Accessibility Promotes Usability

Sufficient Contrast

Provide sufficient contrast between foreground and background

Foreground text needs to have sufficient contrast with background colors. This includes text on images, background gradients, buttons, and other elements. This does not apply for logos, or incidental text, such as text that happens to be in a photograph. The links below provide more information on the minimum contrast ratio as required by the WCAG and how to check contrast. "Contrast ratio" is a short version of the more technically correct term "luminance contrast ratio".

Example: Contrast ratio

✖ Insufficient	✔ Sufficient
Some people cannot read text if there is not sufficient contrast between the text and background. For others, bright colors (high luminance) are not readable; they need low luminance.	Some people cannot read text if there is not sufficient contrast between the text and background. For others, bright colors (high luminance) are not readable; they need low luminance.

Interactive Elements

Ensure that interactive elements are easy to identify

Provide distinct styles for interactive elements, such as links and buttons, to make them easy to identify. For example, change the appearance of links on mouse hover, keyboard focus, and touch-screen activation. Ensure that styles and naming for interactive elements are used consistently throughout the website.

Example: Unique styles for different link states

✔ Style links to stand out from text

Some people can't use a mouse and use only a keyboard to navigate through web pages.

It is important that users can reach all interactive elements using the keyboard, and that it is clear which element has focus.

Visible keyboard focus could be a border or highlight that moves as you tab through the web page.

✔ Mouse hover style

keyboard to navigate

✔ Keyboard focus style

keyboard to navigate

✔ Touch or click style

keyboard to navigate

Form Labels

Ensure that form elements include clearly associated labels

Ensure that all fields have a descriptive label adjacent to the field. For left-to-right languages, labels are usually positioned to the left or above the field, except for checkboxes and radio buttons where they are usually to the right. Avoid having too much space between labels and fields.

✔ **Example: Labels and input fields associated by proximity**

Add a comment

Your E-mail [   ]

☐ I am happy for you to contact me

Your Website [   ]

Comment [   ]

Headings & Spacing

Use headings and spacing to group related content

Use whitespace and proximity to make relationships between content more apparent. Style headings to group content, reduce clutter, and make it easier to scan and understand.

Example: Spacing highlights relationship between content

✖ Little spacing and unclear relationship

Main heading

Sub heading

Sub heading

✔ More spacing and clearer relationship

Main heading
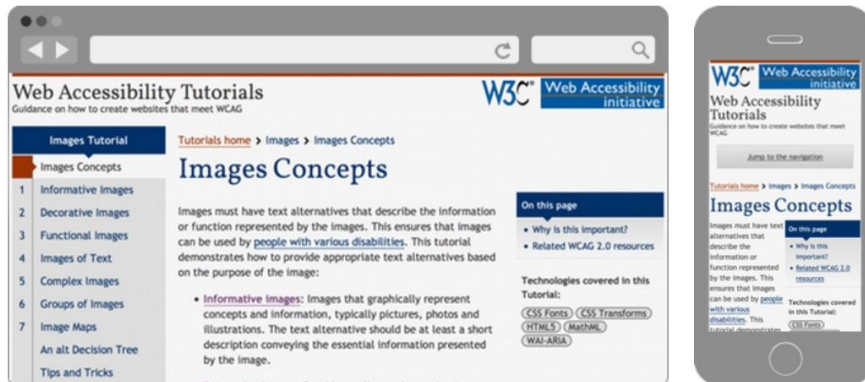
Sub heading

Sub heading

Multiple Viewports

Create designs for different viewport sizes

Consider how page information is presented in different sized viewports, such as mobile phones or zoomed browser windows. Position and presentation of main elements, such as header and navigation can be changed to make best use of the space. Ensure that text size and line width are set to maximize readability and legibility.

Example: Content and navigation adapt to smaller mobile screen

Display in a wide window with small text uses multiple columns for primary content, visible navigation options, and visible secondary information.

Headings Provide Meaning

Use headings to convey meaning and structure

Use short headings to group related paragraphs and clearly describe the sections. Good headings provide an outline of the content.

Example: Using headings to organize content

✖ Lack of headings

Headings and Subheadings

HTML elements provide information on structural hierarchy of a document. Using elements correctly will help convey additional meaning to assistive technology. In many cases, doing so will also make your document easier to edit.

For documents longer than three or four paragraphs, headings and subheadings are important for usability and accessibility. They help readers to determine the overall outline of a document and to navigate to specific information of interest.

Headings are classified into levels from one to six. The highest level is 'Level 1' and often corresponds to the title of the page or major document section. Sub-headers proceed through increasing header levels. The lower the number, the smaller and more detailed a section.

Visual readers identify headers by scanning pages for text of a larger size or a different style. Assistive technology users are not able to see these visual changes, so changing the style is not a sufficient cue.

Instead, the headings must be semantically "tagged" so that assistive technology can identify headings. This can be presented to the user as a navigation aid.

This makes adding headings one of the most important tools for a screen reader user so that he or she can learn what is on the page. Note that tagging usually triggers a formatting change visually, which can be adjusted in more

[+] View inline example

✔ Using headings and subheadings

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Meaning vs. Formatting

[+] View inline example

Clear Content

Example: Making content readable and understandable

✖ Unnecessarily complex

CPP: In the event of a vehicular collision, a company assigned representative will seek to ascertain the extent and cause of damages to property belonging to all parties involved. Once our representative obtains information that allows us to understand the causality, we may or may not assign appropriate monetary compensation. The resulting decision may occasion one of the following options: the claim is not approved and is assigned a rejected status, the status of the claim is ambiguous and will require additional information before further processing can occur, the claim is partially approved and reduced payment is assigned and issued, or claim is fully approved and total claim payment is assigned and issued.

✔ Easier to understand

Claims Processing Procedure (CPP): If you have a car accident, our agent will investigate. Findings will determine any claim payment. This could result in:

- Approved claim - full payment
- Partially approved claim - reduced payment
- Undetermined claim - more information needed
- Rejected claim - no payment

Alt Tags For Images

Include alternative text for images

Ensure that alternative text for images is added to all informational and functional images. Use empty alternative text, `alt=""` for decorative images, or include them in the CSS instead. Text alternatives are usually provided by those responsible for written content.

More Information
- **WCAG**
  - Non-text Content 1.1.1 (Understanding 1.1.1)
- **Tutorial**
  - Images
- **User Story**
  - Describes the value of text alternatives to a blind user

Identify Language

Identify page language and language changes

Indicate the primary language of every page by using the `lang` attribute in the `html` tag, for example `<html lang="en">`. Use the `lang` attribute on specific elements when the language of the element differs from the rest of the page.

More Information

- **WCAG**
  - Language of Page 3.1.1 (Understanding 3.1.1)
  - Language of Parts 3.1.2 (Understanding 3.1.2)
- **How To**
  - Declaring language in HTML

References:

https://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/accessibility-principles/

https://www.w3.org/WAI/test-evaluate/preliminary/#title

https://www.w3.org/WAI/tips/

https://www.w3.org/WAI/tips/writing/

https://www.w3.org/WAI/tips/developing/

https://www.w3.org/WAI/tips/developing/