

Making Microsoft Word Documents Accessible

(Microsoft Word 2016)

Microsoft word is the easiest platform to create accessible documents for many reasons, including:

- Most widely used word processor on the market.
- Most individuals (with and without disabilities) are familiar with its layout.
- Word can be used to create PDF documents or HTML files for websites.

Basic Principles

- Use simple language.
- Ensure that font size is sufficiently large (generally a minimum of 11 points).
- Provide sufficient contrast between text colors and background colors.
- Do not use color as the ONLY way to convey content.
- Be careful with the use of watermarks. They can impact readability and create low contrast. Not recommended for use.
- Provide a table of contents for long documents – Created through Word to allow links to the material.

Structure

- Use the Styles Tool Bar
 - Styles can be used to easily modify and format a document to make it accessible.
 - This allows assistive technology (JAWS) to find different parts of a document and verbally relay this information to the user.
 - Documents should be structured with custom titles, subtitles, headings (very important), lists, etc.
- Utilizing Styles.
 - Select the text.
 - Click on the style.
 - Example: Heading 1.
- Define the space, by using the Paragraph tab versus using the Tab bar and space bar on the keyboard.



Alternative (Alt) Text for Images

- Alternative Text provides Written substitutes for images which allows screen readers to disclose the information to the user.
 1. Right-Click on an image and select **Format Picture**.
 2. Select **Size & Properties**.
 3. Click on **Alt Text**.
 4. Enter concise, illustrative text into the description.
 5. Repeat 1 – 4 for all pictures, images, graphics, etc.



Format Picture

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▶ Text Box

◀ Alt Text

Title ⓘ

Description

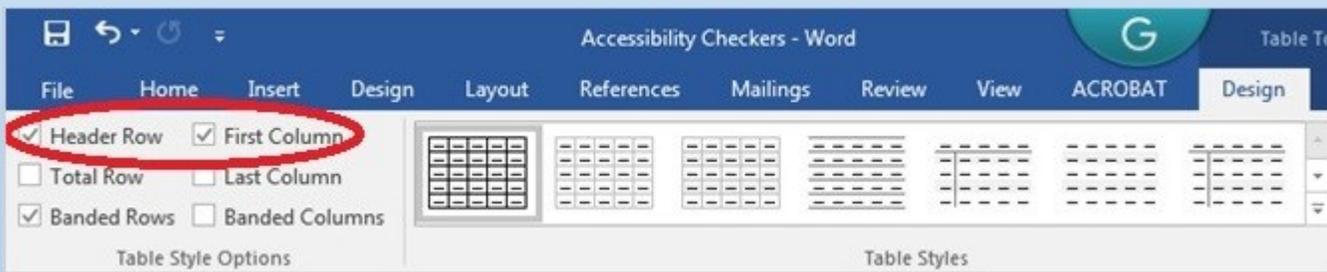
Lee Hall at the University of Mary Washington.

Data Tables

- Utilize the Tables Ribbon instead of using tabs and spaces.
 - Reduces issues with assistive technology when users navigate and access data presented

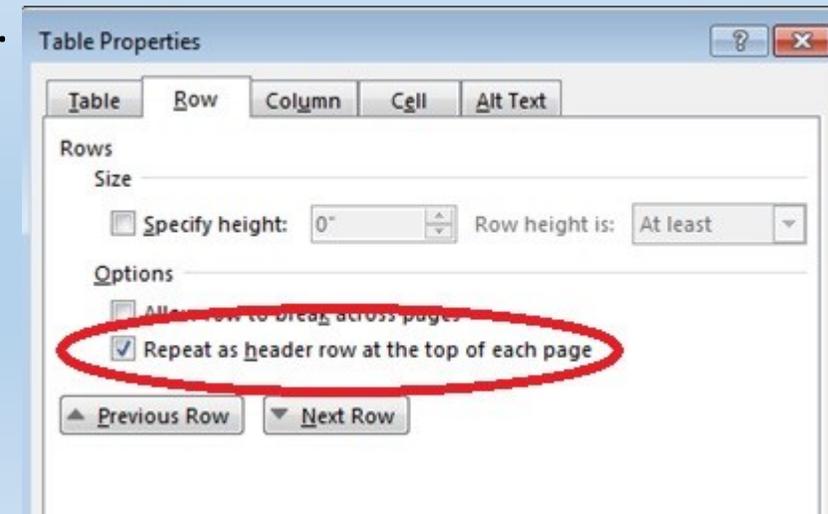
Designing a Table.

