



The City of Belleville

Information and Communications Guide

Building Belleville for Everyone



This document is available in alternate formats or with communication supports upon request. Please visit City Hall, call 613-967-3200 ext. 3502, or email accessibility@belleville.ca

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Introduction

We recognize the diversity of our community and the importance of fostering inclusive community life. We are dedicated to ensuring that all people have equal opportunity to access and benefit from all public information and communications produced by or on behalf of the City as easily and as independently as possible.

The Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA) is provincial legislation intended to develop communities that are free from discrimination and barriers to inclusion. Under the AODA, the Information and Communication Standard of the Integrated Accessibility Standards Regulation outlines specific requirements we must achieve in this area.

To reflect our commitment to our community, we have adopted an Information and Communication Standards Policy to take ownership of our responsibilities. This guide supports the standards and goals laid out in our policy and outlines our expectations for information and communications produced by or on behalf of the City.

Statement of Commitment

The City of Belleville is committed to excellence and openness in local government by ensuring accessible and responsive representation.

To this end, we will ensure our public information and communications are in accessible formats to provide all people with equal opportunity to access, obtain, and benefit from our goods, services, programs, and facilities.

Furthermore, we will provide notice that alternate formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Part One: General Standards

As of 2020, 1 in 7 people in Ontario are living with a disability. This number will continue to rise as our population ages.

Creating accessible information and communications will allow equal opportunity for everyone to access and benefit from our goods, services, programs, and facilities with dignity and as easily and independently as possible.

Keep these general standards in mind when creating or **procuring both printed and web content** information and communications.

Language



Requirement: Use plain language that is clear and concise. Aim for a grade eight or nine reading level.

Plain language gives the reader a chance to process your information quickly and easily. It does not mean over-simplifying your message, it means making it easier to understand for a wider audience.

Plain Language Tips

- Avoid symbols, legal terms, and word jargon
- Use short, simple sentence structure and grammar
- Use common words
- Eliminate unnecessary wording
- Consider your audience and be direct with your message
- Use the active voice
- Introduce and properly identify any acronyms



Caption: A cartoon of a man feeding a lengthy document into a boiling pot, while a woman holding a short document says “and this is what it will boil down to”

Note! If achieving plain language is not realistic due to the nature of your information, give clear notice that alternate formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Microsoft Word uses the Flesch Reading Ease (FRE) to judge the readability of a document. It is a good guideline to keep in mind.

→ **A score between 60 and 69 is acceptable, 70 or above is ideal**

The full FRE scoring is as follows:

- 00.0 to 29.9 = very difficult, college or university graduate level
- 30.0 to 49.9 = difficult, college or university level
- 50.0 to 59.9 = hard, grade 10 to 12 level
- **60.0 to 69.9 = plain language, grade 8 or 9 level**
- **70.0 to 79.9 = easy, grade 7 level**
- 80.0 to 89.9 = very easy, grade 6 level
- 90.0 to 100. = simple, grade 5 level

Plain language example

Original (taken from our old website)

- FRE score = 30.4, difficult (college or university)

It is important that you shall read the notes, advice, and information detailed opposite then complete the form overleaf (all sections) prior to its immediate return to Council by way of the envelop provided.

Plain Language

- FRE score = 87.2, very easy (grade 6)

Please read the notes before you fill in the form. Be sure to complete all sections, then use the envelop to send it back to us as soon as possible.

Note! In earlier versions of Word, it is possible to select certain sentences or paragraphs of text to check readability for only that specific text.

Unfortunately, at the time this document was created, that option does not exist for Office 365. Office 365 will always check the full document, so it is a good idea check your readability frequently as you go.

How to check readability in earlier versions of Word

1. In the top task bar, go to the "Review" tab
 2. In the "Proofing" section, select "Spelling and Grammar"
 3. After reviewing any spelling and grammar edits, a pop-up box will appear with your word counts and readability statistics
- ➔ If your readability statistics are not showing you may need to enable it
1. In the top task bar, go to the "File" tab
 2. From the list on the left select "Options" and a pop-up box will appear
 3. In the pop-up box, from the list on the left select "Proofing"
 4. In the third section about spelling and grammar options, check the box for "show readability statistics" and hit "Ok" in the bottom right corner

How to check readability in Office 365

1. In the "Home" tab of the top task bar, in the last section on the far right, open the "Editor"
 2. A panel will appear on the right side of your document, review any spelling and grammar suggestions
 3. When you have checked all spelling and grammar suggestions the word count and readability statistics pop-up box will appear
- If the pop-up box does not appear you may need to enable it
1. In the "Editor" panel on the right side of your document, at the very bottom of the list open the "Settings"
 2. A "Word Options" pop-up box will appear, from the list on the left select "Proofing"
 3. In the third section about spelling and grammar options, check the box for "show readability statistics" and hit "Ok" in the bottom right corner

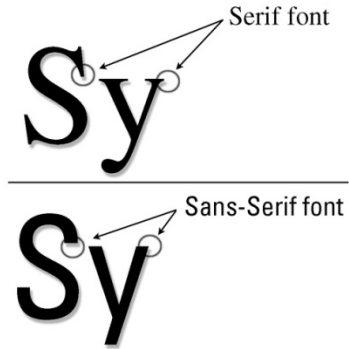
Text

Requirement 1 of 2: Use sans serif fonts.

Requirement 2 of 2: Font size must be appropriate in relation to its use and at minimum Arial 12 point or visually equivalent to it.

Text Font

What are sans serif fonts? They are font styles that do not have extending or decorative flares on any letter strokes.



Examples of serif fonts:

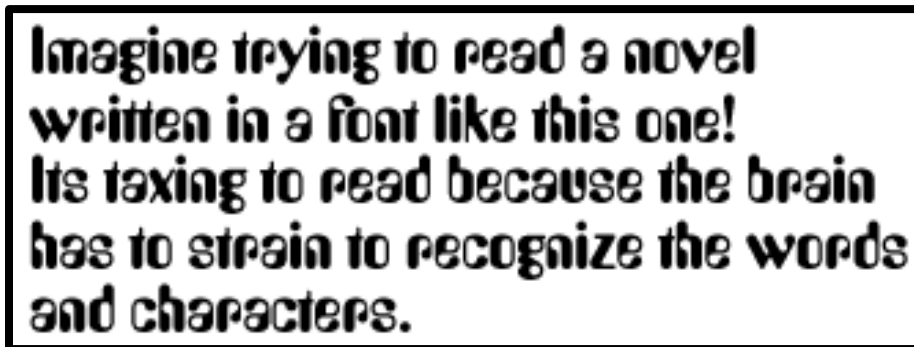
Times New Roman,

Lucida Handwriting

Examples of sans serif fonts:

Arial, Verdana, Calibri

- ✓ Sans serif fonts have easily recognizable upper and lower case letter formations and numerical characters
- ✓ Using these fonts will contribute to the readability of your information



Caption: Written in a decorative font, the image reads, “Imagine trying to read a novel written in a font like this one! It’s taxing to read be because the brain has to strain to recognize the words and characters.”

Text Size

Text size must be at minimum Arial 12 point or a visually equivalent. Choose font sizes that are appropriate for the purpose of the text.

For example:

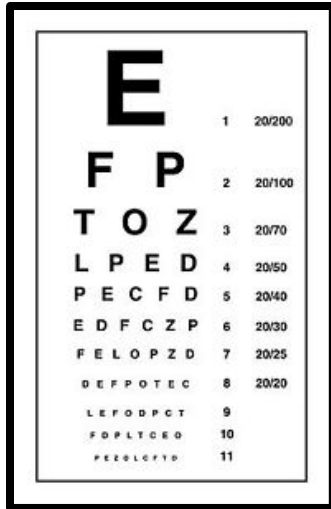
Body text = 12 point

Headings = 14 point

When determining appropriate text sizes consider:

- the purpose of the text

- format and delivery method of the information
- your intended audience



Text size can differ in appearance depending on the font you choose. Remember this when selecting the appropriate text font and size.

