

# Web Design Best Practices Checklist

## Background Information

- URL:
- Audience:
- Subject:
- Developer:

## Page Layout

1. Appealing to target audience
2. Consistent site header/logo
3. Consistent navigation area
4. Informative page title that includes the company/organization/site name
5. Page footer area — copyright, last update, contact e-mail address
6. Good use of basic design principles: repetition, contrast, proximity, and alignment
7. Displays without horizontal scrolling at 1024x768 and higher resolutions
8. Balance of text/graphics/white space on page
9. Good contrast between text and background
10. Repetitive information (header/logo and navigation) occupies no more than one-third of the browser window at 1024x768 resolution
11. Home page has compelling, interesting information above the fold (before scrolling down) at 1024x768
12. Home page downloads within 10 seconds on dial-up connection

## Navigation

1. Main navigation links are clearly and consistently labeled
2. Navigation is easy to use for target audience
3. When the main navigation uses images and/or multimedia, the page footer area contains plain-text hyperlinks (for accessibility)
4. Navigation is structured in an unordered list (accessibility)
5. All navigation hyperlinks work

## Content Presentation

1. Common fonts such as Arial or Times New Roman are used
2. Techniques of writing for the Web are used: headings, bullet points, short sentences in short paragraphs, use of white space, etc.
3. Fonts, font sizes, and font colors are used consistently
4. Content provides meaningful, useful information
5. Content is organized in a consistent manner
6. Information is easy to find (minimal clicks)
7. Timeliness: date of the last revision and/or copyright date is fairly recent
8. Content does not include outdated material
9. Content is free of typographical and grammatical errors
10. Avoids the use of "Click here" when writing text for hyperlinks
11. If standard link colors are not used, hyperlinks use a consistent set of colors to indicate visited/nonvisited status
12. If graphics and/or media are used to convey meaning, the alternate text equivalent to content is provided (accessibility)

## **Color and Graphics**

1. Use of different colors in page background/text is limited to a maximum of three or four colors plus neutrals
2. Color is used consistently
3. Background and text colors have sufficient contrast
4. Color is not used alone to convey meaning (accessibility)
5. Use of color and graphics enhances rather than detracts from the site
6. Graphics are optimized and do not significantly slow download
7. Each graphic serves a clear purpose
8. Image tags use the alt attribute to configure alternate text to display if the browser does not support images (accessibility)
9. Animated images do not distract from the site and do not endlessly repeat

## **Multimedia**

1. Each audio/video/Flash file serves a clear purpose
2. The audio/video/Flash files enhance rather than detract from the site
3. Captions or transcripts are provided for each audio or video file used (accessibility)
4. File size is indicated for audio or video file downloads
5. Hyperlinks to downloads for media plug-ins are provided

## **Functionality**

1. All internal hyperlinks work
2. All external hyperlinks work
3. All forms function as expected
4. No JavaScript errors are generated

## **Browser Compatibility**

1. Displays on current versions of Internet Explorer
2. Displays on current versions of Firefox
3. Displays on current versions of Google Chrome
4. Displays on current versions of Safari (both Mac and Windows)
5. Displays on current versions of Opera
6. Displays on mobile devices (including tablets and smartphones)

## **Accessibility**

1. When the main navigation consists of images and/or multimedia, the page footer area contains text hyperlinks
2. Color is not used alone to convey meaning
3. Image tags use the alt attribute to configure alternate text replacement
4. Captions or transcripts are provided for each audio or video file used
5. Attributes designed to improve accessibility, such as alt and title, are used where appropriate
6. To assist screen readers, the spoken language of the page is indicated with the html element's lang attribute