# MS PowerPoint Accessibility Checklist for Mac

For general accessible document design guidelines, see the [Accessibility Document Design Fundamentals](https://citl.illinois.edu/citl-101/teaching-learning/make-your-course-accessible/document-accessibility-guides/accessible-document-design-fundamentals).

For PC instructions, see the [MS PowerPoint Accessibility Checklist for PC](https://cdn.citl.illinois.edu/documentation/Accessibility/Checklists/powerpoint-pc.docx).

**\*Note**: For accessibility support and features, please use the **MS 365 desktop version** or **older MS versions**. The online version of 365 lacks any such support or features.

## A Word about PDF Conversion

We don't recommend converting to PDF, as it can be more difficult to make and maintain its accessibility. If you absolutely must have a PDF version, please consult our PDF checklist for instructions on exporting to PDF.

**\*Note**: If they haven’t already done so, Mac users will need to follow the [setup instructions for Adobe’s Cloud Service](#_Adobe’s_Create_PDF)so the PDF Maker can connect through its cloud service.

## Use Built-in Slide Layouts

Built-in slide layouts help ensure the correct reading order of slide content for assistive technology (AT). Avoid using blank slides and adding text boxes. These items may not be recognized by AT and will alter the reading order of the slide's content.

* To **apply built-in Slides** > **Layouts**: select the **Layouts** dropdown menu from the **New Slide** section on the **Home** tab). Then select a layout. Avoid using the Blank layout.

## Use Unique Slide Titles

Unique titles provide an overview of the slide topics and make it easier for screen reader users to navigate through a presentation. Unique titles also help presenters and viewers quickly locate and reference specific slides, especially in longer presentations. Finally, unique slide titles aid comprehension and retention by reinforcing the main point of each slide.

* + Use the slide title placeholder for titles.
  + Ensure each slide has a unique title.
  + For multiple slides that continue a topic, you can label them in the following way: "[TITLE OF SLIDE], 1 of 4," "[TITLE OF SLIDE], 2 of 4," etc.
  + To **check titles and document structure**: from the **View tab**, select **Outline View**.

## Keep Slide Content Clear and Concise

* Clear and concise slide content benefits everyone.
* Use concise, non-figurative, and accurate language.
* Keep slides **uncluttered**. It is better to have several slides with a small amount of content than a few slides packed with content.

## Use Readable Font Sizes

Readable font sizes are helpful to everyone but especially beneficial to those with visual impairments or certain learning disabilities such as Dyslexia.

* + Use standard fonts like Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, Times New Roman, Calibri.
  + Avoid using small font sizes. **24 points** or larger for titles, and **18 points** or larger for body text are generally accessible.

## Keep Lists Readable

* + Where possible, avoid presenting more than **six points** per slide at **default font size**.
  + Use one line of text, ideally, and **no more than two** per point.

## Use Alt Text for Images

Alternative text description (alt text) is used by people who are blind or have low vision and either cannot see the image or cannot see it well enough to understand it. In addition to alt text, everyone benefits when images and their purpose are described in the main text and when figure captions/titles are used.

* + Provide concise descriptive alternative text (alt text) for all informative images, charts, and graphs.
  + Right click on the image, then select **View Alt Text** in the dropdown menu.
  + **Or** select the image and go to **Review**> **Check Accessibility**> **Alt Text**.
  + Fill in the **Alt Text** field. If the image is decorative (e.g., a decorative border), activate the **Mark as decorative** toggle.
  + Do **not** use the generated alt text tool to create alt texts by activating the button **Generate alt text for me** or approving the **generated** **Alt text.** While generated alt text does its best to guess what an image is, it is usually inaccurate and must **not** be used.

## Use Descriptive Text for Charts and Graphs

* + Wherever possible, describe the point of the chart or graph in the main text.
  + Provide alt text and titles for charts and graphs.
  + Ensure all chart elements (axis labels, legends) are labeled clearly.

## Use Meaningful Text for Links

**Avoid** link text like “more,” “click here,” or “here” that has no clear meaning out of context. Clear link text is helpful for everyone, especially assistive technology users who often pull up a separate list of links on a page that need to make sense out of their immediate context.

* + Use text that describes the link’s **destination** (e.g., WebAIM’s Contrast Checker).
  + Select the text and open the sub menu by right clicking or selecting the right click keyboard option.
  + Then choose **Hyperlink** and enter the URL.

