

# Creating Accessible PDFs using Microsoft Word

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# Why concern yourself about it?

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PDFs must be accessible when we make them available because it is easier to do it at the beginning than remediate

Microsoft Word can create accessible PDFs if you take particular actions or create things in a particular way

You don't have to have Adobe Professional to create a mostly accessible PDF from Microsoft Word

# It is all fun and games until you create a PDF wrong

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It matters how you create a PDF from Microsoft Word



Printing to a PDF converter will create a tagless PDF



Saving as a PDF will create tags

[How to create a PDF using Microsoft Word \(video, 2.63 min.\) on YouTube.](#)

# Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)

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Items must be **perceivable, operable, understandable,** and **robust**

- What does this mean for my content?
  - Titles, headings, hyperlink text, etc. are consistent, accurate, and unique
  - Be careful with using color with text or to convey meaning
  - Do not require the audience to use any of their senses only

[Creating PDFs to be Perceivable and Understandable \(video, 3 min.\) on YouTube](#)

# Give your Microsoft Word documents style

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Delivers a consistent look and feel

- Promotes ease in browsing the document for all users

Heading styles will generate heading tags when a PDF is created

- Assistive software uses tags to determine how to handle or treat content in PDFs

[Using Microsoft Word to Create a PDF: Using Styles \(video, 2.8 min.\) on YouTube](#)

# Bad alternative text is as bad as none

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When you are deciding what to write as alternative text, ask yourself

- What is the purpose of the image? Is it decorative?
- What does a sighted person get out of the image?

When deciding how to provide alternative text, ask yourself

- Would this only help visually impaired readers or would it help everyone?

# Preserving reading order

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Avoid textboxes, smart art, shapes, and charts in Word.

- If you must build figures with word, use smart art, or create a chart
  - Use a separate file for the graphic. Copy and paste as picture in the document that you are working on

[Using Microsoft Word to Create a PDF: Creating Proper Reading Order \(video, 4 min.\) on YouTube](#)