Avoid Using Floating Images

Images that are not in line with text are challenging to navigate and they may be inaccessible to users with vision impairment. Setting text-wrapping around objects to Top and Bottom or In Line With Text makes it easier for people with screen readers to follow the structure of your document.

1. Select the image and right-click.
2. Choose Wrap Text and then select In Line With Text or Top and Bottom from the list.

Change Text Box and Caption Wrapping

Text boxes and Image captions must have appropriate wrapping so users can navigate through the document.

1. Select the text box and select the wrapping icon that appears to the right
2. Select Top and Bottom under the With Text Wrapping section.

Avoid Image Watermarks

Images used as watermarks may not be understood by people with vision or cognitive disabilities. If you must use a watermark, make sure that the information it contains is also included elsewhere in your document.

Add an Accessibility Completion Date to the Footer

Once your document has been made compliant, it is a good idea to add a statement to the footer indicating the date the document was made accessible.

1. Select Footer from the Insert Menu
2. Add a single line of text that indicates the date made accessible. Example: This document was made accessible on 1/18/2018.

Add Alternative Text to Images, Objects, Tables, and Captions

Alternative text, also known as alt text or Alt Text, appears when you move your pointer over a picture or object. Alt text helps people who use screen readers to understand the content of images in your document.

1. Right click the image or object and then click Format...
2. Click Alt Text from the Layout & Properties group.
3. Enter a description of the image or object into the Title and Description text boxes.
4. Click Close.

Specify Column Header Rows in Tables

Having clear column headings can help provide context and assist navigation of the table’s contents.

1. Click anywhere in the table
2. On the Table Tools Design tab, in the Table Style Options group, select the Header Row check box.
3. Select a Table Style from the Grid Tables groups.
4. Right click the table and select Table Properties.
5. Under the Row tab, click the checkbox beside Repeat as header row at the top of each page.
Use Styles in Long Documents

Heading and paragraph styles, as well as tables of contents when necessary, make it easier for all readers of your document to follow it more easily. In longer documents, these elements can add structure for users who are using a screen reader or who rely on the visual cue of section headings to navigate as they read.

1. Select the text you want to make into a heading.
2. On the Home tab, in the Styles group, select the appropriate level heading style from the Quick Styles gallery.

Use Short Titles in Headings

When you use headings in a document, be sure to keep them short (fewer than 20 words). In general, headings should be, at most, one line long. This makes it easier for readers to quickly navigate the document either by scanning it or by using the navigation pane. When you use headings in a document,

Ensure All Heading Styles are in the Correct Order

By using heading levels in a logical order (for example Heading 4 is a child of Heading 3 not Heading 2) assists users in navigating the document and finding information.

Use Hyperlink Text that is Meaningful

Hyperlink text should provide a clear description of the link destination rather than only providing the URL. Ideally, both should be displayed.

1. Place your cursor where you want the hyperlink.
2. On the Insert tab, in the Links group, click Hyperlink to open the hyperlink dialog box.
3. In the Text to display box, type in the name or phrase that will briefly describe the link destination followed by the URL in parenthesis.
4. In the Address box, type the link URL.
5. Click OK.

Add ScreenTip Text to Hyperlinks

You can include ScreenTip text that appears when your cursor hovers over a hyperlink and can be used in a similar way to alt text. Place your cursor in the hyperlink you want to add ScreenTip text to.

1. On the Insert tab, in the Links group, click Hyperlink to open the hyperlink dialog box.
2. Click ScreenTip.
3. Type in your text in the ScreenTip text box.
4. Click OK.

Use Simple Table Structure

By not using nested tables, or merged or split cells inside of tables, you can make the data predictable and easy to navigate. To test and simplify the table structure, do the following:

1. Select the first cell of the table.
2. Press the Tab key repeatedly to make sure that the focus moves across then down.
3. If you need to merge or split cells to simplify the table, on the Table Tools Layout tab, in the Merge group, click Merge Cells or Split Cells as appropriate.

Avoid Using Blank Cells for Formatting

Using blank cells to format your table could mislead someone using a screen reader that there is nothing more in the table. You can fix this by deleting unnecessary blank cells or if your table is used specifically to layout content within your document, you can clear all table styles by doing the following:

1. Select the entire table.
2. On the Table Tools Design tab, in the Table Styles group, click the arrow next to the style gallery to expand the gallery of table styles.
3. On the menu below the gallery, click Clear.

Avoid Using Repeated Blank Characters

Extra spaces, tabs and empty paragraphs may be perceived as blanks by people using screen readers. Instead, use formatting, indenting, and styles to create whitespace.

1. Remove any existing whitespace around the paragraph.
2. Select the text then right-click and choose Paragraph.
3. Select values for Indentation and Spacing to create whitespace.