# MS PowerPoint Accessibility Checklist for PC

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 Mac instructions, see the [MS PowerPoint Accessibility Checklist (Mac)](https://cdn.citl.illinois.edu/documentation/Accessibility/Checklists/powerpoint-mac.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.

## 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 New Slide** or **Layout**: select the **New Slide** or **Layout** dropdown menu from the **Home** tab. Then select a slide 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 **Presentation Views** and 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 mostly 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.

* 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), check the **Mark as decorative** check box.
* 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 **Link**, 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. In the **Table Style Options** group, 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**. Enter data in the PowerPoint datasheet view, adding labels for rows and columns. Close the datasheet view.
  + **To display table data**: Go to Design > Chart Design > Quick Layout (or Add Chart Element) > Layout 5 (or Select Data Table).

## Check the Reading Order

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

* + Click Review > Check Accessibility > Reading Order Pane. Arrange slide contents top to bottom starting with the title at the top of the list.
  + Alternatively, you can use Accessibility Checker to arrange the reading order.

**\*Note**: Use the Reading Order Pane to fix issues and **ignore** the **Selection Pane order**. The Selection Pane presents items in reverse order.

## 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 expand the menu for **Info** and select **Properties** on the right-hand side.
* 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 disabled students who use accessible course documents in your course, 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.