

PDF Accessibility Checklist

This checklist contains many accessibility best practices but is not an exhaustive list of WCAG requirements. It was developed based on Adobe Acrobat DC, and some features mentioned may not exist or may be found in different places in older versions of Acrobat.

Document Setup

- All issues found in the Accessibility Checker have been resolved. (Accessibility tool > Accessibility Check > Start Checking)
- The document has a descriptive file name.
- The document has a descriptive title. (File > Properties > Title)
- The language of the document has been set. (File > Properties > Advanced > Reading Options > Language)
- Accurate bookmarks are provided for documents with 10 or more pages.
- The document is free from review-related content carried over from Office or other editing tools such as comments, track changes, and/or embedded speaker notes.
- Text can be resized and still considered readable when magnified to 200%.
- The document uses simple, readable [fonts that are considered accessible](#), and glyphs are used properly. (e.g., Minus sign glyph is used instead of dash symbol in a math problem.)
- If the document is a scanned document, Optical Character Recognition (OCR) has been run to make the text editable.
- The language is appropriately set for all foreign words and/or phrases.

Tags

- The PDF has tags. If no tags are included in the document, start with the Autotag function.
- The tags are in a logical and accurate Reading Order, are structured properly, and are not unnecessarily nested within other tags.
- All informational content is contained in the tag structure.
- All non-standard tags are appropriately mapped to standard Adobe tags.
- The tags accurately represent the content. (e.g., Paragraph tags <P> accurately represent visual paragraphs, etc.)
- All blank text runs have been artifacted and all <Artifact> tags have been removed from the tag structure.
- All citations and footnotes/endnotes are tagged with appropriate tags. (e.g., <Reference>)

Images

- All images conveying information are tagged as <Figure> and included in the tag structure.
- All images that convey information have descriptive alt text. (Alt text that provides the same level of understanding a visual user would receive.)
- All images that do not convey information are tagged as <Artifact>.
- Complex images have an alternate, accessible means of understanding the content. (E.g., Explained in the surrounding paragraph text or by a data table. Can be referenced in alt text.)
- Images of text have had the relevant text removed from the image and real text has been used instead, where possible. If not possible, the image's alt text contains all relevant text found in the image. (Examples of images containing text: Picture of an informational table, screenshot of text from another source, etc.)

Headings

- Text intended to act as a visual heading is tagged with the appropriate heading tag (<H1> through <H6>).
- Heading tags follow a logical hierarchy and do not skip heading levels.
- Heading tags are used only on text that defines a section of content.
- Heading text accurately describes the section of content it heads up.

Color

- Color is not used as the only means of conveying information visually. (E.g., important information is red AND noted with an asterisk or bolded, patterns or symbols are added to colored line chart lines, etc.)
- All text has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 between the text and its background color. (Use [Colour Contrast Analyser](#) or [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#) to test.)
- All non-text elements (e.g., legend in a chart, icons, etc.) that convey meaning have a contrast ratio of at least 3:1 between the element and its background color.

Links

- Links are tagged correctly in the tag structure. (Nest the visual link text and "Link – OBJR" within a <Link> tag)
- Links are the only underlined text in the document.
- Link text is descriptive. (E.g., [Oklahoma ABLE Tech](#) (descriptive) vs. <http://www.okabletech.org> (non-descriptive))
- All links are working properly and take the user to the intended destination.

Tables

- Tables are not used for layout.
- The document uses <Table> tags only for data tables.
- The table structure in the tag structure matches the visual table layout.
- All cells contain text. No cells are left blank.
- All Header cells are tagged with Table Header <TH> tags, and all Data cells are tagged with Table Data <TD> tags.
- Header cells all have a row or column scope assigned in the Table Editor.
- Complex tables (i.e., Tables with more than one set of column and/or row headers that may contain merged and/or split cells)
 - Merged cells are correctly spanned with Row Span and/or Column Span using the Table Editor.
 - Data tables with more than one set of column and/or row headers use IDs to associate headers to their data cells.

Lists

- All visual lists are tagged correctly with the List Item and List Body <LBody> tags nested in a List <L> tag.
- Nested lists are appropriately nested in the tag structure.
- The number of items in the tag structure matches the number of items in the visual list.

Forms

- All form fields are correctly tagged.
- All form fields contain understandable labels and tooltips.
- Tooltips explain all formatting requirements. (e.g., Date format: XX/XX/XXXX)
- Required fields are identified in the Tooltip and in the field settings.
- The tab order of the form fields is logical and correct.