

Accessibility Checklist for PDF Documents

Design and Layout

- Ensure that the document is free from content that flashes more than 3 times per second
- Provide accurate bookmarks for documents greater than 9 pages
- Verify if the order in the tag structure is accurate and logical, and if the tags match the order they should be read in
- Confirm that all informational content is contained in the tag structure
- Ensure that all non-standard tags are appropriately mapped to standard Adobe tags
- Check if paragraph tags accurately represent visual paragraphs
- Ensure that text can be resized and remains readable when magnified to 200%
- Confirm if optical character recognition was successfully performed on a scanned image document
- Verify if the language is appropriately set for all foreign words or phrases

Structure

- Ensure that nested lists are appropriately nested in the tag structure
- Check if text intended to act as a visual heading is tagged with the heading tags (H1 through H6)
- Verify if heading tags follow a logical hierarchical progression without skipping heading levels
- Ensure that heading tags are used only on text that defines a section of content
- Check if the heading text accurately describes the sectional content
- Ensure that all form fields are correctly tagged
- Verify if all form fields contain understandable labels and tooltips
- Check if tooltips contain all formatting requirements that will be automatically flagged as an error
- Ensure that required fields are programmatically set
- Verify if the tab order of the form fields is logical
- Check if any nonstandard text (glyph) is tagged in an accessible manner
- Ensure that the table of contents is tagged with appropriate tags (TOC, TOC Item (TOCI))
- Check if all internal links/TOC entries are functioning correctly (if linked)
- Ensure that citations and footnotes/endnotes are tagged with appropriate tags (Reference, Note)

Contrast and Colour

- Verify if information is conveyed by methods other than color alone
- Ensure that all text (excluding logos) has a contrast ratio of 4.5:1 or greater, regardless of the size
- Check if links are distinguished by a method other than color

Content

- Check if the document is free from review-related content carried over from Office or other editing tools (e.g., comments, track changes, embedded Speaker Notes)
- Verify if all link text can be understood out of context, and if generic links have sufficient context

Figures and Media

- Ensure that all images conveying information are tagged as figures and included in the tag structure
- Verify if all images conveying information have alt text that provides the same level of understanding as a visual user would gain
- Ensure that all decorative images are tagged as artifact/background
- Check if complex images have an alternate accessible means of understanding
- Ensure that the document is free from images of text (e.g., pictures of informational tables, screenshots of text from another source)

Tables

- Ensure that table tags are used only for data tables
- Verify if the table structure in the tag tree matches the visual table layout
- Check if all header cells are tagged with the TH tag and if all data cells are tagged with the TD tag
- Verify if all header cells contain text
- Ensure that merged cells are correctly spanned with Colspan and/or Rowspan
- Verify if data tables with one set of both column and row headers appropriately use scope to associate with data cells
- Ensure that data tables with more than one set of columns and/or row headers appropriately use id/headers to associate with data cells
- Check if all visual lists are tagged correctly with the List, List Item (LI), and LBody tags
- Verify if the number of items in the tag structure matches the number of items in the visual list

Saving and Printing

- Make sure the PDF is tagged to assist users of screen reader technology
- In order to create the desired tags during PDF export, the following must be observed:
 - Word for Windows**
 - Select “File” → “Export” → “Create PDF/XPS”
 - Click on “Options”
 - Activate the option “Document structure tags for accessibility”, if not already activated
 - Word for Mac**
 - Select “File” → “Save As”
 - Select the option “PDF” in the drop-down “File format”
 - Activate the option “Optimal for electronic distribution and accessibility”
- Verify if the Document Title is filled out in the Document Properties
 - Windows:** Go to File tab, then Title
 - Mac:** Go to File, then Properties, then Summary tab, and check the Title
- Ensure that the correct language of the document is set
 - Go to Review, then Editor, and Set Proofing Language
- Verify if the PDF fully passed the Adobe Accessibility Checker