

Summary and Checklist: Microsoft PowerPoint Accessibility

Summary

In this course, you learned how to make accessible PowerPoint presentations. Many of the concepts are shared with other digital documents. Understanding the similarities and differences between accessibility for different document formats will ensure that you are skillfully able to produce accessible digital content.

Checklist

Styles and Appearance

Slide Design/Themes

- Built-in slide themes SHOULD be used.

Slide Layout, Slide Master, and Layout Masters

- Built-in slide layouts SHOULD be used.
- Using slide and layout masters in PowerPoint allows you to make styling changes that will affect multiple slides.

Slide Transitions and Animations

- Slide transitions SHOULD be avoided.
- Animations SHOULD be simple (as opposed to flashy or complex).

Color Contrast

- Small text and images of small text (under 18 point regular font or 14 point bold font) MUST have a contrast ratio of at least 4.5 to 1 with the background.
- Small text (under 18 point regular font or 14 point bold font) SHOULD have a contrast ratio of at least 7 to 1 with the background.
- Parts of graphics that are not words but still convey information MUST have a color contrast ratio of at least 3 to 1.
- Large text and images of large text (at or over 18 regular font or 14 point bold font) MUST have a contrast ratio of at least 3 to 1 with the background.
- Background patterns SHOULD be avoided.

Color to Convey Meaning

- If color is used to convey information, it MUST be accompanied by a text alternative.
- The text alternative for information conveyed by color MUST accurately convey the same information without color.
- If color is used to convey information, it MUST be accompanied by a visible alternative (text, image, graph, etc.) that does not depend on color for meaning.

Flashing and Blinking

- Flashing or blinking content MUST be avoided (unless it meets the specific WCAG permissible criteria).

Structural and Semantic Elements

Slide Title

- Each slide MUST have an accurate, informative title.
- The title of each slide SHOULD be unique.

Language

- The language of the presentation (and any language of parts, if present) MUST be specified.

Headers and Footers

- Headers and footers SHOULD be inserted in the Slide Master or Layout Masters using a new text box or an image.

Footnotes and Endnotes

- Footnotes are accessible in PowerPoint.

Columns

- Columns MUST be real, semantic columns and not created using the tab key.

Superscripts and Subscripts

- Superscripts and subscripts SHOULD be avoided (with some exceptions).

Slide Numbers

- You can choose to insert slide numbers as they may help with navigation. You can do so in the Ribbon in the Insert > Header & Footer section, or by editing the Slide Master.

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Text and Fonts

- You can use both serif and sans-serif fonts.
- Avoid using overly-decorative fonts.
- Set the font size to at least 18 point.
- Avoid using excessive capitalization.
- Do not rely on bold, italic, and underline as the only way to convey meaning.
- Avoid using excessive font styling.
- Avoid using strikethrough text.
- Use the word "Important" to highlight important words or phrases for screen reader users.
- Stick to plain text as much as possible and test with a screen reader if you need to use symbols.

Images and Other Graphics

Alt Text

- To add alt text, right-click an image and select Edit Alt Text.
- Images that convey content MUST have programmatically discernible alternative text.
- The alternative text for informative images MUST be meaningful (accurately conveying the purpose of the image, and the author's intent in a way that is useful to those who cannot see the image).
- Alternative text SHOULD NOT include words that identify the element as a graphic or image.
- The length of the alternative text for informative images SHOULD be concise (no more than about 150 characters).
- Images that do not convey content, are decorative, or are redundant to content that is already conveyed in text MUST be given alt text that identifies them as such.

Long Descriptions

- Complex images MUST be briefly described using alt text AND MUST have a more complete long description.
- The long description (or a link or button to access the long description) SHOULD be visible to sighted users.

Watermarks and Background Images

- Watermarks and background images SHOULD be avoided.

Text Boxes, Shapes, and Other Floating Objects

- Floating objects in PowerPoint are accessible (unlike in Word). You do not need to add alt text to text boxes, but you MUST add alt text to other non-text objects, including shapes and icons, images, graphs, charts, etc.

Series of Images

- A series of related images or shapes MUST be semantically grouped and marked with appropriate alt text and long description (if needed).

Graphs and Charts

- Graphs and charts MUST be clearly labeled.
- Graphs and charts MUST have alt text and a long description (if needed).
- Graphs and charts MUST follow color contrast guidelines for non-text contrast (3 to 1 minimum contrast ratio).

Links

Designate Links Correctly

- Links MUST be semantically designated as such.

Link Text

- The purpose of each link SHOULD be able to be determined from the link text alone.
- The link text SHOULD NOT repeat the word "link."
- The full URL SHOULD be included in the document (when appropriate).

Visually Distinguishable from Text

- Links MUST be visually distinguishable from surrounding text.

Links to Other Slides

- Linking from one slide to another SHOULD be avoided (with some exceptions).

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Tables

- Tables in PowerPoint SHOULD be avoided.
- Guidelines for Maximum Table Accessibility
 - **Use the Insert Table Tool** in the Ribbon, and do **not** use the Draw Table Tool.
 - **Create a title for your table**, which can be the slide title.
 - **Ensure that your table has real headers.**
 - Ensure that your table has **only one header row, one header column, or one of each.**
 - **Do not use nested tables, split cells, or merged cells.**
 - Provide **sufficient color contrast** for your table (text against background).
 - **Provide alt text (and a long description if needed).**

Linked and Embedded Files

- Linked files MUST follow the rules for links.
- Embedded files displayed as an icon MUST have alt text.

Multimedia

- Pre-recorded video MUST have synchronized captions.
- Pre-recorded multimedia (video plus audio) SHOULD have a text transcript.
- Pre-recorded media inserted as an object MUST have alt text.

Automatic Captions and Subtitles

- PowerPoint 365 for Windows and Mac and PowerPoint Online include a feature that provides real-time, automatic captions as you are giving a presentation (located in the Slide Show tab of the Ribbon).

Math and Equations

- Math in PowerPoint is not directly accessible (the Equation Editor should be generally avoided, unless the math is very simple and can be described with alt text).
- Accessible math options include using MathType or MathML Cloud.

Speaker Notes and Comments

- Both speaker notes and comments are accessible in PowerPoint. You don't need to take any extra steps to ensure accessibility.

Reading Order

- Verify the reading order by using the Tab key to tab through the presentation and ensure that the reading order is logical.

Saving and Exporting

- Save as PDF in Windows: Click File > Export. Click either Create Adobe PDF or Create PDF/XPS Document (if you don't have Adobe Acrobat). Then click the Create Adobe PDF button (or the Create PDF/XPS Document button).
- Save as PDF in Mac: PowerPoint for Mac does not allow you to save as a tagged PDF. However, you can upload your file to OneDrive and download a tagged copy via the online version of PowerPoint.
- Save as PDF in PowerPoint Online: Click File > Download As > Download as PDF. In the pop-up dialog, select Download. The file will automatically be created as a tagged PDF.