# MS Word 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 Word Accessibility Checklist for PC](https://cdn.citl.illinois.edu/documentation/Accessibility/Checklists/Word-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.

## Styles to Provide Logical Heading Structure

* Select the text that you want to make into a heading.
* From the **Home** tab, choose the appropriate heading level from the **Styles** group.
* Modify the look of a style by right clicking on the heading level in the **Styles** group and selecting **Modify.**

## Use Ordered/Unordered Lists to Group Related Items

* Select the text you want to make into a list.
* From the **Home** tab, select the **Bullets** (unordered list) or **Numbering** (ordered list) in the **Paragraph** group.

## Use Tables for Tabular Data and Provide Column Headers

* Place the cursor in the top row of your data table and activate the **Table Design** tab.
* In the **Table Style Options** group, select the **Header Row** check box.
* Click the **Table Layout** tab.
* In the **Data** group, activate the **Repeat Header Rows** button.

## Use Alt Text for Informative Images

* 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 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.

* Type out text that clearly 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.

## Run Word’s Built-in Accessibility Checker

Word’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

* [Make Your Word Documents Accessible to People with Disabilities (Microsoft)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d?redirectsourcepath=%252fen-us%252farticle%252fcreate-accessible-word-documents-4fbb34d6-264f-4315-98d1-e431019e6137&ui=en-us&rs=en-us&ad=us)
* [Microsoft Word: Creating Accessible Documents (WebAIM)](https://webaim.org/techniques/word/)

**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 Word:

### 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 Word, 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.