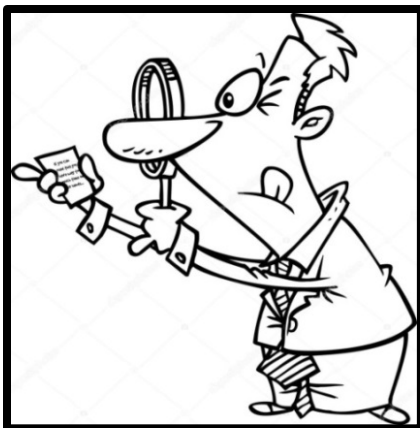
For example, compare:

Calibri font size 12

Arial font size 12

Verdana font size 12

Note: When creating large print formats use a font size of 16 or 18, unless otherwise requested.



Caption: A cartoon man uses a magnifying glass to read fine print on a comically small piece of paper.

Reader Friendly Information

Requirement 1 of 1: Create readable text by using clear and organized text and pre-set document style options.

Creating Readable Information

- Avoid *italics* → italic print is angled and often more narrow than other fonts making it harder to read
- Avoid underlining → underlining can interfere with lower case letters and word shapes making it harder to read. Use only when necessary, like to indicate a link
 - **Tip!** Try using a bottom border. It will give you the same visual look but appear fully below all text lines, so it does not interfere with lower case letter strokes and word shapes.

Underline example

Bottom border example

- To make text stand out use an exclamation mark!, increase the size, or **use bold**
- Do not **bold** full paragraphs. Only use **bold** to make specific text stand out, and try limit it to 5 words in a row
- Avoid busy background designs
- Avoid using all UPPER CASE → using standard combinations of upper and lower case letters provides word shapes that can give clues to our brains. This can make processing time faster and easier for the reader

CAPITALS DON'T GIVE CLUES.

Different shapes give clues.

Margins

- Use one-inch margins for an 8.5 by 11 page size. A minimum margin of 0.5 inches is also acceptable. This promotes readability and is ideal for readers who may use magnifiers

Alignment

- Always align text to the left margin. This makes it easier for readers to find the start of the next line, keeps the spacing between words even, and is more visually appealing

Did you know? Center alignment is more difficult for your eye to track. It causes uneven indentations and can make it difficult for readers to find the start of the next line. Especially for people with vision loss, learning disabilities, or using a magnifier, center alignment makes it challenging to follow along with the text.

Did you know? Justified text creates larger and uneven spacing between words. The irregular spacing means your eye jumps from word-to-word, instead of flowing continuously along the sentence. This can slow down processing and make it more difficult to read and understand the content.

Note! It is acceptable to center a document title, heading level, and short (one or two) lines of text.



Line Height

Line height, known as leading (pronounced “ledding”), is the amount of space between the lines of text in a paragraph. It is calculated automatically using a percentage or decimal of the text font and size you choose.

For example: for a font size of 12 pt, single line spacing would be written as 100% or 1.00, and one and half line spacing would be written as 150% or 1.50.

Ideal leading for readability is between 125% to 150%. The appropriate leading for your content will depend on the font you choose. Some fonts have larger letter formations and will benefit from a larger line height.

Although not commonly focused on, setting the appropriate leading for your document has a significant impact on readability. Consider the following:

➤ **12pt Arial font with single line spacing**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Proin fringilla felis et ullamcorper egestas. Vestibulum magna mi, mollis id rhoncus eu, elementum nec purus. Maecenas nibh elit, viverra a tristique et, laoreet vel tortor. Duis orci quam, vestibulum quis turpis vel, hendrerit sagittis nibh. Mauris viverra mauris ut enim pretium, non hendrerit quam laoreet.

➤ **12pt Arial font with 1.25 line spacing**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Proin fringilla felis et ullamcorper egestas. Vestibulum magna mi, mollis id rhoncus eu, elementum nec purus. Maecenas nibh elit, viverra a tristique et, laoreet vel tortor. Duis orci quam, vestibulum quis turpis vel, hendrerit sagittis nibh. Mauris viverra mauris ut enim pretium, non hendrerit quam laoreet.

➤ **12 pt Arial font with 1.50 line spacing**

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Proin fringilla felis et ullamcorper egestas. Vestibulum magna mi, mollis id rhoncus eu, elementum nec purus. Maecenas nibh elit, viverra a tristique et, laoreet vel tortor. Duis orci quam, vestibulum quis turpis vel, hendrerit sagittis nibh. Mauris viverra mauris ut enim pretium, non hendrerit quam laoreet.

- ✓ Use a minimum 1.25 line height for any public information or communications

Use 1.50 line height for any requested alternate accessible formats, unless otherwise specified

Setting Line Height

You can use your "Paragraph" tools to set line height on demand or, better yet, format your "Normal" document style so that the line height is set for all body text in your document.

1. Choose one of three options:

1a. From the task bar, in the "Paragraph" section, use the "Line and Paragraph Spacing" drop down menu to select "Line Spacing Options"

OR

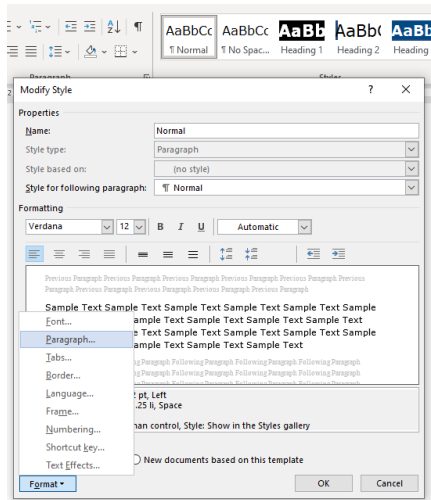
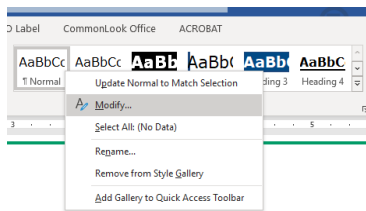
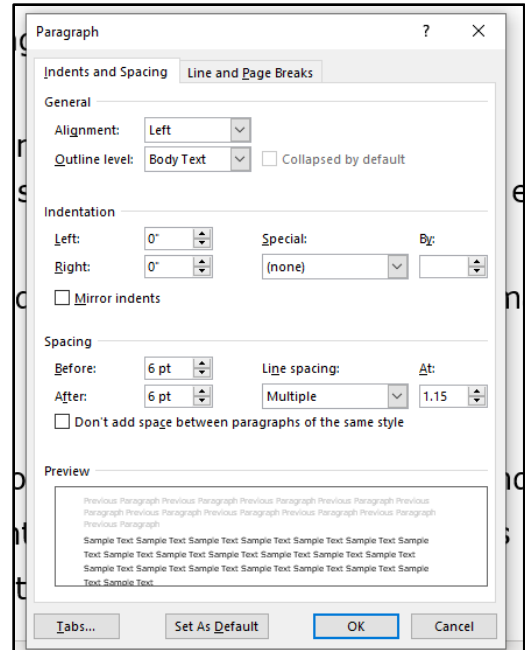
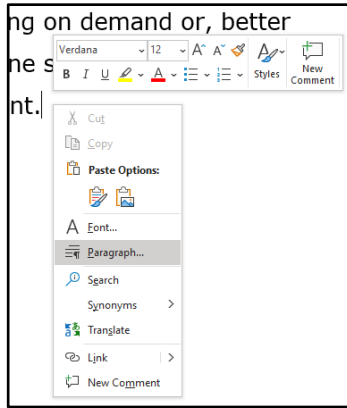
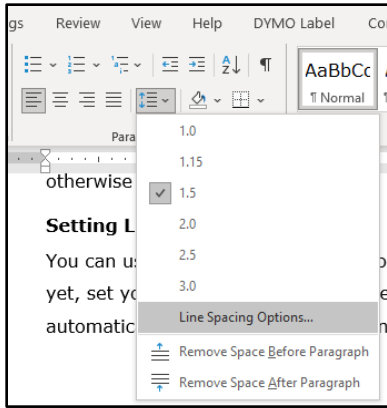
1b. Right click anywhere on the page in your document and from the pop-up menu select "Paragraph"

OR

1c. From the task bar, in the "Styles" section, right click over the style "Normal" and from the pop-up menu select "Modify". A "Modify Style" pop-up box will appear. In the bottom left corner of the pop-up box use the "Format" drop-down menu to select "Paragraph"

2. No matter which first step you follow, they will all result in the "Paragraph" pop-up box. On the first tab for "Indents and Spacing", in the third section "Spacing" use the "At:" field to enter your desired line height between 1.25 (minimum) to 2.00 (double spacing).

