

Section 7 Action Summary

Section summary and checklist of the 5 action items

ONE-LINE SUMMARY OF THIS SECTION

Make links consistent with each other **and** visually different from non-clickable text (while using color-blind-friendly styling), so that people can tell what's actionable simply by looking at the interface and not have to sweep it with their mouse (or other pointing device) to find out.

BEST PRACTICE

01



A user-friendly way to style links is to:

- **Underline links that have surrounding text.**
- **Bold links that are standalone.** (This is if you're not using an underline.) Or use some other color independent styling — meaning, styling that you could see even if you were completely color-blind.
- **Make them some shade of blue.** We don't forget color, which helps non-color-blind users. Blue is the safest choice for a link color, but studies have shown that other colors work almost as well when done with consistency.

CATEGORY

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JANE SMITH

Example of link styling for standalone links and in-copy links.



Don't want to use underlining for your links? 3 alternatives to indicate a link without using underlining:

- **Strategy #1:** Use other text styling, like bold (or italics, font size, typeface, border).
 - Just remember whatever you choose you won't be able to use for anything other than links, or confusion will ensue.
- **Strategy #2:** Use a luminous link color PLUS some non-color styling (such as an underline) for "on hover", and another (such as a border) for "on focus".
 - Luminous colors are those that have a 3:1 or greater color contrast ratio with the color of the surrounding text (e.g. the body copy) PLUS a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 or greater with the background color (e.g. the color of the page or container).
 - 26 luminous colors from WCAG can be found at: [w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/working-examples/link-contrast](https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG22/working-examples/link-contrast)
 - This technique will allow the link styling to pass the WCAG accessibility guidelines, but for optimal accessibility, it's *not* the preferred technique since relative luminance is not particularly obvious to some people with colorblindness.
- **Strategy #3:** Use solitary placement (often with bolding or smaller all caps). Place the link away from other text so it's standalone (not part of a sentence or paragraph). Its placement, coupled with its other styling like bolding, will indicate that it's a link.

We underline our links

Title Here

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...use other styling
(**bold**, *italics*, font size,
typeface, border).

Title Here

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OR ...

...use **luminous links**
PLUS an underline /
non-color styling on
hover and focus.

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...use placement
(often with **bolding**
or **SMALLER ALL CAPS**) for
standalone links.

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**BEST
PRACTICE**
03

- ☐ **Pick your link styling and stick to it:** Whichever appearance you choose for links, apply that same treatment consistently throughout the digital product.

**BEST
PRACTICE**
04

- ☐ **Reserve three things for links only, whether you choose to use them for your links or not:**

- (1) underlining,
- (2) blue text, and
- (3) underlining + blue text.

Any non-clickable elements that use one of these will look like a link, and that would be a misuse of a link signifier.

**BEST
PRACTICE**
05

- ☐ **Reserve a chosen color for all clickable/tappable elements, and avoid using that color for any non-clickable elements.**

Reserve underlining for links

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Reserve a chosen color for all clickable/tappable elements

Rice Krispies Treats

Save Print Share

Recipe By: Kellogg's Nutrition Facts

INGREDIENTS

- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 package (10 oz) marshmallows
- 6 cups Rice Krispies cereal

Buy Ingredients Online

DIRECTIONS

Watch how to make this recipe

Rice Krispies Treats

Save Print Share

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INGREDIENTS

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Buy Ingredients Online

DIRECTIONS

Watch how to make this recipe

Tip: Be cautious of using blue for non-clickable elements

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