

the REVOLUTION *is* INCLUSION

WEB ACCESSIBILITY & ADA COMPLIANCE
(According to Kris Rivenburgh)

What is ADA Compliance?

ADA website compliance essentially comes down to making your website conformant with the **WCAG 2.1 AA technical standards**.

TRANSLATION:

You have a to-do checklist of 50 accessibility things to account for on your website, mobile app, etc. to be more or less practically compliant with the ADA (i.e., you shouldn't receive a demand letter / lawsuit if you do these things).

But, that's not the Law.

There actually is no law for private entities in the U.S.
that mandates web accessibility

The law that primarily governs accessibility in the U.S. is the **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)**. The gist of the ADA is if you don't make things accessible, then you're discriminating against those with disabilities.

TRANSLATION:

Make it so that our websites **provide for meaningful access and effective communication for everyone**, including persons with disabilities, so they can enjoy the “full and equal” use of your website; they can access content, navigate your website successfully, engage with different elements, etc.

So what are the guidelines?

Let's talk about **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines** (WCAG)

There are different versions (1.0, 2.0, 2.1) and conformance levels (A, AA, AAA) for WCAG but the two most important ones are **WCAG 2.0 AA** and **WCAG 2.1 AA**

TRANSLATION:

Think of these as success criteria as bullet points or things to do to make your website more accessible.

2.0 is the classic standard and 2.1 is the current standard. 2.0 was published in 2008 so it's missing some key mobile accessibility issues. It's helpful to know that 2.1 AA includes all of 2.0 AA.

The Beginner's Guide to ADA

The condensed version of WCAG 2.0 to get us started
(Drum roll please...)

Section 1: Alternatives

- ❑ **Alt text (1.1.1):** All images and non-text content needs alt text (there are exceptions)
- ❑ **Video & Audio alternatives (1.2.1):** All video-only and audio-only content has a text transcript. Transcripts are clearly labeled and linked below the media.
- ❑ **Closed captioning (1.2.2):** All video with sound contains accurate closed captioning.
- ❑ **Audio description (1.2.3):** For any video, add an alternative video that includes an audio description of information not presented in the original video's soundtrack (exceptions) or include a text .
- ❑ **Live captions (1.2.4):** Any live video presentations must have closed captions.
- ❑ **Audio description (1.2.5):** An audio description is optional under 1.2.3 level A but not in 1.2.5 AA.

Section 2: Presentation

- ❑ **Website structure (1.3.1):** Use proper markup techniques to structure your website's content (e.g. use correct heading tags and HTML for ordered and unordered lists)
- ❑ **Meaningful order (1.3.2):** Present content in a meaningful order and sequence so that it reads properly.
- ❑ **Sensory characteristics (1.3.3):** When providing detailed instructions, make it so they aren't reliant on a single sensory ability.
- ❑ **Use of color (1.4.1):** Do not rely on color alone to convey information.
- ❑ **Audio control (1.4.2):** Any audio must be able to be paused, stopped, or muted.
- ❑ **Color contrast (1.4.3):** There must be a color contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 between all text and background.
- ❑ **Text resize (1.4.4):** Text must be able to be resized up to 200% without negatively affecting the ability to read content or use functions.
- ❑ **Images of text (1.4.5):** Do not use images of text unless necessary (e.g. logo).

Section 3: User Control

- ❑ **Keyboard only (2.1.1):** All content and functions on a website must be accessible by keyboard only (i.e. no mouse).
- ❑ **No keyboard trap (2.1.2):** Keyboard-only users must never get stuck on any part of the website; they must be able to navigate forwards and backwards.
- ❑ **Adjustable time (2.2.1):** If there any time limits on a website, users have the ability to turn it off, adjust it, extend it.
- ❑ **Pause, stop, hide (2.2.2):** If there is content that blinks, scrolls, moves, users must have the ability to pause, stop, or hide it.
- ❑ **Three flashes or below (2.3.1):** Web pages do not contain anything that flashes more than three times in any one second period.
- ❑ **Skip navigation link (2.4.1):** A “Skip to Content” or “Skip Navigation” link allows users to bypass the heading and go straight to the main content.