3. Click "Okay" in the bottom right corner of the pop-up box to set the line spacing. If you started with method 1a or 1b the formatting will only apply to the specific text highlighted



Tips for Organizing Text

Caption: The woman on the left is stressed and confused trying to read a full page of solid text. The woman on the right is happy as she easily reads her page because the author used readable and organized text practices like headings, short paragraphs, bullet lists, and images.



Your message doesn't matter if they can't or don't want to read it!

Without clear content organization your reader or audience could quickly become confused, overwhelmed, and disinterested in the information.

The way you structure your content helps people to stay focused and quickly and easily follow along, interpret the information, make connections about your message, and understand its purpose.

- Use columns → can help break up lengthy text
- Align text to the left margin → makes it easier to find the start of the next line and keeps the spacing between words even
- Use bullet points and lists → can break up lengthy text and promote readability by being more direct
- Use images → conveys spirit or meaning
- Use appropriate headings → organizes your content
- Aim for short paragraphs → convey only one or two related thoughts or points of information.

Organization and presentation of your content
is just as important as your actual information.

Colour

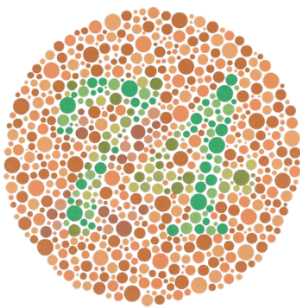
Requirement 1 of 2: The contrast ratio between any text or content element and its background must be at least 5:1.

Requirement 2 of 2: Do not use colour alone to convey a message, there must be another identifying feature.

What is a Contrast Ratio?

A contrast ratio refers to the noticeable difference between the brightness of any two colours. Brightness difference can range from 1 to 21. A contrast ratio is always written so that 1 represents the "lighter" colour between the two that you are comparing.

good (contrast 11.2:1)	colour (contrast 19.6:1)	contrast (contrast 8.9:1)
bad (contrast 3.2:1)	colour (contrast 2.7:1)	contrast (contrast 4.0:1)



What do you see in the graphic on the left?

Some people might only see a shaded circle, some might see a circle of dots, others might see the number 74, and still others might see the number 21. This is an example of how we can perceive colour differently.

Colour is a great way to enhance your content. It can help **attract attention** **convey meaning**, **represent importance**, and be **visually appealing**.

However, all people see colour a little differently. If you are not careful with your colour choices it can significantly impact reading and comprehension, especially for those living with a colour vision deficiency.

Did you know?

Colour Vision Deficiency (CVD) is the inability to distinguish some colours or shades from each other. Colour Blindness means the person cannot identify any colour at all.

Colour Blindness is very rare, but CVD is actually quite common. CVD is more common in males, with 1 in 10 men having some type of CVD and only 1 in 200 women.



Use colour appropriately! Consider your content, your message, your audience, and the end format of your information or communication.

Do not use colour alone to convey a message! In graphic elements such as graphs or charts, always use a second identifying feature other than colour to help readers differentiate and interpret information.

Figure 1 = Good

This graph is reader friendly because it uses colour and patterns to differentiate information

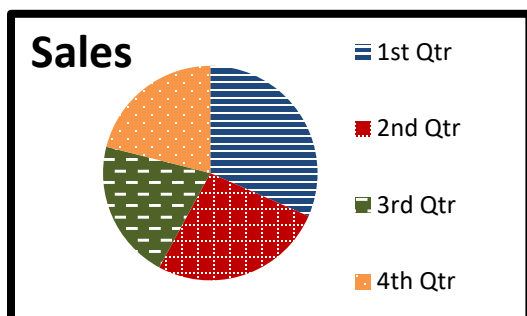
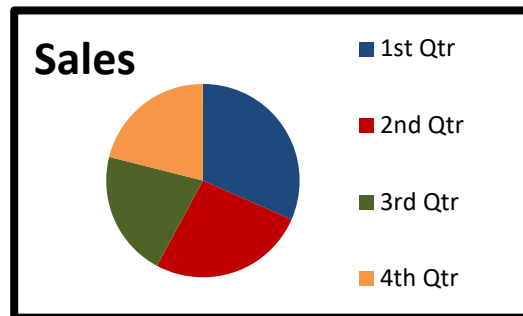


Figure 2 = Bad

This graph would be difficult to interpret for readers who have some form of CVD



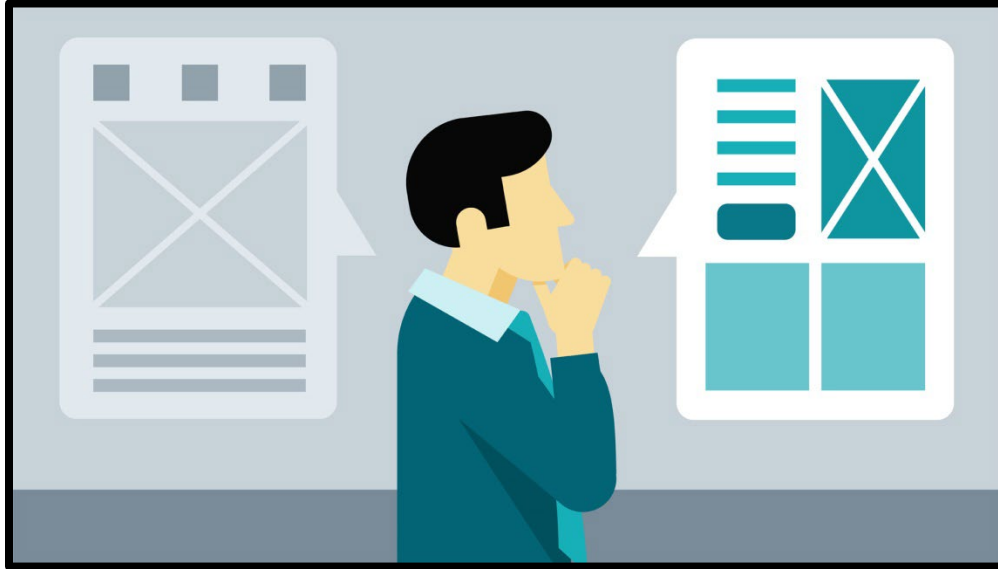
- There are many options for colour combinations! A great way to determine contrast ratios is to use a [free online colour contrast checker](#).

Using the Colour Contrast Analyzer

1. Use the link above to download the colour contrast analyser
2. Use the eye dropper in the first section to select the foreground colour.
3. After clicking on the eye dropper icon, you will notice your mouse turns into a small dot with a magnified view of the surrounding content. Drag the dot over the first colour you want to compare and click to select it.
4. Use the eye dropper tool in the second section to select the background colour.
5. The colour contrast checker will automatically calculate the contrast ratio between the two selected colours. It will also tell you if you have passed the colour contrast requirements of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), which is an AODA requirement.

The image shows a composite of a web page and a software tool. On the left, a web page snippet includes a yellow box with the text "Requirement 2 of 2: Do not use colour alone to convey a message there must be another identifying feature." Below this is a section titled "What is a Contrast Ratio?" with a grid of color swatches and their contrast ratios: a "bad" red swatch (3.2:1), a "good" yellow swatch (19.6:1), a "good" green swatch (2.7:1), and a "good" blue swatch (4.0:1). A circular graphic of colored dots is also present. On the right, the "Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA)" window is open. It shows the "Foreground colour" as yellow (#FFFF00) and the "Background colour" as dark blue (#17375E). A "Sample preview" shows the text "example text showing contrast" in yellow on a dark blue background. The "WCAG 2.1 results" section shows three categories: "1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum) (AA)", "1.4.6 Contrast (Enhanced) (AAA)", and "1.4.11 Non-text Contrast (AA)", all with green checkmarks indicating they are passed. A "Contrast ratio 11.2:1" is displayed in a box. Arrows and numbers 1-5 are overlaid on the image to indicate the steps described in the text.