1. Verify under the Design Tab that the following is checked:
 1. Header Row
 2. First Column



Formatting a Table.

1. Right-click the table > Select **Table Properties**.
2. Select the Row tab > Unclick “Allow row to break across pages, and click **Repeat as header row at the top of each page**”.
3. Click **OK**.



Lists

- Create lists using the built in bullets and numbering list options, DO NOT simply use the tab key.
- Utilize both ordered (numbered) and unordered (bullet) lists.
- Lists ensure navigation of documents with screen readers as lists are identified as lists instead of text.

Assistive Technology

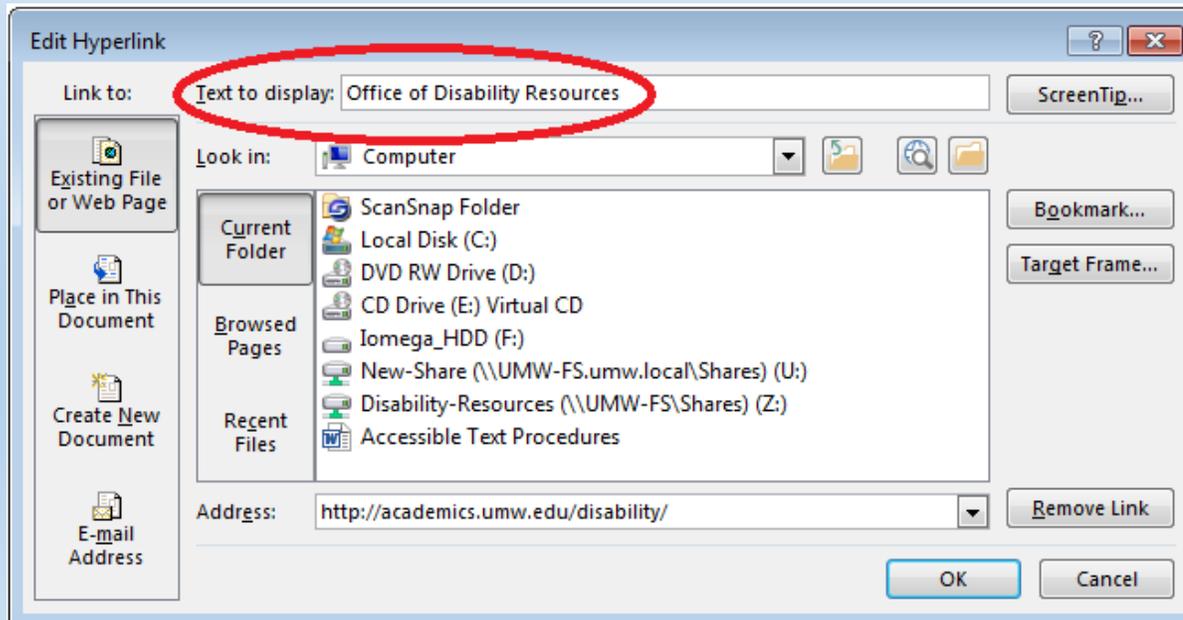
1. Smart Pens
2. Audio Recorders
3. FM Systems
4. Accessible Keyboards

Hyperlinks

- Rename links to allow screen readers to provide users with useful information about the link.
 - Use simple, meaningful descriptions.
 - 2015 Quick Facts Data for incoming Freshman and Transfer students.
 - Avoid vague links descriptions.
 - Click here, read more, etc.

- Creating Hyperlinks

- Highlight text.
- Right-click and select **Hyperlink**.
- Enter the new name in the **Text to Display** field.
- Enter the address of the link in the **Address** field.
- Click **OK**.