Section 4: Understandable

- ❑ **Page titles (2.4.2):** Each page of a website needs to have a unique and descriptive page title.
- ❑ **Focus order (2.4.3):** Users must be able to navigate through a website in a logical sequential order that preserves meaning.
- ❑ **Link anchor text (2.4.4):** The purpose of each link should be clear based on its anchor text (e.g. don't use "click here")
- ❑ **Multiple ways (2.4.5):** There are multiple ways to access different pages/information on a website (e.g. search bar, nav menus, sitemap, breadcrumbs, helpful links after content).
- ❑ **Descriptive headings and labels (2.4.6):** Headings and programmatic labels must be clear and descriptive. They do not need to be lengthy.
- ❑ **Focus indicator (2.4.7):** Any "user interface control" that receives focus from a keyboard user should indicate that focus on the current selected element (e.g. add a visible border around a text link).
- ❑ **Website language (3.1.1):** Set the language for your website.
- ❑ **Language changes (3.1.2):** Indicate any language changes for an entire page or within the content.

Section 5: Predictability

- ❑ **No focus change (3.2.1):** Nothing changes merely because an item receives focus; a user must actively choose to activate an item (e.g. hit enter to submit) before a change takes place.
- ❑ **No input change (3.2.2):** Nothing changes just because information is inputted into a field (e.g. form doesn't auto submit once all fields are filled out).
- ❑ **Consistent navigation (3.2.3):** Keep navigation layout consistent throughout all pages of the website (e.g. same links in the same order).
- ❑ **Consistent identification (3.2.4):** Components that have the same function within a website are identified consistently (but not necessarily identically) (e.g. two check marks can indicate two different things as long as their function is different — one indicates “approved” on one page but “included” on another).
- ❑ **Error identification (3.3.1):** Make any form errors easy to identify, understand, and correct.
- ❑ **Form labels and instructions (3.3.2):** Programmatically label all form or input fields so that a user knows what input and what format is expected.

Section 5: Predictability (Continued)

- ❑ **Error suggestions (3.3.3):** If an input error is automatically detected, then suggestions for correcting the error should be provided.
- ❑ **Error prevention on important forms (3.3.4):** For pages that create legal commitments or financial transactions or any other important data submissions, one of the following is true: 1) submissions are reversible, 2) the user has an opportunity to correct errors, and 3) confirmation is available that allows an opportunity to review and correct before submission.
- ❑ **Parsing (4.1.1):** Make sure HTML code is clean and free of errors, particularly missing bracket closes. Also, make sure all HTML elements are properly nested.
- ❑ **Name, role, value (4.1.2):** For all user interface components (including forms, links, components generated by scripts), the name, role, and value should all be able to be programmatically determined; make sure components are compatible with assistive technology.

That's A Lot To Remember...

But, just because our website doesn't fully meet a WCAG success criterion doesn't mean we're in violation of the ADA

Until the DOJ adopts specific technical requirements for web accessibility in a final rule, if you're subject to the ADA, **you have more flexibility in determining how to make your website compliant** with the ADA's general requirements of nondiscrimination and effective communication.

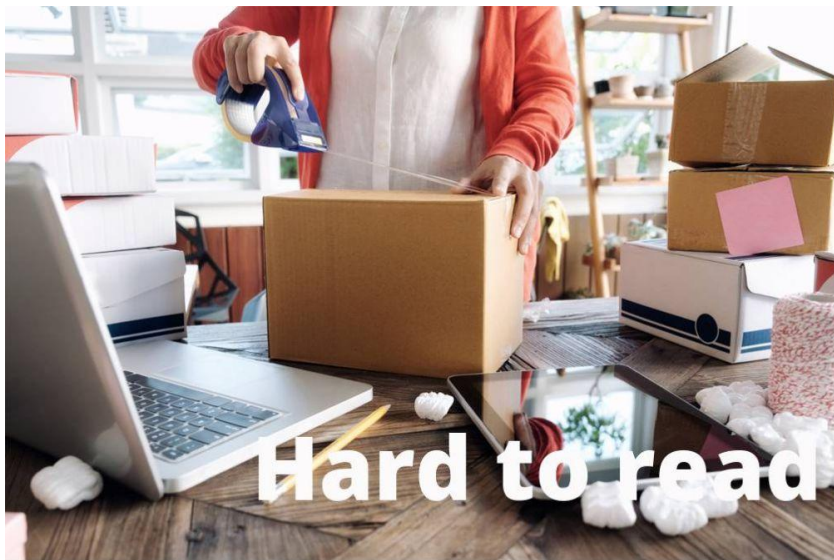
TRANSLATION:

