



## Microsoft Word – Accessibility Quick Tips

Any directions in this document were created using Word 2010. Other versions may vary.

Mac users: Choose Ribbon from the View menu; this will make the interface similar to Windows versions of Word, so you can follow the instructions below.

### Accessibility Checker\*

1. Navigate to File/Info
2. Click Check for Issues/Check Accessibility
3. The Accessibility Checker will open on the right side of the screen.
4. Click on the specific issue and in the Additional Information box under the Accessibility Checker, read why and how to fix the issue

\*Accessibility Checker is not currently available for Macs

### Text

#### Font

- Recommended Type: Arial and Tahoma
- Recommended Size: Minimum 10 point

#### Color

- Minimize use of color
- Do not emphasize important information in color alone
- Avoid combinations with little contrast
- Avoid red, green and orange
- Use texture instead of color in charts

### Headers & Footers

- Anything you want someone to be able to read should go into the main body of the document so that a screen-reader can access the information automatically

### Styles

- Keep layouts simple
- Avoid using text boxes, track changes or commenting which are not accessible
- Use MS Word Styles for Titles, Headings, etc.
- Avoid using the Space Bar when indenting and spacing; use the Tab key instead
- Avoid watermarks; if unavoidable, make sure any information is included elsewhere in the document

#### Modifying a Style

1. Select and right-click the style
2. Choose Modify
3. Make your modifications

### Images

- Use alternative text for all images (photos, clip art, charts, shapes, SmartArt, etc.)
- For charts, use texture fill instead of color fill

#### Adding Image Alt Text

1. Right-click the image
2. Select Format Picture (object type varies)
3. Click Alt Text in left column
4. Type a Title and Description in the appropriate fields

Note: In Word 2011 (Mac) the Insert Picture button is on the Home tab as opposed to the Insert tab in Word 2010 (Windows).

### Lists

- On the Home tab, in the Paragraph group, select the Number of Bullets list icon

### Bold and Italics

- Bold is for Strong Emphasis
- Italics is for Subtle Emphasis

### Hyperlinks

Use meaningful text to provide a clear description of a website link rather than just the URL or “click here”

#### Adding a Hyperlink

1. Highlight meaningful text
2. Right-click and choose hyperlink
3. Fill in the web address

#### Changing the Text of a Hyperlink

1. Right-click the hyperlink
2. Click Edit Hyperlink
3. Make changes

If you think people will be printing the document and you want them to have the URL, put it in parentheses after the link, but don't hyperlink it.

- Example: [Binghamton University](http://www.binghamton.edu) (www.binghamton.edu)

### Tables

- Use alternative text to describe the table
- Do not merge or split cells
- Do not embed tables within tables
- Define column widths as percentages
- Designate header rows

#### Adding Table Alt Text

1. Right-click in the table
2. Go to Table Properties
3. Select Alt Text tab
4. Enter Title and Description in appropriate boxes.

Many thanks to Portland Community College Disability Services for providing permission to use elements from their website: [www.pcc.edu/access](http://www.pcc.edu/access)

### *Tables Continued...*

#### Defining Columns Widths

1. Right-click in the table
2. Go to Table Properties
3. Select Columns tab
4. Change size to percentage

Designating a Header (Note: MS Word only allows the top row of a table to be designated as a header row)

#### *MS Word 2010 for Windows*

1. Put your cursor in the top row of your data table
2. In the Table Tools ribbon, click Design
3. In Table Style Options grouping, make sure Header Row check box is selected
4. Click Layout tab under the Table Tools tab
5. Click on Repeat Header Row

#### *MS Word 2011 for Mac*

1. Put your cursor in the top row of your data table
2. The Table Layout will display, but don't go there yet
3. In the Table Styles Options group on the Table tab select the Header Row check box
4. Click on the Table Layout tab
5. Click on Repeat Header Row

### Math/Science

- For MS Word, use the MathType plug-in to create math and science equations, formulas and notations. Do not use Microsoft's equation editor.
- If you convert to a PDF or export to a webpage, save the original MS Word source document which Disability Services may ask for.

### Saving Files

- Save file as .doc or .pdf
- If the MS Word file is created with accessibility in mind, when saved as PDF file, the PDF file will be accessible too

### Additional Resources

- [WebAim: Microsoft Word](#)
- [The National Center on Disability and Access to Education Cheatsheets](#)

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