# CREATING ACCESSIBLE MICROSOFT WORD 2016 DOCUMENTS (WINDOWS)

Heading Styles

Create a uniform heading structure through use of styles in Word. This allows screen readers to navigate a document and improves accessibility for everyone.

1. Start a new line to create a heading, or highlight text to change to a heading.
2. Select the *Home* tab, and choose the appropriate heading in the *Styles* panel.
3. Headings 1, 2, or 3 can also be assigned using *Ctrl + Alt + 1*, *2*, or *3*, respectively.
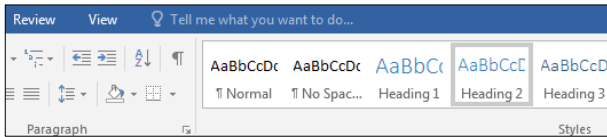
Alternative Text

Apply appropriate alternative text to images in Word.

1. Right-click the image and select *Format Picture*.
2. Select the *Layout & Properties* icon and choose *Alt Text*.
3. Enter appropriate alt text only in the *Description* field (not the *Title* field).
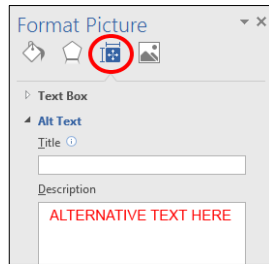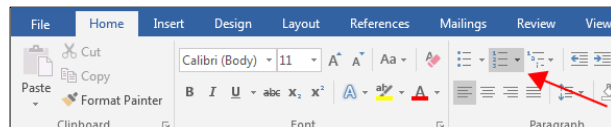
See webaim.org/techniques/alttext for more information.

Lists

Use *true numbered, bulleted or multi-level lists t*o simplify a grouping of information or sequence of steps.

1. Highlight the set of information.
2. Select the Home tab on the ribbon.
3. Choose the Numbered, Bulleted or Multi-Level List option from the Paragraph group.

Hyperlinks

Word *automatically creates a hyperlink* when a user pastes a full URL onto a page. These may not make sense to screen reader users, so make sure the link text is unique.

1. Select a hyperlink, right click, and select *Hyperlink* r hit *Ctrl + k*.
2. Change the text in the *Text to Display* field to a more meaningful description.
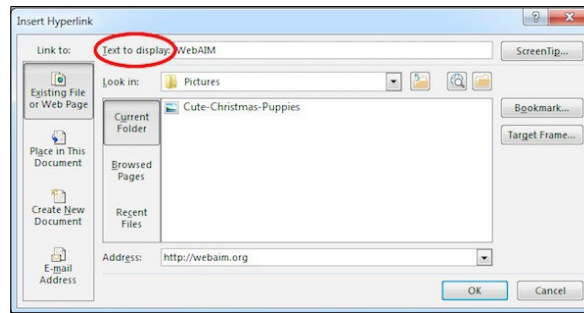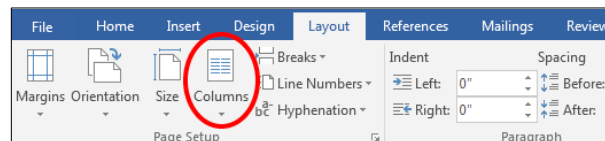
Document Properties

1. *File>Info>Properties*
2. Add descriptive title for document
3. *Review Author to see if it needs to be deleted.*
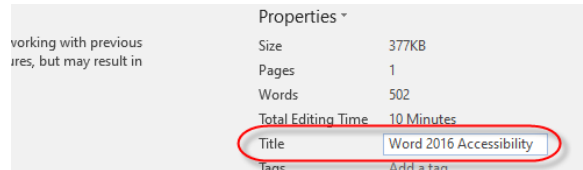
Columns

*Always use true columns.* Don't create columns with *Tab*. Select the *Layout* tab on the ribbon.

1. Select *Columns* in the *Page Setup* group.
2. Choose the number of columns.

Data Tables

Accessible tables need a *clear table structure* and *table headers* to help guide a screen reader user.

1. Select the *Insert* tab on the ribbon, then select *Table > Insert Table*.
2. To add table headers to the frst row, select *Table Tools > Layout* on the ribbon, then choose the *Repeat Header Rows* option in the *Data* section.
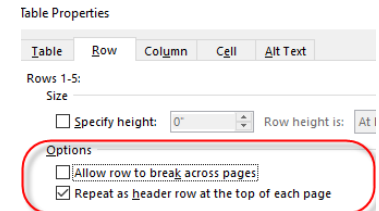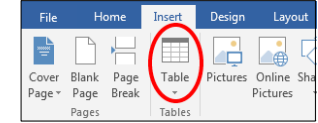
Options in the *Design* tab may be used to change appearance but will not provide necessary accessibility information.

Accessibility Checker

Word includes an accessibility resource that *identifies accessibility issues.*

1. Select *File > Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility*.
2. The checker presents accessibility errors, warnings, and tips for making repairs.
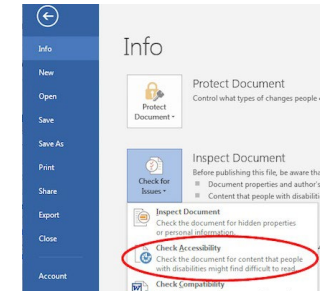
Select specific issues to see *Additional Information* at the bottom of the task pane.

Other Principles

- Ensure that font size is sufficient, around *12 points.*
- Provide sufficient *contrast.*
- Don't use color as *the only way* to convey meaning.
- Provide a *table of contents* for **long documents.**

Export to PDF

- **Use** Save As – Adobe PDF or Acrobat – Create PDF
- **Do not use** File – Print – PDF (this creates an untagged/unstructured document