Some of these 50 to-dos are much more critical than others (both in terms of accessibility and legal risk).

Two big accessibility items in lawsuits are **1. missing alt text** and **2. missing labels**.

Let's Give It A Try

Proper Contrast Ratio

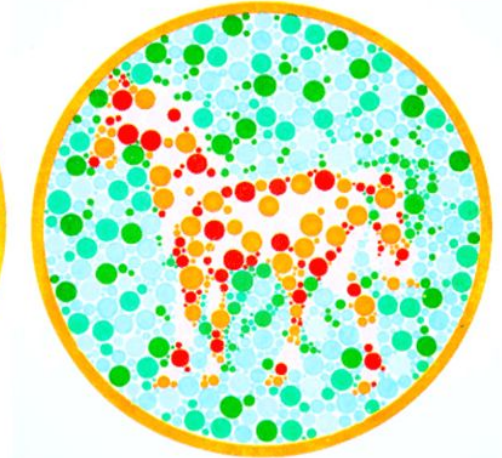
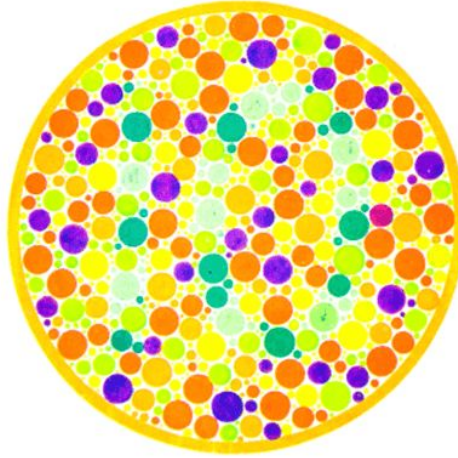
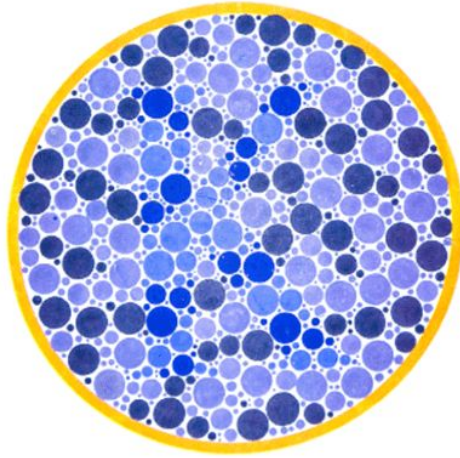


