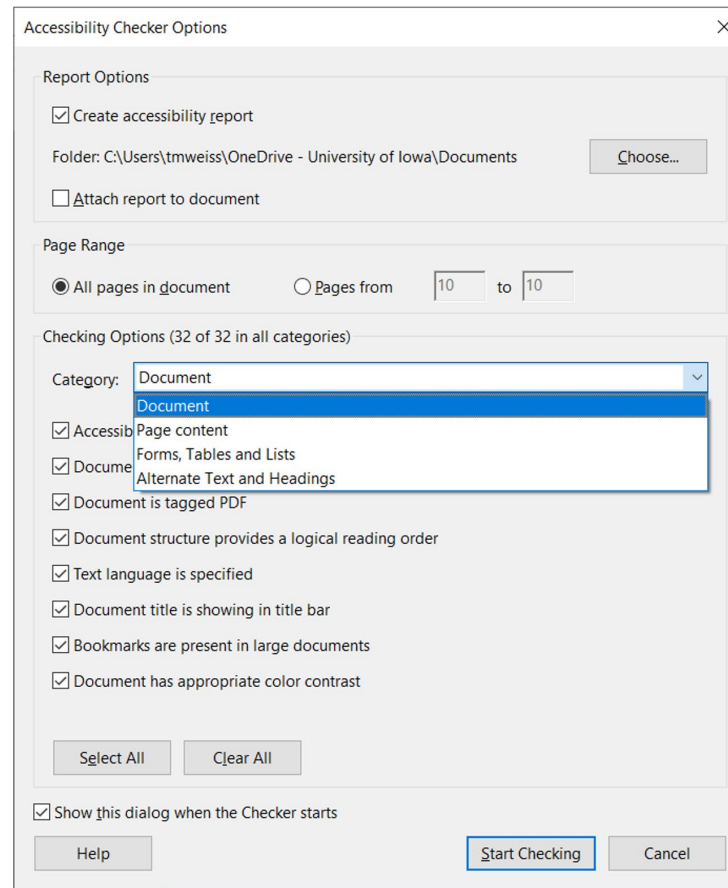
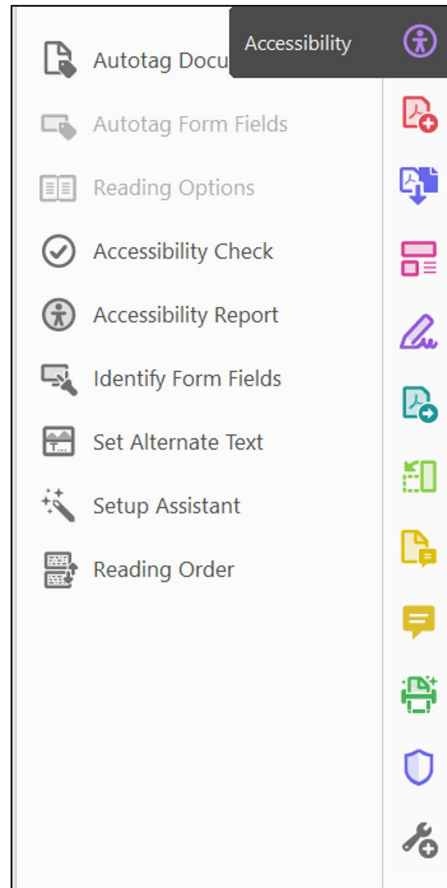
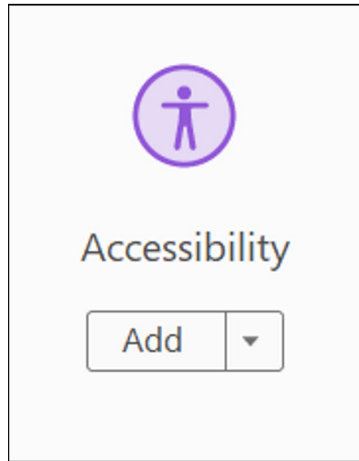
**Why Fix?**

Alternative text for images and other objects is very important for people who can't see the screen. Screen readers read alternative text aloud, so it's the only information many have about the image. Good alternative text helps them understand the image.