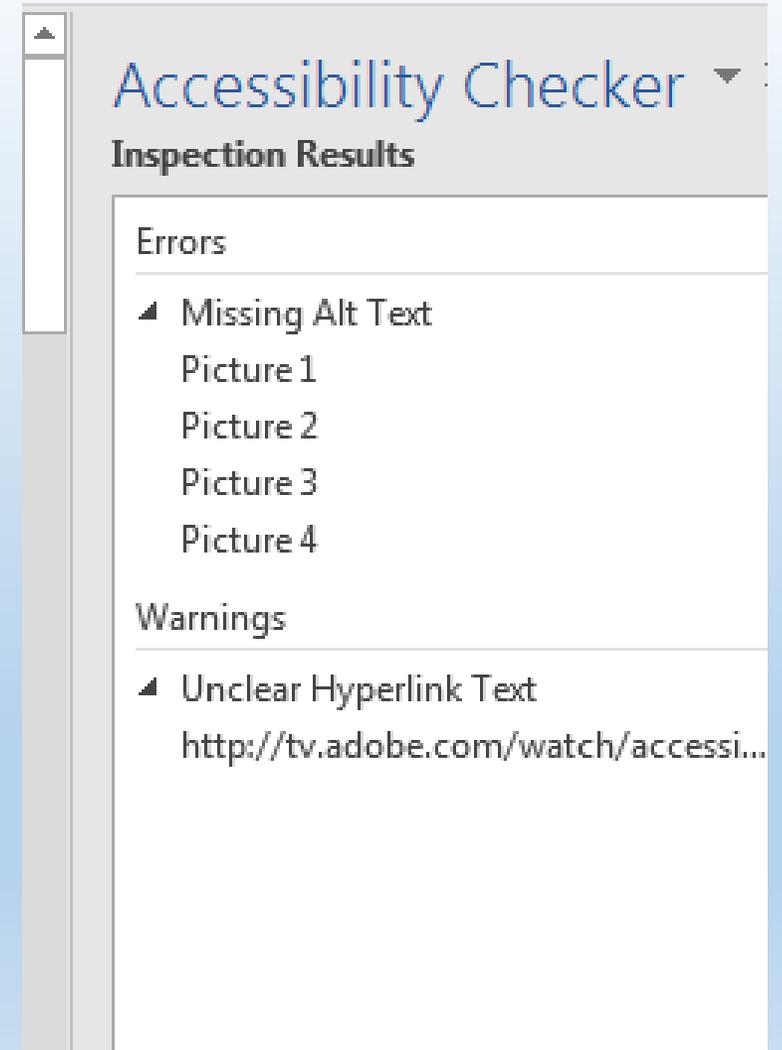
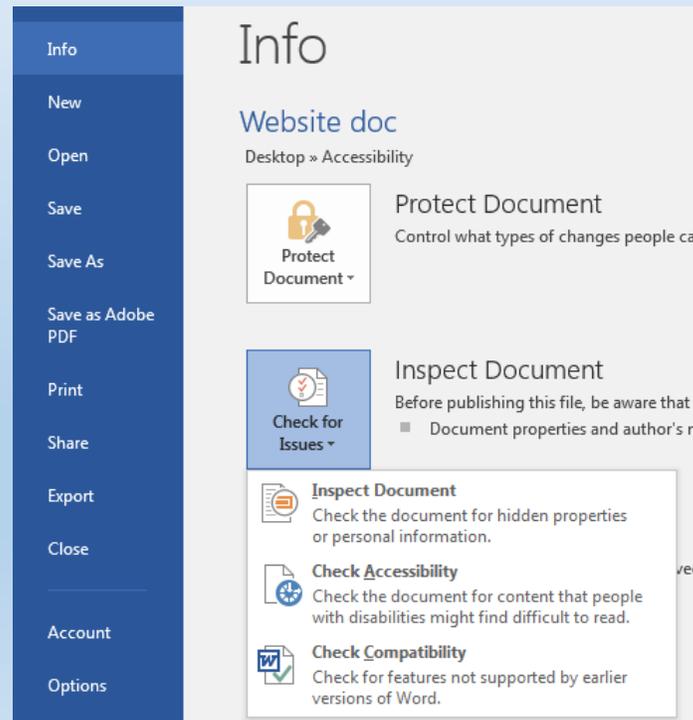


Original Link: <http://academics.umw.edu/disability/>

New Link: [Office of Disability Resources](#)

Checking Accessibility

- Click File.
- Under Info, Click **Check for Issues**.
- Click **Check for Accessibility**.
- The Accessibility Checker will pop up towards the right of the screen.

