Accessibility and disability

- Web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that affect access to the Web, including:

  visual

  auditory

  physical

  speech

  cognitive

  neurological

We are now going to look at accessibility. Accessibility is really important and falls under user experience. So what is it?

- What is the web accessibility initiative?
- What kind of things can you do to make your site accessible?
- And how can you check that it's working?

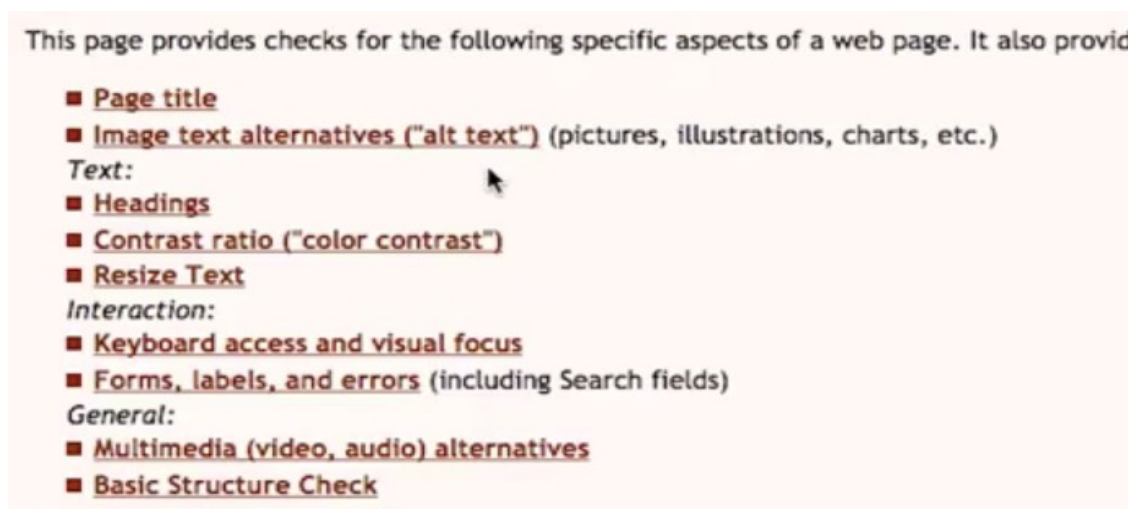As you'll see, web accessibility encompasses all disabilities that effect access to the web.

- Now this might include visual impairments. So, if someone isn't able to see content on the web in their browser, they might have it read to them instead through a screen reader.
- They might not be able to hear things particularly well, so they may need captions of some sort if there's multimedia content.
- They might have motor difficulties, physical difficulties that make it difficult to control input devices like a keyboard or a mouse. And so some kind of adaptation is required.
- They may have difficulty with speech. They may not be able to use speech interfaces.
- There may be cognitive or neurological difficulties that stop them from accessing the content in a particular way.

Thing about accessibility is, that designing for a good accessibility means you're being very inclusive and you're designing for everyone. So it's a better user experience all around.

This is the World Wide Web Consortium's Accessibility Initiative http://www.w3.org/WAI/
They have a huge resource on their website for getting started with web accessibility. It's addressed to people who use the web and how they can set up their browsers to the best way of viewing content.

And also, accessibility basics for people designing websites. There's plenty of information about it. They give you an introduction to accessibility. What factors you might need when you're designing a webpage. And they give you the guidelines, the web content accessibility guidelines for websites and web applications. They also provide a list of resources and tools. Things like how to evaluate your site to check for accessibility. A common form of making something accessible, is to use a screen reader or a text only browser for people who have any kind of visual impairments, you can get browsers that will turn that purely into text, and then you can have plugins that can read it aloud.

Using an extension called Textize, prints out the text only version for you, removes all formatting, so you're right down to the content without any modification. To take that a step further, you can then use an extension such as Chrome Vox, that if you enable it, will allow you to have that read to you.

This page provides checks for the following specific aspects of a web page. It also provid

- **Page title**
- **Image text alternatives ("alt text")** (pictures, illustrations, charts, etc.)
Text:
- **Headings**
- **Contrast ratio ("color contrast")**
- **Resize Text**
Interaction:
- **Keyboard access and visual focus**
- **Forms, labels, and errors** (including Search fields)
General:
- **Multimedia (video, audio) alternatives**
- **Basic Structure Check**

Looking at the Web Accessibility Initiative's easy checks, it's clear to see the kind of very simple practical things you can do to make sure your webpage is accessible. Always give your page a title. Make sure that if you've got an image, as we've said before, it has some kind of alt-text. An alternative text description. So that you describe, perhaps the contents of the picture. Make sure your headings are actually headings and they're not just different sized fonts. Make sure your contrast is good, so that you've got a good balance between light and dark. Light background, dark text, or vice versa. Make sure the text on your page can be resized, so that anyone who needs the text a little larger will be able to do that themselves. And make sure that there are alternatives to any multimedia you include, so if you have a video, make sure there are some captions on that video, some subtitles. And if you have audio, make sure you have some kind of description as well.

- Essentially, check through all of your site to make sure that it can be accessed in a number of ways. And you can do that by turning images on and off, by turning scripts on and off, just to see how well the page stands up on its own.