Instead of this



Do this

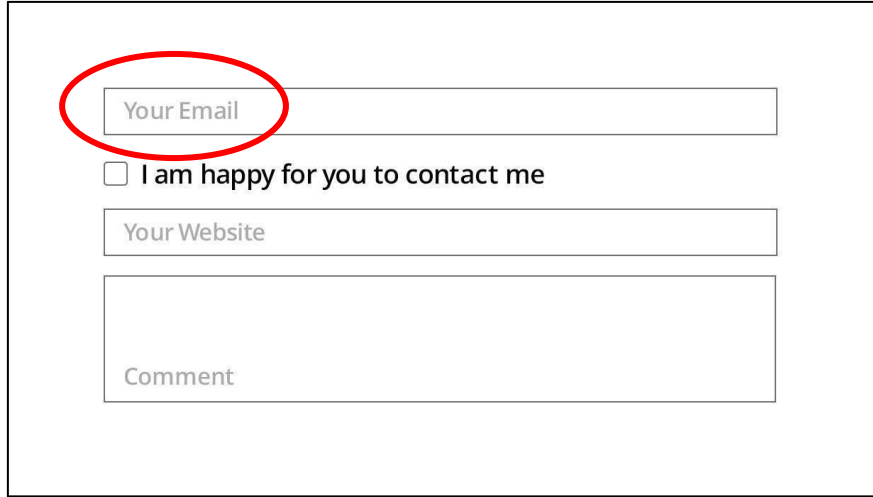
Don't Rely On Color



|

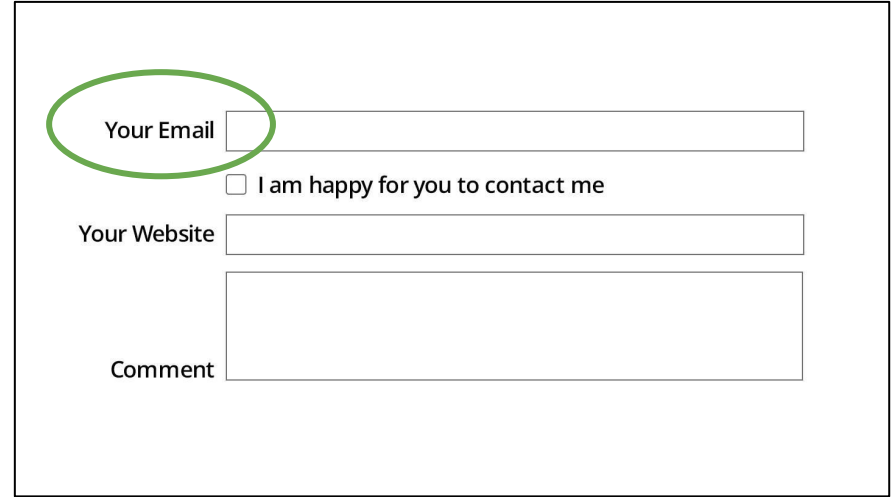
None of these images are accessible to those who are colorblind

Label Your Forms Properly



A form layout where labels are placed inside the input fields. The first field is labeled "Your Email" inside the box. Below it is a checkbox labeled "I am happy for you to contact me". The second field is labeled "Your Website" inside the box. The third field is labeled "Comment" inside the box. A red oval highlights the "Your Email" label inside the first input field.

Instead of this





A form layout where labels are placed outside the input fields. The first field is labeled "Your Email" to the left of the box. Below it is a checkbox labeled "I am happy for you to contact me". The second field is labeled "Your Website" to the left of the box. The third field is labeled "Comment" to the left of the box. A green oval highlights the "Your Email" label outside the first input field.

Do this

Provide Feedback for Errors and Omissions


Please correct the following errors:

1.  [Email address is invalid](#)
2.  [A comment is required](#)