Part Two: Format and Structure



It is important to format and structure your document using the pre-programmed options and settings. This helps organize your content and makes your document compatible with assistive technologies.

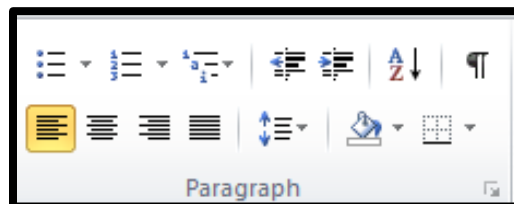
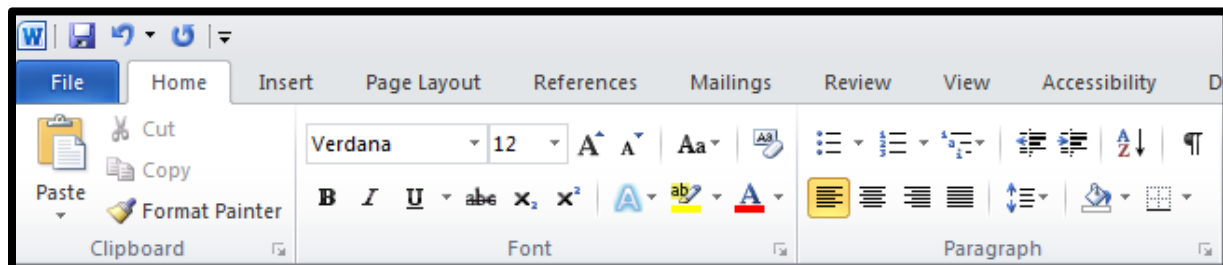
Tip! Take the time to structure your source document properly, such as in Word, PowerPoint, or InDesign. This will assist you later when converting the document to PDF, HTML, or other accessible formats.

Formatting your Content

Requirement: Use pre-programmed functions to format your document.

Paragraph Formatting

Almost all paragraph-formatting options are under the “Home” tab in the top task bar, in the “paragraph” section.



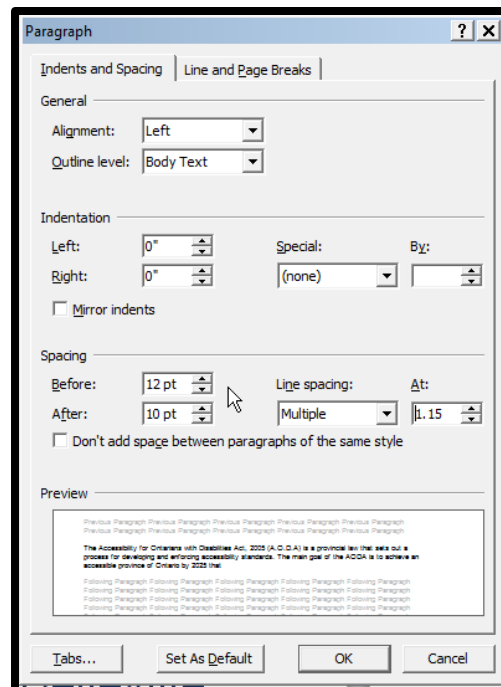
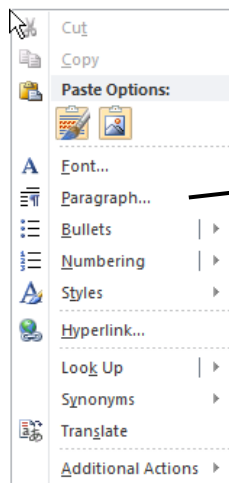
Top row icons from left to right:

- create a bulleted list
- create a numbered list
- structure a multi-level list
- decrease indent
- increase indent
- sort data
- show / hide paragraph formatting

Bottom row icons from left to right:

- left alignment
- center alignment
- right alignment
- justified alignment
- line and paragraph spacing
- shading options
- border options

You can also right click and access the paragraph-formatting options within a pop-up menu.



Blank Spaces

Creating and managing blank space properly contributes to an organized document, but more importantly keeps your document reader friendly and compatible with assistive technologies.

- × **Do not use** “Enter” to create space between headings, body text, or paragraphs
- ✓ **Do use** the “Line and Paragraph Spacing” options to add space above or below your headings, body text, or paragraphs
- × **Do not use** the “Space Bar” or “Tab” multiple times to indent lines
- ✓ **Do use** the “Increase Indent” or “Decrease Indent” options to adjust where the line starts
- × **Do not use** the “Space bar” or “Enter” repeatedly to force text onto a new page
- ✓ **Do use** the “Page Break” function (in the “Pages” section of the “Insert” tab) to move content onto a new page

Did you know? If you create blank space by using “Enter”, “Space bar”, or “Tab” a screen reader will read out “blank space, blank space, blank space....” This is a great example of why it is important to use proper formatting options to create readable and accessible documents.

Lists

When creating a list, be sure to format a real list by using the built-in formatting options. List options are in the “Home” tab of the top task bar, in the “Paragraph” section.

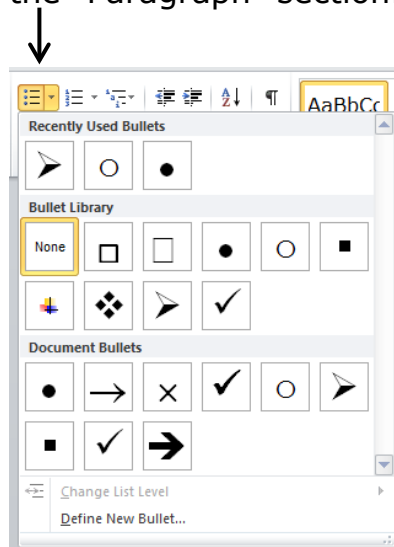


Figure 1: Bulleted Lists

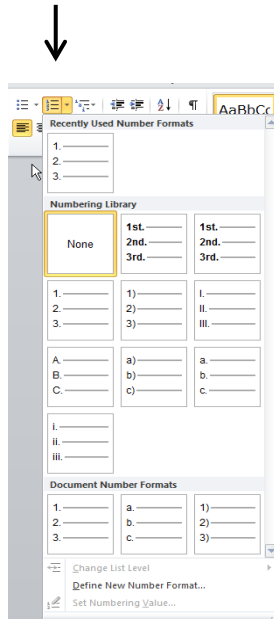


Figure 2: Numbered Lists

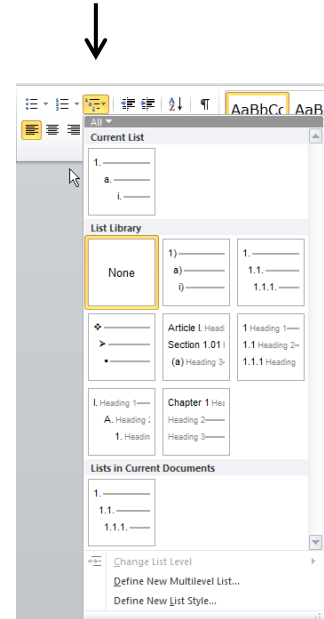


Figure 3: Multi-level Lists

- Use bullets for listing standard information
- Only use a numbered list if you need to convey an order or count of your information

Formatting proper lists is important for compatibility with assistive technologies. If you make your list manually by typing in numbers or bullets a screen reader cannot identify the list structure, and some of the meaning and relationship between content will be lost.

Given careful attention to how you structure any multi-level lists. This will maintain compatibility with assistive technologies and ensure you are conveying the relationship between information.

Remember! Structuring lists properly in your source document will assist you later when converting your document to another format like PDF.

Abbreviations

An abbreviation is a shortened form of a word or term. You need to clearly identify them to keep your content reader friendly and compatible with assistive technologies. We will focus on three common types of abbreviations: acronyms, initialisms, and contractions and shortenings.

