

Tips for Creating Accessible Word Documents

- Ensure the content is NOT a scanned image of text. You should use appropriate OCR (optical character recognition) software to scan hard copies so that your scanned text is not an image but can be edited.
- Structure the content with hierarchical headings such as title, heading 1, heading 2, etc. by applying Styles and Formatting in Word.
- Format the layout or spacing between paragraphs by modifying the Style and Formatting in Word, not by pressing the Enter key on the keyboard.
- For all images such as photos, clip art, diagrams, etc. in the content, include text equivalent information such as Alternative text* or Caption.
- Avoid using Text Boxes for inserting text information.
- For hyperlinked text, include descriptions of the hyperlink's destination or the website and the web site address or URL.
- When information appears to be of tabular content, use table function to format or organize the information. Avoid using "Tab" key or indent to format.
- A text-to-speech or screen reader software reads tabular information across from left to right, one cell after another cell, then from top to down, one line after another one. Bear in mind this reading order as entering table information.
- Apply the Header Row Repeat function from the Table menu for table information that carries over to subsequent pages.
- When using different font colors in creating documents ensure the color are understandable for people who cannot perceive color. Color and highlighting can be used for markup, but should not be the only way to provide information.

** For 2008 Word Mac version, there is no Alternative text feature. Two available options are: 1) Insert alternative text next to the image element and apply font color the same as the background color. 2) Select Caption function from the Insert menu.*