# ARIA Cheat Sheet - Accessible Rich Internet Applications

ARIA stands for Accessible Rich Internet Applications. It is a set of attributes that improve accessibility for users who rely on assistive technologies like screen readers.

## What does aria-label do?

aria-label provides an accessible name for an element when there is no visible text label or when the visible text is not descriptive enough. Screen readers read this label aloud, so users know what the element does.

## Why is it important?

Some elements (like icons, buttons with only an image, or custom components) do not have meaningful text by default. Without aria-label, a screen reader might announce something generic like 'button' or 'link,' which is confusing. Adding aria-label='Close menu' makes it clear: the button closes the menu.

## Example

```
<!-- Without aria-label -->
<button>
  <svg><!-- close icon --></svg>
</button>
<!-- Screen reader says: 'button' (not helpful) -->


<!-- With aria-label -->
<button aria-label='Close menu'>
  <svg><!-- close icon --></svg>
</button>
<!-- Screen reader says: 'Close menu button' -->
```

## When to use aria-label

- On icon-only buttons (e.g., hamburger menu, close button).

- On interactive elements where the visible text is missing or unclear.

- Avoid using it if the element already has a clear text label (do not duplicate).

## Common ARIA Attributes

| Attribute | Purpose | Example |
|---|---|---|
| aria-label | Accessible name | <button aria-label='Close'>...</button> |
| aria-labelledby | Reference label | <div aria-labelledby='title'>...</div> |
| aria-describedby | Extra description | <input aria-describedby='hint' /> |
| aria-hidden | Hide from screen reader | <span aria-hidden='true'>*</span> |

| aria-live | Announce updates | <div aria-live='polite'>...</div> |
| --- | --- | --- |
| aria-expanded | Expanded state | <button aria-expanded='false'>...</button> |
| aria-checked | Checkbox state | <div role='checkbox' aria-checked='true'></d |
| aria-current | Current item | <a aria-current='page'>Home</a> |
| aria-disabled | Disabled state | <button aria-disabled='true'>Submit</button> |