

Authoring Accessible Word Files

Headings	<p>Use Styles to create headings.</p> <p>Structure content hierarchically: Heading 1 (title), Heading 2 (sections), Heading 3 (subsections), and so on.</p>
Images	<p>Add concise, meaningful alt text to images and graphics.</p> <p>Mark non-essential visuals as decorative.</p> <p>Review and edit any AI-generated alt text.</p> <p>Provide underlying data for charts and graphs.</p> <p>Include long descriptions for complex images when needed.</p>
Links	<p>Write clear, descriptive link text.</p>
Lists	<p>Use built-in list tools (Home ribbon or Styles) to create structured lists.</p>
Color contrast	<p>Use high-contrast colors for text (verify contrast of text over images or graphics).</p>
Color reliance	<p>Use text, labels, or patterns—not color alone—to convey meaning.</p>
Tables	<p>Use tables only for data.</p> <p>Keep tables simple; convert complex tables to multiple simple tables.</p> <p>Define column or row headers.</p>
Reading Order	<p>Set images and graphics to Inline with Text.</p> <p>If an image is wrapped, place the anchor icon in the margin next to the related paragraph to manage the image's location in the reading order.</p> <p>Use columns instead of text boxes to maintain reading order.</p>
Document Title	<p>Add a concise, descriptive document title.</p>
Headers/Footers	<p>Place essential content in the main body of the document so assistive technology can access it.</p>
TOC	<p>Use Word's built-in Table of Contents tool (References tab).</p>
Check Accessibility	<p>Run <i>Check Accessibility</i> (Review tab) and fix all issues.</p>
Create PDF	<p>Save As or Save a copy using <i>Best for electronic distribution and accessibility</i>.</p>

Complete guide on [Digital Accessibility for Word](#).