

Accessible Documents Checklist

APS Web Team: www.aps.edu/web-team

January 2017

PDF Documents: use Adobe Acrobat to check Accessibility

1. **Text is Readable**

If you cannot select text with the arrow Selection Tool, the document was probably scanned and is an image of text. Go to Tools, Recognize Text. If you don't see this tool, click the Show or Hide Panels button in the top right and click Recognize Text. Click In This File, All Pages, OK.

2. **Language is established**

If the document was scanned, the language should be established. Go to File, Properties, Advanced, Language, and select from the dropdown list.

3. **Document has accurate Tags**

In the Accessibility Tool, click Add Tags to Document if it's not greyed out. If you don't see this tool, click the Show or Hide Panels button in the top right and click Accessibility. If the document already has tags, go to the Tags panel on the left side of Adobe Acrobat. If you don't see the Tags panel, go to View, Show/Hide, Navigation Panes, Tags. Click the arrows to expand the tag structure. Check for accuracy: Headings, paragraphs, and figures (images) should all be accurately tagged. If they're not, right click a tag, click Properties and change the tag type in the Tag tab. If the tags are in the wrong order, this affects the reading order; simply drag and drop tags in the correct order.

4. **Reading Order is accurate**

Open the Order panel on the left side of Adobe Acrobat. If you don't see it, go to View, Show/Hide, Navigation Panes, Order. Expand the structure, drag and drop elements if they are in the wrong order.

5. **Images have Alt Text**

Adding Alt Text to images can be done in different ways. Find the image Tag (called Figure) in the Tags panel, right click and select Properties. Under the Tag tab, add a description in the Alternate Text field. If the image is decorative, find the image in the Order panel, right-click and select Tag as Background. You can

also edit the image Alt Text by going to Content, Edit Object, select the image, right click and select Properties. In the Tag tab, add a description in the Alternate Text field.

6. **Accessibility Full Check**

In Adobe Acrobat, go to the Accessibility tool and select Full Check. If you do not see the Accessibility tool, click the Show or Hide Panels button in the top right and click Accessibility. Click Start Checking. The tool will produce a report and will open in the left side of Adobe Acrobat. Read the report, it will detail any problems and will instruct you how to fix these problems.

Microsoft Office Documents: use the Check Accessibility tool in Word, Excel, and Powerpoint

It's recommended to upload only PDF documents on APS websites. If you *must* upload a Microsoft Office document, compose and edit your documents with accessibility principles in mind.

1. **Text is easy to read**

Use only standard, readable fonts. Use large font sizes (no less than 10 px), and use high contrast colors. Avoid using track changes, comments, and floating text boxes because these are not accessible.

2. **Headings and structure is used appropriately**

Use headings in sequential order, bullet and numbered lists, and logical structure. Headings and lists are important for screen readers and will convert to tags when you save as a pdf document.

3. **Image Alt Text**

Add Alt Text to all images, maps, diagrams, charts, shapes if they convey important information. If the image is decorative, leave it blank. Add Alt Text to the description of the image and add a summarized Title only if the description is long and complicated. In Powerpoint, using a fancy slide design template makes adding alt text very difficult. It's best to keep the design simple and clear.

4. **Links**

Links in documents should be descriptive of the link destination. Avoid links such as "click here" or "read more" and instead link detailed information. Links are

used to navigate a document and should be clear to the reader.

5. Data Tables

Avoid using tables for design layout. Instead, only use tables for data. In a data table, make sure the top row is a Header Row. In the Table Design tab, the Header Row checkbox is checked by default. Don't merge or leave cells empty in a table; doing so changes the reading order and will confuse the reader.

6. Save/Export as PDF

Use the Save as or Export option to save as a PDF. Do not use the Print to PDF option as this does not maintain accessibility in the document. Composing and editing a Microsoft document correctly helps pdf documents be accessible.

7. Check Accessibility

As you compose your document, use the Accessibility tool to fix errors. On a PC go to File, Info, Check for Issues, Check Accessibility. On a Mac go to the Review tab, Check Accessibility. This report will tell you the errors and gives detailed information on how to fix errors.