Acronyms

- Uses the first letter of each word in a term to create a new word
- Pronounced phonetically as word, do not use periods or spaces to separate the letters
- Typically, every letter is capitalized

Example:

- “CAPTCHA” is a common acronym for “completely automated public turing test to tell computers and humans apart”. You want a screen reader to pronounce “CAPTCHA” as a word, not read out each letter individually, so do not use spaces or periods

Initialisms

- Uses the first letter of each word, but no new word is created
- Use spaces or periods in between the letters so each one is read out individually
- Typically, every letter is capitalized

Example:

- “DIY” is a common initialism for “do it yourself”. You want a screen reader to read out each letter individually as D - I - Y, not pronounce “diy” as a word

Contractions and Shortenings

- An abbreviation where you leave out some of the letters in a word to create a short form
- Shortens the written word, but often you still pronounce the full word it represents when reading
- Some common contractions and shortenings may have two meanings, so it is important to properly identify them
- If the shortened version of the word is a real word itself that still conveys the proper meaning, it does not need to be identified as an abbreviation unless there is more than one possible interpretation
- The first letter of a contraction or shortening is only capitalized if you would normally capitalize the full word

Example:

- “Dr” might be a contraction for “Doctor” or “Drive”
- “apt” is a contraction for appointment
- “Sat” is a shortening for “Saturday”
- “app” might a shortening for “application” or “appetizer”
- “info” is a shortening for “information” and is a real word that can still convey the full meaning. You would not need to identify it as an abbreviation.

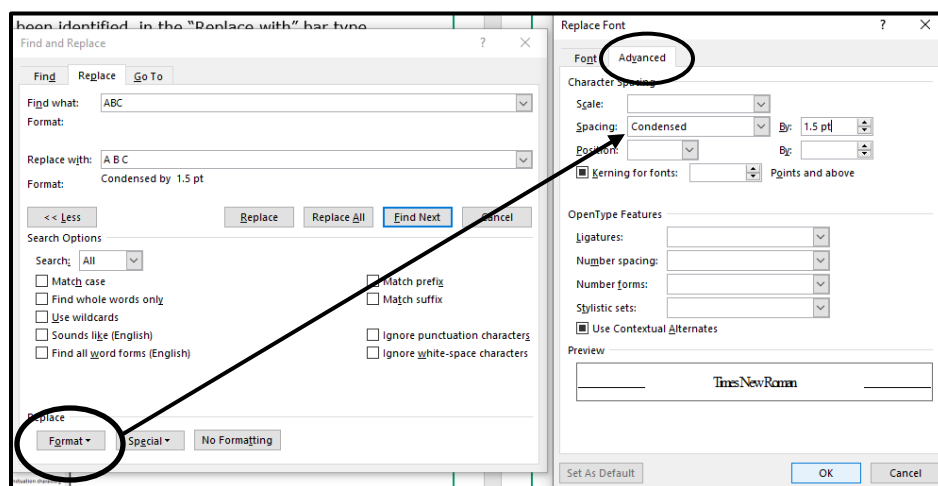
Identifying Abbreviations

For acronyms and initialisms, always fully introduce the full word or term the first time you use it and include the corresponding abbreviation in brackets immediately following it.

For contractions and shortenings, when converting your document to PDF add alternative text for the contraction or shortening so that the correct word or interpretation is read out properly by screen readers.

Formatting tip for initialisms: if you do not like the appearance of using a full space or periods between the letters of your initialism, there is a formatting adjustment you can use.

1. In your document type your initialism without spaces, for example DIY
2. In the "Home" tab of the top task bar, go to the "Editing" section (fourth in from the right side) and select "Replace"
3. A pop-up box will appear. In the "Find what" bar, type your initialism without spaces as you did in your document
4. In the "Replace with" bar type, your initialism again but this time use spaces (for example D I Y)
5. With your cursor left in the "Replace with" bar, in the bottom left corner of the box click on the "More" button to expand the options
6. Go to the "Format" menu in the bottom left of the expanded pop-up box and select "Font"
7. A second "Font" pop-up box will appear, go to the second tab "Advanced"
8. In the first section, from the "Spacing" drop down menu select "Condensed". Directly beside this it says "By", in the bar next it enter or use the arrows to set your condensed spacing to about 1.5pt and click "Okay" in the bottom right corner
9. Finally click either "Replace" or "Replace All" and your initialism will reformat itself so that the letters appear close together, while maintaining a structural space so that it can be read out properly by screen readers



Structuring your Document

Requirement: Use appropriate heading levels to structure your document

Heading levels

Heading levels are important to add structure, create logical reading order, and show relationships between your content

- A heading should be descriptive, but short
- Use heading levels in order without skipping a level, for example:
 - heading 1 = the title
 - heading 2 = top level headings
 - heading 3 = sub-section headings
 - normal = body text
- Use appropriate headings frequently to break up long documents and organize your content
- Do not select a heading level based on visual appearance. You can modify the appearance of the appropriate heading level as necessary
- Text standards still apply such as font, size, and colour. Do not choose or create a heading style that go against these general requirements

➤ Throughout your document you may go from a "heading 3" back to a "heading 2", but you cannot for example skip from a "heading 1" to a "heading 3"



Not sure how or when to use a heading level?

Consider this example: say you have a textbook,

- Heading level 1 (H1) = book title
- Heading level 2 (H2) = chapter titles
- Heading level 3 (H3) = titles of subsections within each chapter
- Heading level 4 (H4) = the practice questions of a sub-section

In the continued example below, notice how the heading levels add structure, relationship, and navigation to the content. Users of assistive technology depend on this to ensure their reading experience is logical, comprehensive, and user friendly.

For example, a person using a screen reader can access a list of the heading level structure and jump directly to the content they want to read, without having to go scroll through a full document.

(H1) Biology 101

(H2) Chapter 1: Cells

(H3) 1.1 Cell Structure and Function

(H4) 1.1.1 Cell Structure and Function Practice Questions

(H3) 1.2 Biological molecules

(H3) 1.3 Cell Membranes

(H4) 1.3.1 Cell Membrane Practice Questions

(H2) Chapter 2: Genes

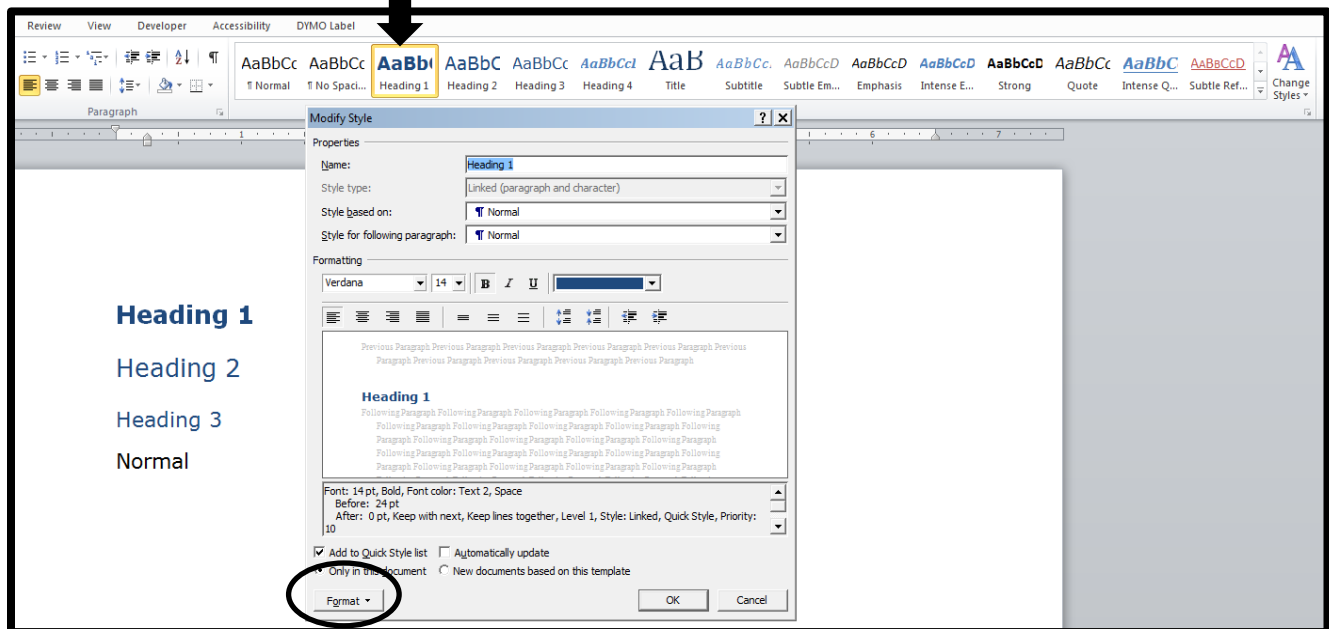
(H3) 2.1 What are Genes

(H4) 2.1.1 Genes Practice Questions

(H3) 2.2 Genes and Hereditary Characteristics

Creating and modifying a heading level:

