



MS Word Accessibility Reference Guide for macOS

Oklahoma ABLE Tech

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Document Properties

Document Title

1. Select the **File** menu in the toolbar.
2. Select **Properties**.
3. Select the **Summary** tab.
4. Add the Document Title to the **Title** field.
5. Select **OK**.

File Name

1. Select the **File Name** dropdown menu in the top window bar.
2. Enter a file name in the **File Name** field.

Language

1. Select the **Review** tab.
2. Select the **Language** button.
3. Select the language of your document from the list of available languages.
4. Select **OK**.

Fonts

Choosing Fonts Carefully

- Avoid overly stylized or scripted fonts to decrease cognitive load.
- Try to choose a font that has distinct letterforms, particularly these:
 - B, 8
 - C, O, 0
 - c, o, e
 - l, L, 1, i, l

Suggested Fonts

System fonts

- Tahoma
- Calibri
- Helvetica
- Arial
- Verdana
- Times New Roman

Open-source fonts

- Source Sans Pro
- Museo Slab
- Rockwell
- Merriweather
- Public Sans
- Roboto

Using Styles

Modify a Style

We recommend modifying the **Normal** style first since many other styles are based off it by default.

1. In the **Styles Pane**, select the dropdown button next to the Style you want to modify.
2. Select **Modify** from the dropdown.
3. Use the options available in the **Modify Style** window to set the characteristics of the style.

You can modify things like Font, Color, Paragraph Spacing, etc., all within this single window.

Apply a Style to Text and Headings

1. Select the text you want to apply the Style to.
2. Select the Style you wish to apply from the **Styles Pane**.

Once you have selected your text, you can also apply the most commonly used Styles using the following keyboard shortcuts.

1. Apply the Normal style: **Command + Shift + N**
2. Apply the Heading 1 style: **Command + Alt + 1**
3. Apply the Heading 2 style: **Command + Alt + 2**
4. Apply the Heading 3 style: **Command + Alt + 3**

Color Contrast

Using the Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA)

1. Open **CCA** on your PC.
2. Select the **eyedropper tool** to choose your foreground and background colors.
3. Ensure **4.5:1 contrast ratio** is met for **small text** and **3:1 contrast ratio** is met for **non-text elements**.
 - a. If contrast ratio is not met:
 - i. Expand the color sliders.
 - ii. Select the **Synchronize colour values** checkbox.
 - iii. Drag the sliders to find colors that meet contrast requirements.
4. Copy the **HEX** code.

Applying Custom Colors from Colour Contrast Analyser

1. In the **Styles Pane**, select the dropdown menu for the Style you want to edit.
2. Select the **Modify** button.
3. Select the **Font Color** dropdown menu.
4. Select the **More Colors** button.
5. Select the **Custom** tab.
6. Paste the **HEX** code you got from the CCA into the Hex field. Make sure to include the “#”.
7. Finally, select **OK** to close the **More Colors** window and then select **OK** again to close the **Modify Styles** window.

You can see your custom colors in the **Recent Colors** area, making them easy to apply to other Styles.

Lists

1. Select text to become a list.
2. Use the built-in **Bulleted List**, **Numbered List**, and/or **Multilevel List** buttons instead of manually formatting a list with spaces or tabs.
 - a. Use a **Bulleted List** if the order of the items on the list does not matter. For example, a list of ingredients in a recipe.
 - b. Use a **Numbered List** or **Multilevel List** if the order of the items on the list matters. For example, the steps describing how to cook a recipe.

Tables

Insert a Table

1. Open the **Insert** tab.
2. Select the **Table** button.
3. Choose the size of your table.

Set headers

1. Navigate to the **Table Design** tab.
2. Check **Header Row** checkbox.
3. If your table uses the first column as a Table Header, check **First Column** checkbox.

Set Table Style

To modify the visual style of the table:

1. Navigate to the **Table Design** tab on the ribbon.
2. Select a **Table Style** that has enough color contrast or adjust the colors to be accessible.

Set properties

1. Right-click the Table Header and select **Table Properties**.
2. Select the **Row** tab.
3. Uncheck the **Allow row to break across pages** checkbox.
4. Check the **Repeat as header row at the top of each page** checkbox.

Hyperlinks

Remember, hyperlinks should always:

- Be descriptive.
- Be underlined.
- Have enough color contrast (4.5:1) for the visited and unvisited states of the link.

Add Hyperlink with Descriptive Link Text

1. Select text in a paragraph that you want to be the descriptive text for a link.
2. Right-click on the selected text.

3. Choose **Hyperlink**.
4. Enter the URL for the link into the **Address** field.

Adjust the Hyperlink Styles

1. In the **Styles Pane**, change the displayed list to **All Styles**.
2. Modify the **Hyperlink** (unvisited links) and **FollowedHyperlink** (visited links) to have 4.5:1 to color contrast or higher.

Images

Add Image

1. Click the **Insert** tab above the **Ribbon**.
2. Select the **Picture** dropdown menu.
 - a. **Note:** If your screen resolution is low, you are zoomed in, or the application isn't set to full screen, you may need to click on the **Illustrations** section before you can see the Pictures option.
3. Choose an option based on the image's location.
4. Find and select the image you want to insert.
5. Click **Insert**.

