**At Purdue, we are committed to continuous improvement and as accessibility practices are updated, we will update our manuals. This version of the manual was finalized on 6.29.18**

Note that formatting a document in PDF format is not a preferred method since it is relatively hard to edit items as a PDF and more steps are involved when trying to edit and produce documents as a PDF. If possible, create and edit within the original document before converting to PDF.

## Titles

| Check | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Fill in the title in the given slide format. |
| [ ] | Write short, concise titles that include keywords. |
| [ ] | Write titles that give people good clues about the information that follows them. |
| [ ] | Make sure there are no duplicate titles. If a slide must have the same title as another slide, include something like part 1,2,3… or add the word “continued” |

**Why is this important?**

* Screen readers and text-to-speech tools are programmed to look for titles on each slide.
* People who use screen readers depend on titles for navigation. If there are duplicate slide titles, they may be confused as to which slide they are on.
* People who have any reading issues depend on titles to:
  + Provide clues about the content
  + Organize content into groups of related ideas

## Images

| **Check** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Add Alt Text to images, diagrams, SmartArt, and tables. |
| [ ] | Write Alt Text that describes what’s important in the image for this article. |
| [ ] | If you included an image for visual emphasis or decoration, write “ “ (Double quote –space – double quote) in the Alt Text title and description. This tells screen reader software to skip over the image, and not describe it for a blind person. |
| [ ] | If the image contains text, repeat the text exactly in the Alt Text description or adjacent content. |

**Why is this important?**

* Screen readers read Alt Text out loud.
* Alt Text is the only information that people who are blind have about images and diagrams.
* People who use screen readers depend on Alt Text to explain what the image or diagram communicates. Does it show how something works? Does it show important data?

## Lists

| **Check** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Create lists (bulleted and numbered) by using built-in features in Word. |
| [ ] | Insert a lead phrase or sentence to introduce the list. |
| [ ] | Make lists that contain related items. If needed, make more than one list |
| [ ] | Use numbered lists if the order of items is important. |

**Why is this important?**

* Screen readers and text-to-speech tools are programmed to understand lists that you create with the built-in features. This is especially important for nested lists.
* People who use screen readers appreciate hearing that a list about to be read.
* It’s easier to remember list items if they are related to one another.

## Links

| **Check** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Give every link meaningful display text. |
| [ ] | Make sure the link display gives a clear idea of the destination and purpose of the link. |
| [ ] | Avoid meaningless phrases such as “Click here” and “Learn more”. |

**Why is this important?**

* If a link does not have meaningful display text, then screen readers read the link URL one character at a time. This can be extremely difficult or impossible to follow while listening.
* If you must use a phrase like “Click here”, include some contextual information. For example, use “Click here to see our low sale prices,” or “Click here to try again.”
* Check the destination site. If you can, learn its title and use that in the link display text.

## Tables

| **Check** | **Description** |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Insert tables by using built-in features. |
| [ ] | Use the Tab key to move through the table cells. Make sure the tab order of cells matches the table appearance. |
| [ ] | Make sure that the table has one Header Row. |
| [ ] | Add column labels in the Header Row that describe their contents. |
| [ ] | Fix any merged or split cells in the table. |

**Why is this important?**

* Screen readers and text-to-speech tools are programmed to understand how tables are organized, if you create the table by using built-in features.
* Some screen readers can repeat column labels on request. This can be very helpful on large tables with lots of data.
* Screen readers keep track of their location in the table by counting table cells. If a cell is merged or split, then the screen reader loses count. It can’t provide helpful information to the listener anymore.

## Accessibility Checker

| Check | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Run the Action Wizard Assistant or Full Check under the Accessibility tool, Note: This is different from Microsoft Office software. |
| [ ] | Fix all errors, right clicking to fix the issue. |
| [ ] | Make sure to check Color Contrast manually. |

**Why is this important?**

* Checking for accessibility in Adobe Acrobat requires different steps than in Microsoft Office suites.
* This serves as the finalizing step before you are ready to produce the final product.

## Whole Document

| Check | Description |
| --- | --- |
| [ ] | Check the reading order on all slides. Order should be read bottom to top. |
| [ ] | Save the file as a portable document file (.pdf). |
| [ ] | Give the file a meaningful name. |
| [ ] | Make sure the filename gives a clue about the document contents. |
| [ ] | Add the author’s name and the document title to the document properties on the Word Backstage. |
| [ ] | Add “AC” at the end of the filename for accessibility or “ACAN” for accessibility with animation. |

**Why is this important?**

* Meaningful file names help people locate the information that they want.
* Some organizations put documents on websites and organize them by using information from the document properties. It’s a good idea to make sure your document is ready for this.

# More Tips for an Accessible Document

## Fonts

* Use Sans Serif fonts.
* Minimize the use of character formats like italics and bold.
* Avoid setting specific sizes because this removes the user’s ability to resize pages with application or browser functions like Zoom.

## Alignment

* Use Left-aligned text whenever possible.
* Centered (justified) text creates uneven vertical lines that are very difficult for people with reading disabilities and people with low vision.

## Colors

* Think strong contrast; but avoid using pure black text on a pure white background. If possible, use a background that is not pure white.
* Never use color alone to indicate information. People who are color-blind might not be able to see the point.

## Writing Style

* Use short, simple sentences.
* Avoid abbreviations except when the abbreviation is part of common language, like USA or NASA.
* Group related ideas under a heading.
* If possible, limit paragraphs to one idea.
* Check readability statistics.

## White Space and Background

* Allow ample white space between lines and between paragraphs.
* Clearly separate text and background.