1. Select the text you want to apply the heading level to
2. In the “Home” tab of the top taskbar, in the “Styles” section, click on the appropriate heading level
 - You have now structured the highlighted text as the selected heading level
3. To edit the style, hover your mouse over the desired heading level you want to edit, right click, and select “Modify” from the pop-up menu
4. A dialog box will appear. Here you can set features such as text font, size, and colour
5. By clicking “Format” in the bottom left corner of the dialog box you can modify other features such as “Paragraph” options (spacing) or “Borders”
6. When you are finished making changes, click “Okay” in the bottom right corner of the dialog box. Changes will apply to all text that is designated as that heading level
 - If you want to change the appearance of only one heading, not all headings at that level, you can use your standard formatting options



Caption: A screen shot on how to create a heading level, including the “Modify Style” pop-up box that allows you to edit the style or appearance of the heading level.

The Navigation Pane

The navigation pane allows you to view and, if necessary, edit your document heading levels and reading order. Double check the navigation panel to ensure your document is properly structured.

How to check and reorder the navigation pane:

1. Select the "View" tab in the top taskbar
2. In the "Show" section, check the box beside "Navigation Pane" and a panel will pop up on the left side of your document
3. Check your heading levels and reading order. If your document is properly structured, all heading levels will be shown with lower heading levels nestled under the higher heading levels
4. If the reading order is not correct you can move a heading by clicking on it and holding the click, then dragging the heading up or down the list and releasing the click to insert in the desired location
5. If a heading is missing, go back through your content and format your titles and headings using the pre-programmed options. Especially for lengthy documents, make sure all important sections of your content are represented with heading levels

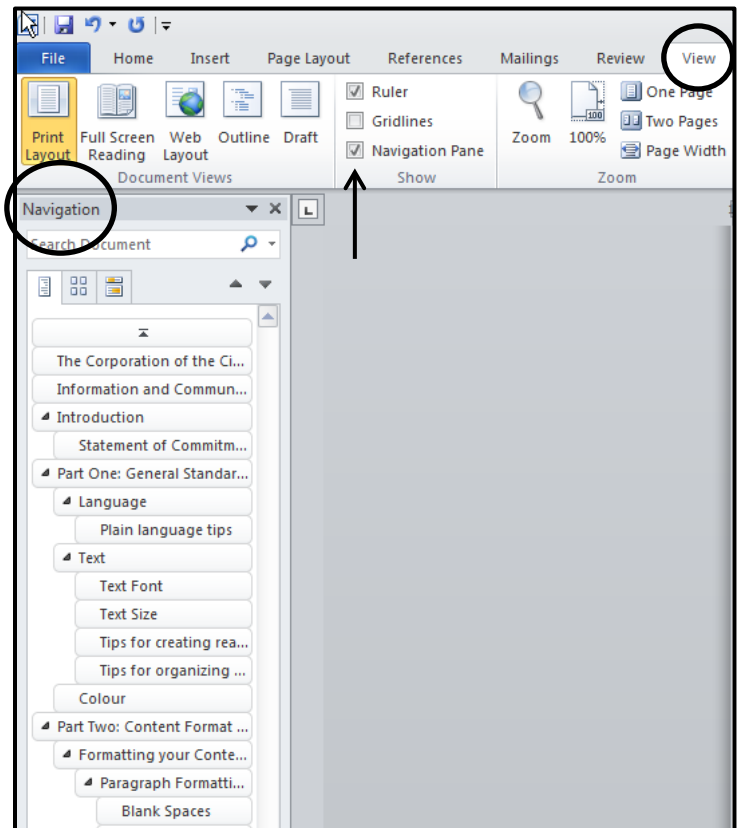


Table of Contents

A table of contents makes it easier for readers to navigate large documents. Documents 10 pages or longer should have a table of contents. If you use proper heading levels, Word can automatically create a table of contents for you.

How to create a table of contents:

1. Open the "References" tab in the top task bar
2. In the "Table of Contents" section, click on "Table of Contents" and a drop-down menu will appear
3. Select "Insert Table of Contents" from the bottom of the drop-down menu and a dialog box will appear
4. Using the options in the dialog box you can set the format and style for your table of contents including which heading levels you want to include, page numbers, and tab leaders
 - 4.1. By selecting "Modify" in the bottom right of the dialog box, an additional dialog box will open which will allow you to edit text font, size, and spacing. When you are finished, click "Okay" in the bottom right corner to take you back to the main dialog box
5. Click "Okay" in the bottom right corner of the main dialog box and the table of contents will automatically appear in your document
6. To update the table of contents right click on the table and a pop up menu will appear. Select "Update Field" and a small dialog box will open. Choose to update page numbers or entire table and click "okay". The table will update automatically

Do not create a table of contents manually

Table of Contents Best Practice

- Do not choose a dot tab leader. Chose a straight line or chose to not have a tab leader

Images and Non-text Elements

Requirement: All non-text elements need appropriate and descriptive alternative text.

Alternative Text

Alternative text, or alt text, is a short written description that gives the reader the same information that the visual element represents. It should describe the element and the message, information, spirit, or function it is meant to convey.

Do not skip or diminish the value of alt text

Appropriate alt text:

- ensures our websites and web content meet accessibility standards
- makes our websites and web content more searchable
- supports website function, particularly if it is slow to load, has difficulty displaying non-text elements, or when using mobile devices

It is a simple concept that plays a very important role. It is especially important for users of assistive technologies, such as screen readers, since it provides visual information in an alternate format.

Every non-text element must have alt text. Consider the context when determining appropriate alt text: how and why the element is used.

Never leave alt text blank

Important Note! Null alt text = ""

Null alt text signifies to assistive technology that it should skip over the element. Continue reading to learn when to use it.

Adding Alt Text

1. Select or place your cursor over the image or non-text element. Right click and from the pop-up menu select "Format Picture"
2. The "Format Picture" box will pop-up, and from the options down the left side select "Alt Text". It is the very last option in the list
3. Enter a title and description, using null alt text if appropriate, and click "Close" in the bottom right corner of the box



Steps to add alt-text

Types of Elements & Appropriate Alt Text

Informative Elements

- Typically accompany body text to visually represent information, spirit, or emotion

Example:



Appropriate alt text:

Title: Belleville Pride Parade

Description: people of all ages carry a large multi-coloured pride flag over their heads as they march through Zwicks Park as part of Belleville's Pride Parade

Functional Elements

- Signify an action such as a button, link, or other interactive feature
- Alt text should describe the functionality rather than the visual image
- Use null alt text if a functional element is accompanied by a caption or descriptive text

Example: this image is on our website as a functional link



Appropriate alt text:

Title: Facebook

Description: redirect to City of Belleville Facebook page

→ If this image had a caption that read “Facebook” or descriptive text saying “follow the City of Belleville on Facebook”, it would have been appropriate to use null alt text (“ ”)

Images of / containing text

- In general, avoid using text within images
- If images of / containing text are present, use those words as part of the alt text
- This does not exempt the element from also following any other applicable alt text rules. For example, if an informative photo has text within the image the alt text should convey both the intended message or spirit and any in-image text

Example:



Appropriate alt text:

Title: Belleville, a great place to visit

Description: Diners on the patio of Myer’s Pier waterside restaurant look on as a rowers paddle a long boat down the Bay of Quinte

Decorative Elements

- Only purpose is to add visual decoration to the page
- Provide null alt text (“ ”) to signify that assistive technology can ignore or skip over the element
- It is very important for compatibility with assistive technology that decorative elements are given null alt text and not simply left blank