Set Image to Be in the Proper Reading Order (In Line)

1. Select the image.
2. Navigate to the **Picture Format** tab.
3. Select the **Position** dropdown menu.
4. Then select **In Line with Text**.

Add Alt Text

1. Right-click the image, then select **Edit Alt Text**.
2. Add appropriate Alt Text to the box in the **Alt Text Pane**.
 - a. **Note:** if the image is decorative, check the **Mark as decorative** checkbox instead.

Avoid Using Color Alone

Avoid using color as the only way to convey information in your document. Use color and at least one other way.

See [Charts](#) for more information on how to avoid using color alone in charts.

Charts

Insert a Chart

1. Navigate to the **Insert** tab.
2. Click the **Chart** button.
3. Select the type of chart to insert (we recommend **line charts** because other chart types do not have the option to add symbols for visual clarity).
4. Click **OK**.
5. A mini-spreadsheet window will pop up, and you should enter your chart data in the appropriate fields.

Add Symbols

1. Select the chart and navigate to the **Chart Design** tab.
2. Expand the **Chart Styles** dropdown.
3. Choose **Style 11** to quickly add symbols to the chart.
 - a. You can see what each Chart Style is called by hovering your mouse over the styles.

Edit Symbols

1. Right-click a specific symbol on the chart or graph.
2. Select **Format Data Series**.
3. Select the **Fill & Line** paint bucket icon.
4. Select the **Marker** tab.
5. Edit the Marker Options.
 - a. **Note:** You can also adjust the **Type** (Symbol), **Color**, and **Border** by expanding the **Fill** and **Border** sections as needed.
 - b. **Note:** Ensure all elements have enough color contrast.
6. Repeat for each data series but choose a different **Type** (Symbol) for each series.

Add a Data Table to Chart

1. Select the chart.
2. Navigate to the **Chart Design** tab.
3. Select the **Quick Layout** dropdown.
4. Choose **Layout 5** to quickly add a data table below the chart.
 - a. **Note:** You can see what each Quick Layout Style is called by hovering your mouse over the styles.

Add Data Labels

1. Select the chart and navigate to the **Chart Design** tab.
2. Select the **Add Chart Elements** button.
3. Select **Data Labels** from the dropdown options.
4. Select an option for where to insert the data labels.

Edit Data Labels

1. Select a data label.
2. Use the **Font** section of the **Home** tab to manually edit the font to be accessible and match the document.
 - a. **Note:** Unfortunately, you cannot create a Style for this.
3. Move individual data labels by dragging them to be more visible.
 - a. **Note:** Try to avoid overlapping other elements.
4. Repeat for each data label.

Add Patterns

Note: Only available as an option for certain charts, such as a bar chart.

1. Right-click a data bar.
2. Select **Format Data Series**.
3. Select the **Fill & Line** paint bucket icon, then the **Fill** menu.
4. Select **Pattern Fill**.
5. Select a **Pattern**.
6. Choose a **Foreground & Background** color.
7. Ensure there is enough color contrast by using CCA.
8. Repeat for each data series but choose a different pattern and colors for each series.

Table of Contents (TOC)

Add Basic TOC

1. Navigate to the **References** tab.
2. Select the **Table of Contents** dropdown.
3. Select the style of the TOC that you would like from the list under **Automatic Table of Contents**.

Customize your TOC

1. Navigate to the **References** tab.
2. Select the **Table of Contents** dropdown.
3. Select **Custom Table of Contents**.
4. Modify your desired TOC settings, then click **OK**.
 - a. **Note:** This is a perfect time to ensure the **Use hyperlinks instead of page numbers** checkbox is checked which is found just below the **Formats** pane.

Edit Which Heading Levels Appear in Your TOC

First, open the **Custom Table of Contents Options** menu then:

1. Click the **Options** button to edit precisely which Heading Levels should appear in your TOC.
2. **Note:** Ensure the **Styles** and **Outline levels** checkboxes are checked.
3. You can map different Heading Levels to different TOC Styles by finding the Heading Style in the list, then adding, changing, or removing the number in the **TOC Level** field.
4. **Note: If you followed our recommendation to only use a single Heading Level 1 (H1) in your document**, be sure to delete the number "1" in the **TOC Level** for Heading 1 to remove it from your TOC.

Modify Specific TOC Styles

Modifying specific TOC Styles allows you to make your TOC look how you want without messing up the actual heading levels in the rest of your document.

To do this, first open the **Custom TOC options menu**, and then:

1. Click the **Modify** button.
2. Select the **TOC Style** you want to edit.

3. Click the Modify button to open the same **Modify Style** window that you used to set your **Styles** before.

Manually setting TOC Styles with the Styles Pane

If you would prefer to set your TOC Style using the **Styles Pane**, simply:

1. Select the text in the TOC that you want to work with.
2. Then select the **TOC Style** you wish to apply from the **Styles Pane**.

Updating your TOC after making changes in your document

Even though we recommend adding the TOC as the last step in preparing your accessible MS Word document, there is always the possibility that you will need to make changes later that might affect the TOC.

If you change any headings in your document or if any page numbers change after the TOC is created:

1. Click the TOC to select it, then click **Update Table**.
2. An **Update Table of Contents** window will pop up and give you a choice of whether to update just the page numbers or the whole table, including headings. Choose whichever is most appropriate given the changes you have made.