New Editions
CONSULTING, INC.
The Leader in Accessible Solutions

Accessible Word (2013, 2010, 2007)
Source: http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/word-help/creating-accessible-word-documents-HA101999993.aspx?CTT=3

Making Documents Accessible

Use Accessibility Checker
1. Click the **FILE** tab > **Info**.
2. Click **Check for Issues** > **Check Accessibility.**
   a. The **Accessibility Checker** task pane will open, showing the inspection results.
3. Click on a specific issue to see **Additional Information** (why fix and how to fix).

Add Alternative Text to Images/Objects
Note: Alt text should be added for pictures, clip art, charts, tables, shapes, SmartArt graphics, all objects in the groups list, embedded objects, links, and video and audio files.

1. Right-click the image or object and select the **Format** item type (e.g., **Format Shape**, **Format Object**, **Format Chart Area**)
   a. A format panel will open on the right.
2. Click the **Layout & Properties** icon.

3. Click **ALT TEXT**.

4. Enter the title and description in the **Title** and **Description** field.

5. When finished, click **X** in the format panel to exit.

Add Alternative Text to Tables
1. Right-click anywhere in the table.
2. Select **Table Properties…**
3. Click the **Alt Text** tab.
4. Enter the title and description in the **Title** and **Description** field.
5. Click **OK** when finished.

Specify Column Header Rows in Tables
Note: In addition to adding alt text that describes the table, having clear column headings can help provide context and assist navigation of the table's contents.

1. Click anywhere in the table.
2. In the **TABLE TOOLS** tab, click the **DESIGN** tab.
3. In the **Table Style Options** group, make sure that the **Header Row** check box is selected.
4. Add the header information in the table.

Use Simple Table Structure
Note: Nested tables, and merged or split cells inside of data tables are more difficult to navigate.

To Test the Table Structure:
1. Click the first cell of the table.
2. Press the **Tab** key repeatedly to make sure that the focus moves across the row and then down to the first cell of the next row.

Avoid Using Blank Cells for Formatting
Note: Blank cells to format tables can mislead someone using a screen reader to believe that there is nothing more in the table. You can fix this by deleting unnecessary blank cells.

To Clear All Table Styles:
1. Select the entire table.
2. In the **TABLE TOOLS** tab, click the **DESIGN** tab.
3. In the **Table Styles** group, click the last arrow next to the style gallery to expand the gallery of table styles.

4. On the menu below the gallery, click **Clear**.

Use Meaningful Hyperlink Text
Note: Hyperlink text should provide a clear description of the link destination, rather than only providing the URL.

To Add a Hyperlink:
1. Place the cursor where the hyperlink will be inserted.
2. Click the **INSERT** tab.
3. In the **Links** group, click **Hyperlink**.
4. Type the desired hyperlink text in the **Text to display** field.
5. In the **Address** field, type the link URL.
6. Click **OK**.

To Change the Text of a Hyperlink:
1. Highlight the hyperlink.
2. Click the **INSERT** tab.
3. In the **Links** group, click **Hyperlink**.
4. In the **Text to display** field, change the text.
5. Click **OK**.

New Editions
CONSULTING, INC.
The Leader in Accessible Solutions

To Add a ScreenTip:

Note: ScreenTip text appears when the cursor hovers over a hyperlink, and can be used in a similar way to alt text.

1. Place the cursor in the desired hyperlink to add the ScreenTip.
2. Click the **INSERT** tab.
3. In the **Links** group, click **Hyperlink**.
4. Click **ScreenTip…**
5. Type the text in the **ScreenTip text** field.
6. Click **OK**.

Use Styles in Long Documents

Note: Heading and paragraph styles, as well as tables of content, make it easier for all readers to follow.

Note: Using the **Navigation Pane** in Word lets you browse the document by heading.

To Apply Heading Styles:

1. Highlight the desired text to add a heading style.
2. Click the **HOME** tab.
3. In the **Styles** group, select the desired level heading style from the **Quick Styles** gallery.
4. Use short titles in heading (at most one line long).

Ensure All Heading Styles Are in the Correct Order

To View and Update the Document's Organization:

1. Click the **VIEW** tab.
2. In the **Show** group, click **Navigation Pane**.

To Change a Heading Style:

1. Select the heading to change.

2. Click the **HOME** tab.
3. In the **Styles** group, click the desired heading style.

To Add a Heading Line:

1. Insert a line of text for the new heading.
2. Click the **HOME** tab.
3. In the **Styles** group, click the desired heading style.

Include Closed Captions for Any Audio or Video

Note: Ensure that your audio or video is available in alternative formats for users with disabilities, such as closed captions, transcripts, or alt text.

Avoid Using Repeated Blank Characters

Note: Extra spaces, tabs, and empty paragraphs may be perceived as blanks by people using screen readers.

To Use Formatting to Add Whitespace around a Paragraph:

1. Remove any existing whitespace around the paragraph.
2. Select the text.
3. Right-click it.
4. Choose **Paragraph**.
5. Select values for **Indentation** and **Spacing** to create whitespace.

Avoid Using Floating Objects

Note: Setting text-wrapping around objects to top and bottom or in line with text makes it easier for people with screen readers to follow the structure of the document.

To Change the Text-Wrapping around Objects:

1. Select the object.
2. Right-click it.
3. Click **Wrap Text** > **In Line With Text** or **Top and Bottom**.

Avoid Image Watermarks

Note: If you are using a watermark, make sure that the information it contains is also included elsewhere in the document.

Increase Visibility for Colorblind Viewers

- Avoid using orange, red, and green in your graphs or objects.
- Use texture in graphs, instead of color, to highlight points of interest.
- Keep the overall contrast in your document high.