Example:

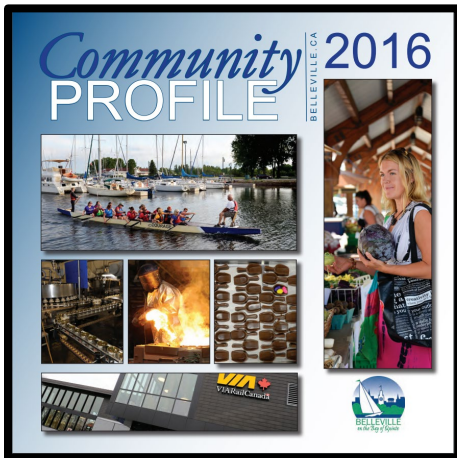


Appropriate alt text = " "

Grouped Elements

- If multiple images or non-text elements convey a single piece of information, enter alt text for one element that conveys the information for the entire group
- Use null alt text for the remaining elements of the group

Example: A group of photos makes up the cover page for this brochure



Title: Belleville Community Profile 2016
Cover Page

Description: Belleville highlights including a long boat of rowers pulling into Myers Pier Marina, fresh chocolate from Donini Chocolate Factory, the newly updated Via Rail train station, and a local woman shopping at the farmers market.

➔ The remainder of the images should have null alt text (" ")

Appropriate alt text for the first image:

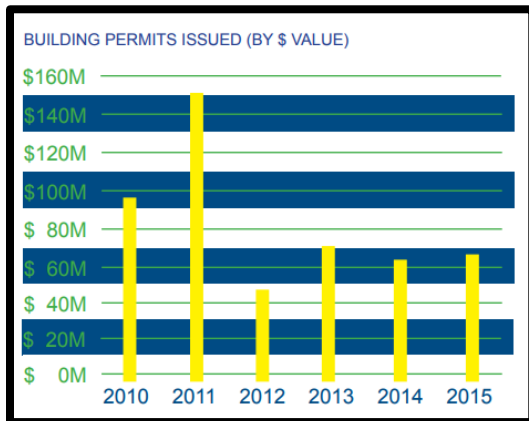
Complex Elements

- Used to convey data or detailed information, such as graphs, diagrams, and maps
- Best practice is to describe the content of complex elements in the body text of your document or web content, making direct reference to the visual element

- If descriptive text is not included, insert a caption with a summary of the information that the visual element provides
- Be sure to provide an accurate label or title for the element
- If descriptive text or an appropriate caption is present, use null alt text (" ")

Example: this complex element is a bar graph with no descriptive text

Bar Graph: Dollar Value of Building Permits Issued Per Year



Bar graph of building permits issued by dollar value per year between 2010 to 2015: 2010 approximately \$95 million, 2011 approximately \$150 million, 2012 approximately \$45 million, 2013 approximately \$70 million, 2014 approximately \$65 million, and 2015 approximately \$67 million

Appropriate alt text:

Title: Dollar Value of Building Permits Issued Per Year

Description: " "

** Since there is an appropriate, descriptive title and caption for this graph, that provide equivalent information as the visual image, we can use null alt text

Using Tables, Charts, or Graphs:

When using complex elements such as tables, charts, or graphs, keep your formatting simple so the information can be understood by a large audience. It is important to make sure these features are compatible with assistive technologies.

- Keep tables simple and avoid merged cells
- Identify a header row for tables. If a table runs across pages, format it so the header row shows at the top of each page
- Do not use colour alone to convey or differentiate information. Remember to include more than one identifying element
- Include a title that expresses the purpose of the data and be sure to identify the type of visual (example: chart, bar graph, table)
- Provide descriptive text making reference to the visual element, or use a caption to explain information that is visually presented

Note! For some complex elements, for example a financial document, it may not be possible to comply with all the above requirements. If you author such documents, you must clearly give notice that alternate formats or communication supports are available upon request.

Part Three: Municipal Website and Web Content

The World Wide Web Consortium, known as W.3.C, wrote [the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(W.C.A.G\)](#). They are the internationally recognized standard for web and web content accessibility. The AODA defers to the W.C.A.G 2.0 when setting requirements for accessible information and communications.

This section outlines the basic accessibility expectations for web content authors. It does not cover every requirement of the W.C.A.G and how to meet them. If you require further training on W.C.A.G requirements please speak with your supervisor.

In today's society, people access many of our goods, services, and programs online. We need to ensure that people with disabilities have equal opportunity to access and benefit from them, with dignity and as independently as possible.



A computer monitor surrounded by symbols representing various types of disabilities, to stress the importance of creating and maintaining accessible websites and web content.

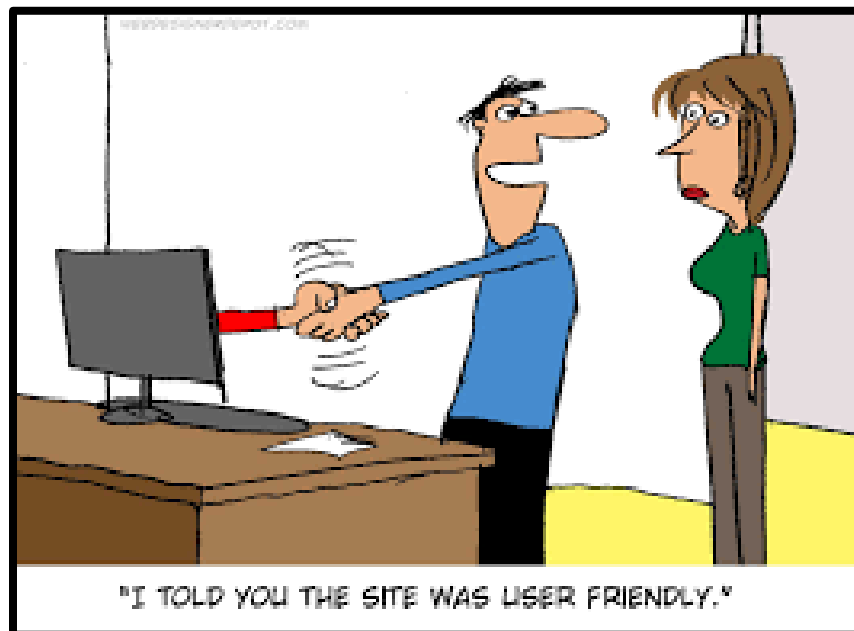
Web Content

Requirement 1 of 2: All web content must meet level AA criteria of the W.C.A.G 2.0.

Requirement 2 of 2: Any documents posted to our municipal websites must be an accessible PDF.

The general criterion for accessible information still applies. Always remember to consider features such as,

- Text font and size
- Plain language
- Colour contrast
- Format and structure
- Images and non-text elements
- Alt text



A comic of an arm reaching out of a computer screen to shake a man's hand, and the man turns to a woman and says, "I told you the site was user friendly"

Online Audio and Video

Any of our public information or communications delivered through pre-recorded audio and /or video media must also present information in an alternate format.

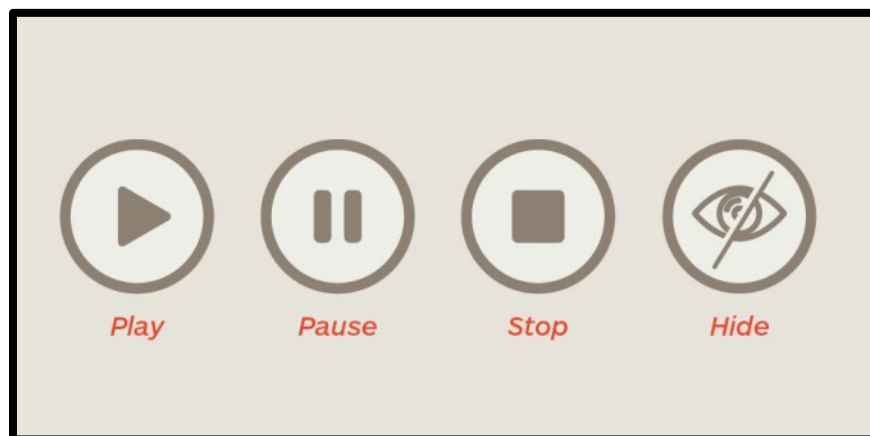
- Prerecorded audio clips must have a text transcript
- Prerecorded audio-video and video only clips must have captions

Note: At the time this document was created, the AODA provides exceptions for live captioning and prerecorded audio descriptions. This may change depending on updates to legislation.