Add a comment

Required fields are in red and marked with an *

Name

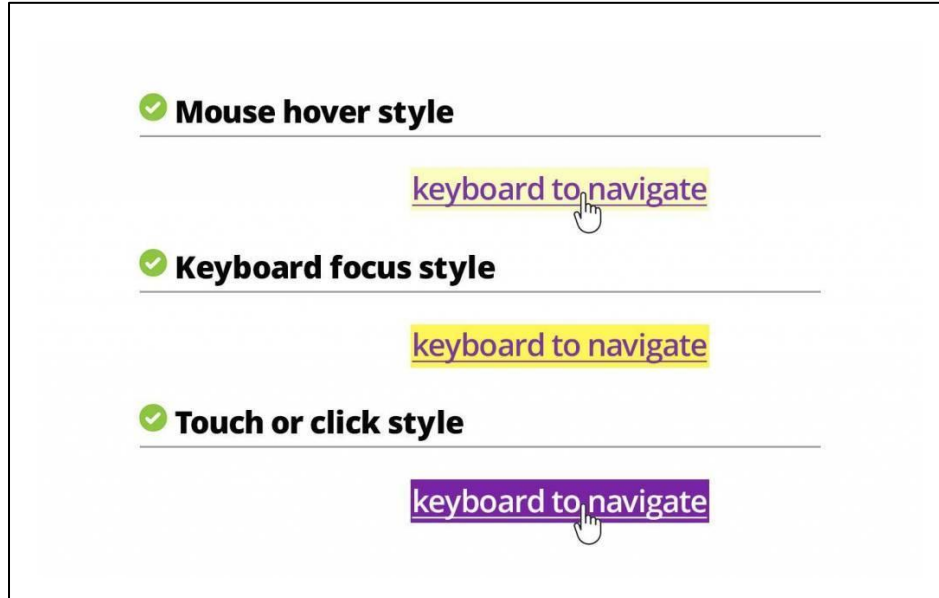
 Email *

Website

 Comment *

Alert users to errors with text messaging, symbols, and colors—but not colors alone.

No Mouse, No Problem



For keyboard navigation to be accessible, links must be indicated using color and design variation for the activation state: **mouse over, keyboard focus style, and touch or click style.**

Consistent Navigation



Users with cognitive or neurological challenges depend on these consistent design elements to avoid becoming lost or frustrated.

Simple Headings and Spacing

❌ Little spacing and unclear relationship

Main heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.

Sub heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.

Sub heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.



Instead of this

✅ More spacing and clearer relationship

Main heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.

Sub heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.

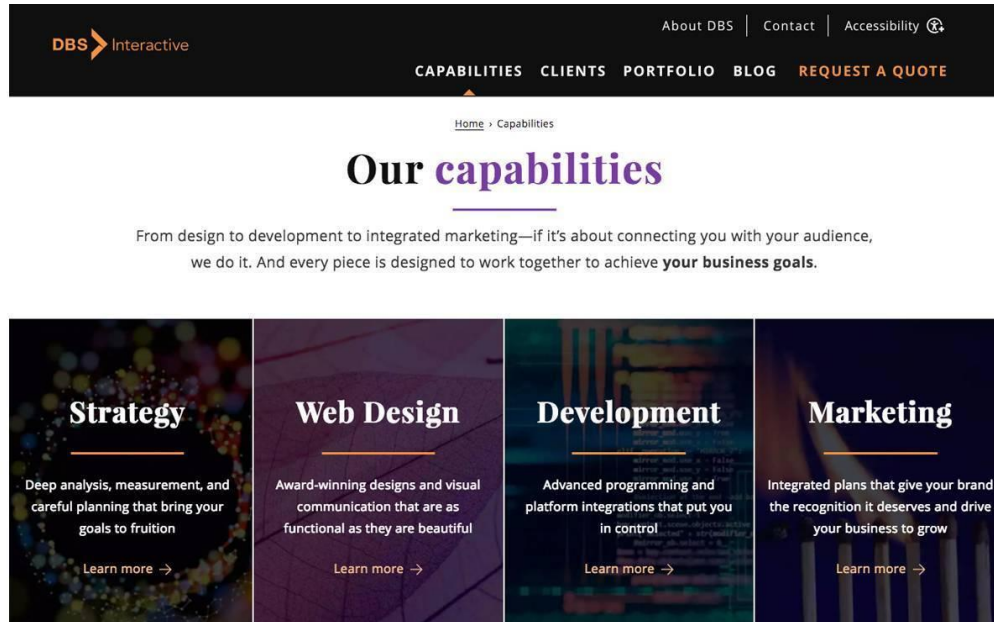
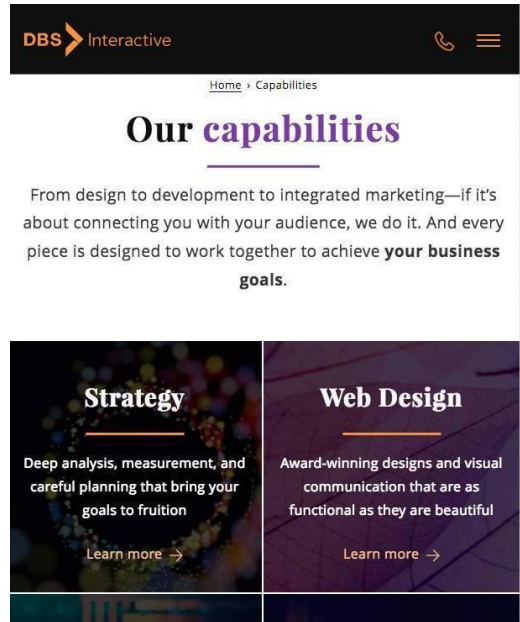
Sub heading

Horizontal lines representing text content.