**Steps To Fix:**

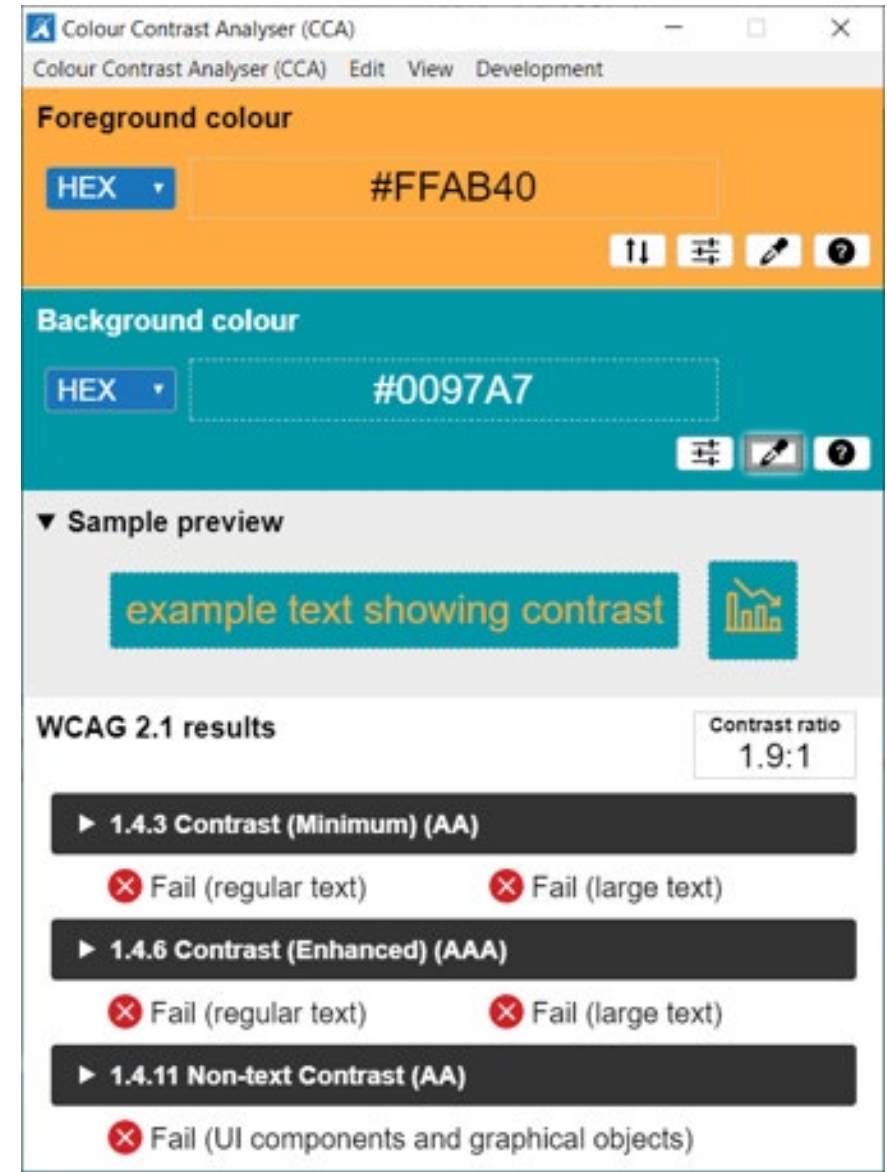
[Read more about making documents accessible](#)

# Acrobat Accessibility Checker



# Colour Contrast Analyser

- Calculates contrast ratio
- Reports results for WCAG success criteria
- Enables color previews
- Onboard color blindness simulator
- <https://www.paciellogroup.com/>

