Converting MS Word 2010 Documents to PDF

This tip sheet will introduce you to the concepts needed to make your Word document accessible and how to convert that document into a PDF format.

Headings

Make sure to use the styles provided by Word to format your headings. This helps to ensure the readability and navigability of the heading.

- To stylize a heading go to the **Home Tab** -> **Styles Group** -> **Select a style**.
- Keyboard shortcuts:
    - Ctrl + Alt + 1 -> Heading 1
    - Ctrl + Alt + 2 -> Heading 2
    - Ctrl + Alt + 3 -> Heading 3

Graphics and Images

All images need to have ample white space between them and any text and to have an alternative text so that a visual impaired user can understand the image even when they can't see it.

- To add alt text to an image **Right Click the Image** -> **Select Format Picture** -> **Select Alt Text** -> **Enter a title and a description**.

Text

The accessibility rules for text are as follows:

- Text needs to be at least 12pt size regardless of the font chosen
- The text needs to be a non-fancy, sans-serif font such as Arial or Calibri

- Avoid using MS Word textboxes

Columns

Do not use the tab key to create columns. Use Word's built in functionality to make them for you.

- To create tabs go to **Page Layout Tab** -> **Page Setup Group** -> **Columns**

Hyperlinks

It is important that hyperlinks use meaningful text that is easy to understand. Avoid using links such as "Here" or "Click Here". To insert a hyperlink do one of the following:

- **Insert Tab** -> **Links Group** -> **Hyperlink** -> **Add in a description**
- Select the text to become a hyperlink and press **Ctrl + K** -> **Add in a description**

Lists

Don't try to use the tab key or small images to format a list. Instead use the built in functionality for creating lists:

- **Home Tab** -> **Paragraph Group** -> **Select the preferred List Type**

Make sure to use a numbered list for specifically ordered items otherwise use a bulleted list.

Tables

Tables are more complex structures that are good for relating information. There are a few more rules that you have to consider when making tables:

- Don't any tabbing or spacing to format the table. Use **Insert Tab** -> **Tables Group** -> **Table**
- If a table goes onto another page make sure that repeat header rows on the table is enabled
    - Click in the table then **Layout Tab** -> **Data Group** -> **Repeat Header Row**
- Each column and row in the table needs to have the same number of cells

Exporting to PDF (Word Only)

To export the accessible document to PDF select **File** -> **Save As** -> in file type dropdown select PDF.

Exporting to PDF (Acrobat 11 Plugin)

If you have acrobat pro installed on your computer you will likely have a MS Word plugin available for exporting your document to the PDF format.

Generally speaking you will get better results from exporting a PDF document form Word instead of using the Acrobat plugin. Sometimes, though, the plugin will yield better results and it is important to know about.

To export a PDF using the Acrobat Pro plugin go to:

- **Acrobat Tab** -> **Create PDF** -> **Choose Save Location**

Acrobat Plugin Settings

There are some plugin settings that might yield better results when exporting your document. It is important to experiment with them to find what works best for a given document.

To view the export preferences go to **Acrobat Tab** -> **Create Adobe PDF Group** -> **Preferences**

From the **Settings Tab**:

- Select the **Add Links**, **Create Bookmarks**, and **Enable Accessibility and Reflow** checkboxes.
- You can also try checking off the **Advanced Tagging** option

From the **Security Tab:**

- Make sure the **Require a password to open the document** is unchecked
- If you choose to restrict the editing make sure the **Enable text access for screen reader devices** is selected

From the **Bookmarks Tab**:

- Select the **Export Word Headings to Bookmarks** checkbox

The last and most versatile option is:

- Go to **Settings Tab** -> **Advanced Settings** -> Select the newest version from the **Compatibility** combo box