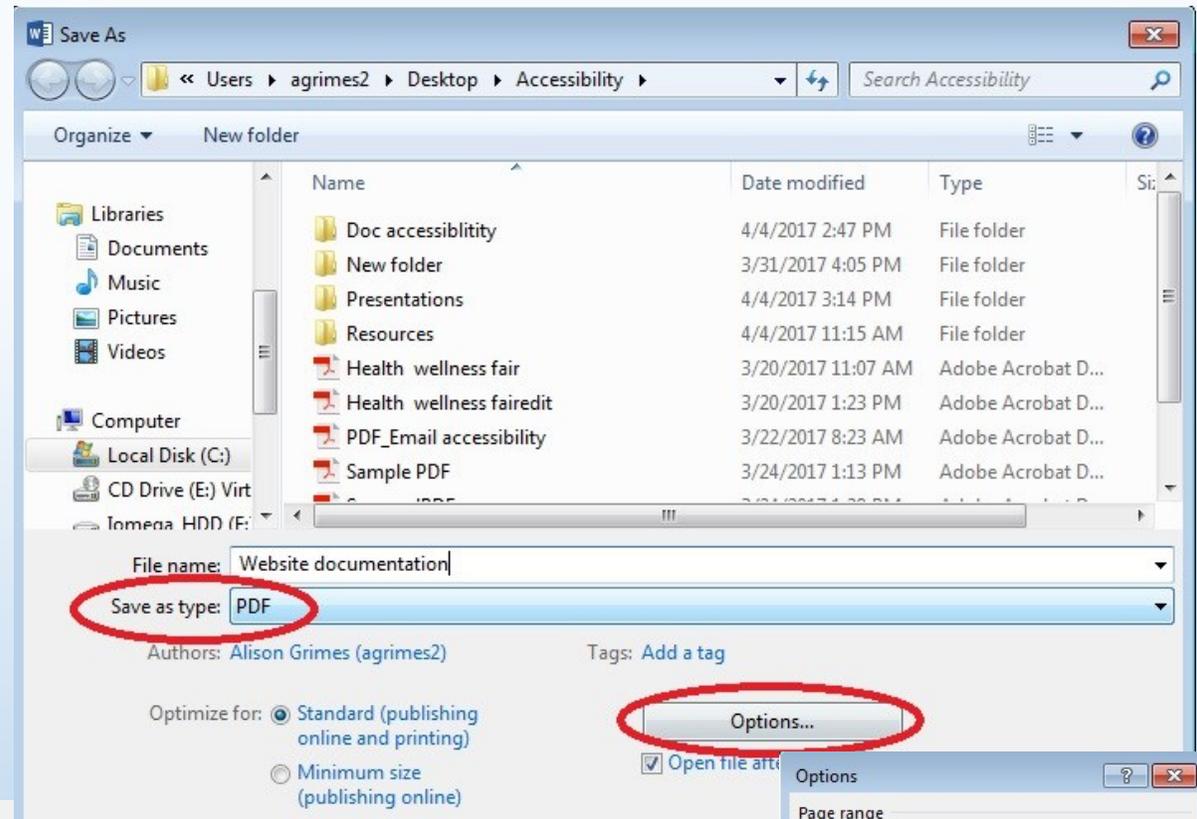


Accessibility Checker

- The accessibility checker is used for identifying and repairing accessibility issues. The Inspection results classify accessibility issues into three categories:
 - Errors: content that makes a document very difficult for people with disabilities to access.
 - Example: No alt text associated with an image.
 - Warnings: content that in most – but not all – cases make the document difficult for people with disabilities to access.
 - Example: A link with text that is not descriptive of its function, “click here”.
 - Tips: content that people with disabilities can access, but that might be better organized or presented.
 - Example: skipping from a first-level heading to a third-level heading.

Converting to PDF

- Review document to ensure accessibility before converting to a PDF document.
 1. Select **File**.
 2. Click on **Save As**.
 3. Select the **save destination folder**.
 4. Enter a name for the document.
 5. Set the **Save as type** to PDF.
 6. Click Options > Check **ISO 19005-1 complaint (PDF/A)** under PDF options. Click **OK**.
 7. Click **Save**.



In Need of Additional Information:

Information

- [Microsoft Word 2016 Accessibility Checklist](#)
- [Find and Fix Accessibility Issues in Word Video Series](#)

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