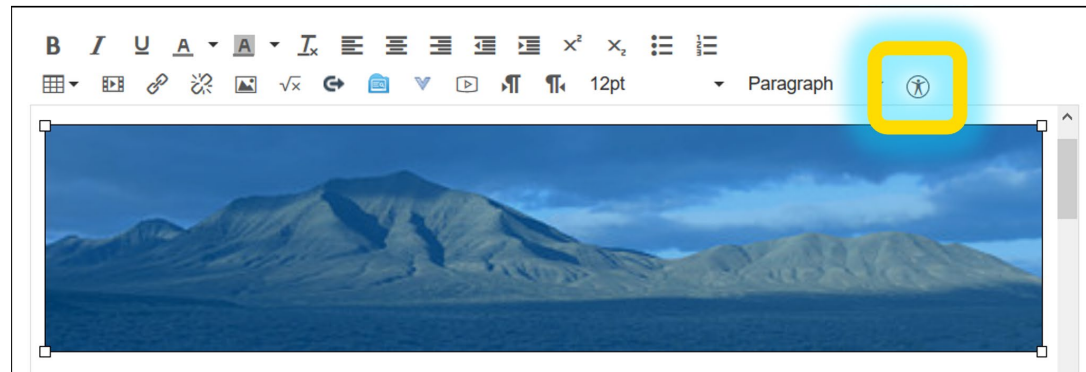


# Canvas Accessibility

- Headings and reading order
- Images and ALT text
- Descriptive hyperlinks
- Color and contrast
- Digital media
- Data tables
- Timed activities
- External/non-Canvas content



# Accessibility Checkers in ICON/Canvas



### Accessibility Checker

Issue 1/3 ?

Tables should include a caption describing the contents of the table.

Add a caption

Prev Next Apply

### Accessibility Checker

Issue 2/3 ?

Heading levels should not be skipped.

Action to take:

Leave as is ▼

Prev Next Apply

### Accessibility Checker

Issue 3/3 ?

Images should include an alt attribute describing the image content.

Add alt text for the image

Decorative image

Prev Next Apply



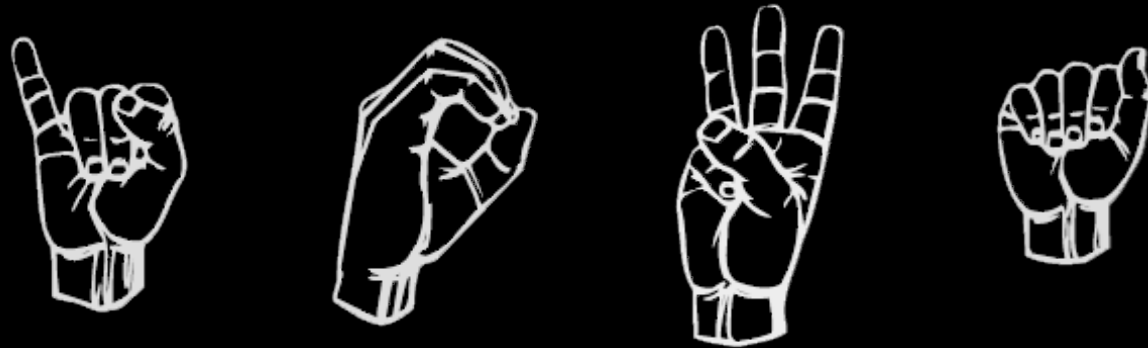
## Report for Global Accessibility Awareness Day

55 errors, 25 suggestions, 4 unscannable files

### + Report Summary

- 55 Errors**
  - 6 Alternative Text should not be the image filename
  - 3 Links should contain text
  - 34 No table headers found
  - 5 Insufficient text color contrast with the background
  - 1 Alt text for all img elements used as source anchors should not be empty
  - 2 No closed captions found.
  - 4 No closed captions found on media comment.
- 25 Suggestions**
  - 2 Consider adding headings to your document to create more structure
  - 7 Image elements should have an "alt" attribute
  - 13 Avoid using styles for document structure
  - 1 Content length should not exceed 3000 words.
  - 2 Captions don't match course language

# IOWA



<https://itaccessibility.uiowa.edu>