Do this

Design for Various Devices, Views, and Screens



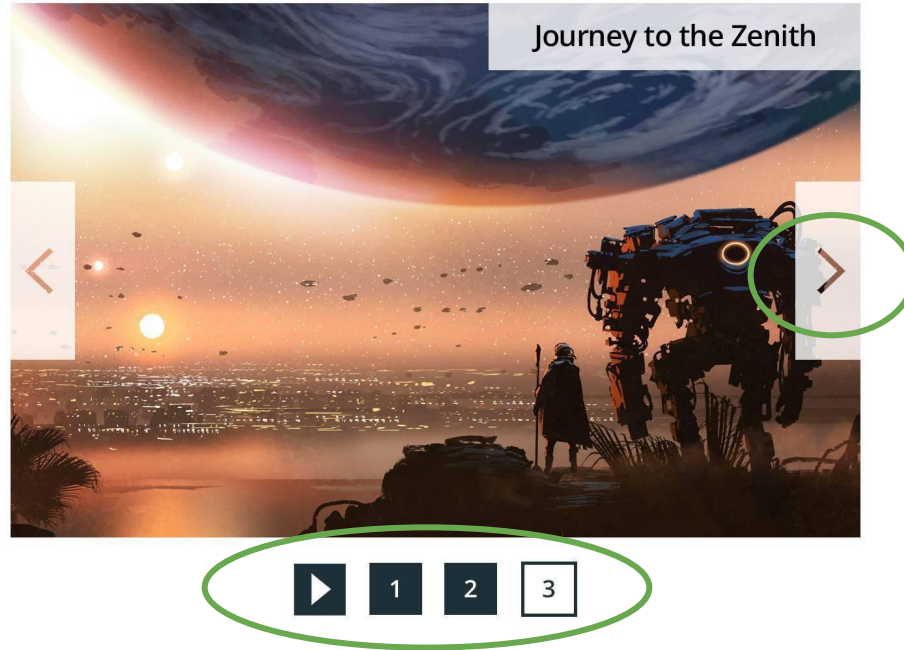
Always at least create a Mobile and Desktop version

Offer Alternatives for Consuming Media



Creating content in different forms offers users with various disabilities equal access to information.

Offer Alternatives for Consuming Media



Users with cognitive limitations, however, may not comprehend your information quickly enough before the view changes or your video ends.

The Ultimate Goal

Try your best to meet as many of the WCAG success criteria as best you can.

Also, ask yourself the following two questions:

1. What is the primary purpose of my website?
2. What are the common paths that visitors take once they're on my website?

TRANSLATION:

You want to make absolutely sure both the primary purpose and common paths are clear of any barriers that could potentially prevent access or cause frustration.

Real accessibility takes genuine time and manual effort.

There are no quick solutions or easy workarounds, so If it seems like you're being a sold an instant fix to website accessibility, you're on the wrong path.

Additional Resources

ADA Compliance and Web Accessibility is a very legal and technical journey but it ultimately benefits everyone collectively. These links should help ...

To read more about Do's and Don'ts of web accessibility:

<https://www.dbswebsite.com/blog/ada-compliance-starts-with-accessible-design/>

To explore website examples that are user-inclusive:

<https://inviga.com/blog/web-accessibility-examples-5-sites-doing-it-right>

To learn more about the information from this presentation:

<https://medium.com/@krisrivenburgh/the-ada-checklist-website-compliance-guidelines-for-2019-in-plain-english-123c1d58fad9>

To take a deeper dive and read the complete guides to WCAG 2.0AA & 2.1AA:

[Sign up free at Accessible.org](#)