Depending on your information, audience, and delivery method, it may be appropriate to include additional communication supports.

Example 1: For a video from Mayor and Council regarding a public safety message, it may be appropriate to include sign language interpretation

Example 2: If you are hosting a large conference, it may be appropriate to arrange for live captioning and sign language interpretation



Stop, Pause, Hide: For any media that flashes, scrolls, moves, auto-updates, or plays automatically, the user must have the option to stop, pause, and hide the content.

Hyperlinks and Link Text

A hyperlink, or simply a link, allows you to jump from your current position on a web page or in an online document to another section, or a different web page or document. Link text is the clickable text that contains the link.

You will find links on almost all websites and frequently used within web content documents. Making a link accessible and compatible with assistive technologies is a basic, but important aspect of web accessibility.

Creating Accessible Links

- Link text needs to be short, but descriptive. Never use “click here”
- Never use a website address as link text
- Links need to make sense when taken out of context.
 - Some users may choose to access a list of available links, especially if they know what they are searching for. Your link text needs to be descriptive so that its purpose or destination is clear even without the rest of your content
- Do not include the words “link” or “link to”. Assistive technologies will indicate the presence of a link option to the user
- Do not re-use link text. Each link should serve a unique purpose and have a specific function
- Avoid redundant links. There is rarely a need to have two links on the same web page that perform the same function
- Make sure you do not have any empty or broken links

Web Developers: Ensure that the software or program you use will allow a person using keyboard navigation to find and activate links

Example:

Right → Access our [Information and Communications Guide](#)

Wrong → To access our information and communications guide [click here](#)

Wrong → Access our Guide: www.informationandcommunications/guide_123

Wrong → [Download our Guide](#)

PDF and Accessibility

PDF stands for portable document format. PDFs are used for accessible web content because they can be opened on any operating system and will maintain their formatting. Additionally, PDF Reader is free, so the end user does not need to purchase a program or subscription to open your document.

Note: All documents posted to our municipal websites must be an accessible PDF, including accessible fillable forms

PDF Accessibility Checklist

Tags

- PDF has appropriate tags
 - no empty content tags
 - no redundant (double tagged content)
 - properly tagged lists, headings, paragraphs, images, and other non-text elements with standard PDF tags
 - paragraph tags accurately represent any visual paragraphs
 - all text within tags is correctly formatted, as in free from line breaks and split words
- any text with added features intended to visually identify a heading is tagged with an appropriate heading tag (H1 through H6), starting with the descriptive document title tagged as an H1
- heading tags follow a logical hierarchical progression (no skipped heading levels)
- appropriate heading tags on text that defines a section of content
- the heading text accurately describes the content
- links are tagged correctly and included in the tag structure (contain link text and link OBJR within the link tag) and appropriate alt-text
- all non-standard tags are appropriately mapped to standard PDF tags (for example "story" tags removed or modified)

- all informational content is contained in the tag structure
- the order in the tag structure is accurate and logical. The tags match the order they should be read in

Reading Order

- reading order was manually reviewed and, if necessary, corrected

Table of Contents

- accurate bookmarks are provided for documents greater than 9 pages
- table of contents is tagged with appropriate tags (TOC, TOC Item (TOCI))
- all TOC entries are functioning internal links (appropriate bookmarks)

Colour

- do not use colour alone to convey information. When using colour, include another identifying feature to convey information. For example use colour and pattern for graphs
- all colour combinations meet the 5:1 colour contrast ratio between text and any other elements and their background

Links

- links or functional elements are distinguished by a method other than color
- link text can be understood out of context

Non-text Elements

- all images conveying information are tagged as figures and included in the tag structure
- all images conveying information have alt text that provides the same level of understanding a visual user would gain
- all decorative images are tagged as artifact
- provide equivalent information in an alternate, accessible format for any complex graphic elements (data graphs)
- the document is free from images of text or information (such as scanned pictures, tables, or document text from another source)

- groups of related images are tagged in a way assistive technology users would understand

Tables and Lists

- use table tags only for data tables
- the table structure in the tag tree matches the visual table layout
- all header cells are tagged with the TH tag and all data cells are tagged with the TD tag
- all Header cells contain text
- merged cell properties are correctly spanned with Colspan and/or Rowspan
- set column and row headers appropriately using scope
- tables with more than 1 set of column and/or row headers appropriately use id/headers to associate to data cells
- all visual lists are tagged correctly with the List, List Item (LI), and LBody tags
- the number of items in the tag structure matches the number of items in the visual list
- nested lists are appropriately nested in the tag structure (multi-level lists)

General

- document title is set in Document Properties
- correct language of the document set
- fonts are embedded
- the document is free from content that flashes more than 3 times per second
- text can be resized and still considered readable when magnified to 200%
- citations and footnotes / endnotes are tagged with appropriate tags (Reference, Note)
- the PDF will pass a CommonLook validation against WCAG 2.0 level AA criteria

- Adobe has a built-in accessibility checker, however unfortunately it cannot provide a comprehensive review and is not a reliable measure of compliance with our web content responsibilities. **All PDFs need a manual review** to ensure it is in an accessible and compliant format.

-

- **Remember:** The easiest way to create an accessible PDF is to start with an accessible source document (like Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or InDesign)

PDF Forms

As much as possible, City staff should use our form builder tool to create online fillable forms. If it is not possible or practicable to have an online fillable form, you must use an accessible, fillable PDF.

Fillable PDF Forms

This guide provides an outline of what makes a PDF form fillable and accessible. It can help act as a reminder of the steps you might need to take when creating or fixing your form.

- ✓ Add form fields. You can do this manually, or if you are starting with an accessible source document that you have properly formatted to become a fillable PDF form, Adobe can try to add form fields automatically. This feature is not always functional and accurate though, so you may still need to manually add or edit form fields for each question.
- ✓ Each form field needs a visual label and tool tip for assistive technology to describe what the user needs to do with that form field
- ✓ Use radio buttons and check boxes appropriately, and ensure they have a proper tool tip. Use radio buttons when only one option from a list can be selected. Use check boxes when more than one option from a list can be selected.
- ✓ If the question is required, provide this information in the tool tip
- ✓ Tag all elements of the form appropriately, for example paragraph text, headings, form fields, non-text elements
- ✓ Ensure each form field has its own individual tag
- ✓ Check and if necessary adjust reading order
- ✓ Unless required, do not add time limits. If you must have a time limit, provide an option to save the form or extend the time

Tips for User-Friendly Forms

- Provide brief background information and / or instructions about what the form is for and how to complete it
- Keep questions short and specific, ask one thing at a time
- Avoid using asterisks (*) to indicate a required field

- Use standard entry fields for basic information such as dates, phone numbers, and emails
- Provide direction for how the user needs to complete a question. For example, if the question has multiple choice options, indicate “select one” or “select all that apply”
- Provide error messages to help users understand incorrect or missed information
- Provide a confirmation note once the user has completed the form, and if applicable describe what to expect or any next steps

For self-help instructions, check out [Adobe’s guide to creating accessible and interactive forms](#)

For City staff, if you would like full training on how to achieve these requirements please contact the Accessibility Coordinator.

P D F Fillable Form Accessibility Checklist

- each question has form fields that are accurate and functional
- all form fields are correctly tagged
- all form fields contain understandable labels and descriptive tooltips
- tooltips contain all formatting requirements
- required fields are programmatically set and identified in the tooltips
- the tab order of the form fields is logical
- radio buttons and check boxes have be used and tagged appropriately, including appropriate tooltips
- all standard PDF tagging requirements are met, such as paragraph and heading tags

Helpful Resources

[W3C PDF Techniques for WCAG 2.0](#)

If you would like to learn more about why document and web accessibility are important, check out [the Perspectives Videos from W.3.C.](#)