## Use Sufficient Color Contrast

Use a free tool like [WebAIM’s Contrast Checker](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/) to ensure sufficient color contrast between the foreground (text or graphics) and background. Be sure to check the color contrast of any links as well (see [WebAIM’s Link Contrast Checker](https://webaim.org/resources/linkcontrastchecker/)).

* Use the **checker’s dropper tools** to select the **foreground** and **background** colors.
* The **checker results** indicate whether selected colors **meet** **accessibility standards**.
* The checker’s slider tool can be used to adjust colors as needed.

## Keep Table Structure Simple and Use Headers

Tables should be used for presenting data, not for layout. Clearly defined column and row headers provide a frame of reference that makes it easier for everyone to understand how the information is organized. They are essential for screen reader users who can only navigate through tables one cell at a time.

* + Use simple tables with clear row and column headers.
  + Where possible, break up complex tables with merged cells into simple tables.
  + **To** **add table headers**: position the cursor anywhere in the table. Select the **Header Row** checkbox. In the first row of the table, type the column headings.

## Insert Charts and Graphs with Data Tables

Where possible, include the corresponding data table with charts or graphs.

* + **To add table data**: Use **Insert** and select **Chart**. Select the **type of chart** you wish to use from the dropdown.
  + Complete the Excel sheet that opens by typing the **in the** **values**. Remember to add labels for the rows and columns. Close the sheet by exiting out of Excel.
  + **To display table data**: Change the chart layout by selecting from the **Quick Layout** options.

## Check the Selection Pane Order

Ensure the **reading order** of content on each slide matches the **visual order** (left to right from top to bottom).

* + **Activate Review > Check Accessibility > Selection Pane**. Arrange slide contents bottom to top starting with the title at the bottom of the list.

## Provide Transcripts for Multimedia

* + Include captions for videos.
  + Provide transcripts for audio content.
  + Note: auto-generated captions are not sufficiently accurate.

## Avoid Using Animations and Transitions

Avoid using animations and transition effects because they are not accessible for users using screen readers. Also, these problems can distract or cause seizures in some individuals.

## Include Speaker Notes

If it makes sense, include Speaker notes to provide additional information and context for all users.

## Run PowerPoint’s Built-in Accessibility Checker

PowerPoint’s built-in accessibility checker doesn’t check for everything, but it can help identify some remaining issues that may have been overlooked.

* + Go to **Review** > **Check Accessibility**.
  + Follow the accessibility instructions to address any remaining issues.

## Document Properties: Identify the Title and Author

* On the Windows main menu, select **File,** then select **Properties**.
* From the **Summary** tab of the **Properties** dialog, add or change the **Title** and the **Author**.

## Additional Resources

* [Microsoft: Making your PowerPoint presentations accessible.](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25)
* [WebAIM: Accessible PowerPoints.](https://webaim.org/techniques/powerpoint)
* [UI System: PowerPoint Accessibility Process](https://www.hr.uillinois.edu/cms/One.aspx?portalId=4292&pageId=1571490)
* [Penn State: PowerPoint Tips](https://accessibility.psu.edu/microsoftoffice/powerpoint/)
* [TGPI: Color Contrast Analyzer (CCA)](https://www.tpgi.com/color-contrast-checker/) (free download to your desktop)

**Important:** If you are working with a student with a letter of accommodation for accessible documents in your course or you have received a request from a student regarding document accessibility, you must reach out to [DRES Accessible Media Services](http://dres-accessible-media@illinois.edu./) ([dres-accessible-media@illinois.edu](mailto:dres-accessible-media@illinois.edu)) for assistance.

## Adobe’s Create PDF Cloud Service Instructions for Mac

It requires a **one-time setup** to enable Adobe’s Create PDF Cloud Service because the PDF Maker must connect from the source document application to Acrobat through Adobe’s cloud service, and it is created in Acrobat. Please follow the steps for PowerPoint.

### Signing In

If you do not have an account, please create an account and continue to log in. If you already have an account, sign in.

### Using the Cloud Service to Set up for One-time Process

1. Open PowerPoint, activate the Acrobat tab, and then Preferences.
   1. The dialog “Adobe Create PDF Settings” appears.
   2. Check the checkbox “Prompt for using Adobe Create PDF cloud service.”
   3. Activate the OK button.
2. Go back to the Ribbon and activate the Create PDF.
   1. The dialog “Adobe Create PDF” pops up.
   2. Check the checkbox “Remember my choice.”
   3. Activate the Yes button.
3. Now, the cloud service will create the PDF in Acrobat.