

Table of Contents

Creating Accessible Web Content	1
Writing Styles	2
Use Proper Text Formatting and Styles	2
Check Color Contrast	2
Add Alternative Text to Images	3
Embedded or Attached Audio and/or Video Files	3
Verify that Attachments are Accessible	3
Descriptive Links	4
Create Accessible Tables	4
Checklist	5

Creating Accessible Web Content

The Town of Sudbury currently uses WordPress to manage website content. By April 26, 2028, all online information and documents must be accessible to people with disabilities and others who use assistive technologies. Staff should begin following accessibility best practices now to prepare for the upcoming compliance standards. WordPress generally includes built-in forms that require you to enter the necessary information. Some content types, such as News Articles, provide an editor where you can enter text, images, and links similar to creating a Microsoft Word document. Unfortunately, these do not have built-in accessibility checkers and you will need to check your final web posting using available external tools and manual checks. Following these practices helps meet ADA accessibility guidelines and creates a better experience for all users, not just those with disabilities.

Writing Styles

The subject and body of the content should be clear and concise. The purpose of the content should use plain language targeting the intended audience. Some best practices include

- Spell out abbreviations before using them. For example, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).
- Avoid jargon and unfamiliar technical terms whenever possible
- Avoid the overuse of ALL CAPITAL LETTERS.
- Avoid references to shape, size, sound, color, or page location.
- Use inclusive language.
- Avoid using a trademark unless referring to a specific product.

Use Proper Text Formatting and Styles

When creating content, do not use background images or stationery and use heading levels to organize and separate sections of content.

- Use a simple, clear font, preferably a sans serif font, size 12 or larger.
- Do not modify the text space to “squish” the letters, words, or sentences too close.
- Use black text on a white background to ensure appropriate color contrast
- Create bulleted and numbered lists using the built-in list tools.
- Use left-aligned paragraph text. Full Justification should be avoided.
- Where Headings are used, ensure proper heading order.
- Ensure forms use properly labeled fields and provide clear error messages.

Check Color Contrast

By default, content should use a style of black text on a white background. If you add colored text, text highlighting, and/or background images, make sure you test for color contrast, and that the contrast ratio is 4.5:1 or greater. Never use color as the only method of emphasis or meaning.

Add Alternative Text to Images

Images can help reinforce and enhance your content. However, for users with vision impairments, you need to provide a text explanation using Alternative Text (alt text) that can be read by a screen reader. Guidelines for alt text include

- All images must have alt text or be marked as decorative. In WordPress, if you do not mark an image with alt text, it automatically marks it as decorative.
- Avoid text on images and do not use images that are just text
- Alt text should consider the context of the image and be as meaningful as possible.
 - Does the image convey information or tell a story? Then it should describe the image concept
 - Is it a screenshot in a tutorial? Then it should be more literal and exact
 - Is the image functional? Then it should describe the function instead of how it looks
- Do not use “a picture of”, “an image of”, “a photo of”, “the blah blah icon”, etc. as the screen reader will already announce the item which has the alt text.
- Avoid excessive use of images

Embedded or Attached Audio and/or Video Files

If audio or video files are embedded, linked, or attached to web content, you need to ensure that accessibility features such as captions, transcripts, and audio description are available as needed. Autoplay should be avoided and provide controls that allow users to pause or stop audio and video playback.

Verify that Attachments are Accessible

Documents attached to web content should be accessible.

- Attachments should have a unique and descriptive name.
- Attachments that are not accessible, such as a scanned document in .tif or .jpg format, cannot be read by screen readers, and should include a description of the attachment at the bottom of the content.

Descriptive Links

Links should have descriptive text that tells the user what to expect when they select the link.

- Avoid generic terms such as “Click Here”, “Learn More”, and “Read More”
- Create a link text that is as specific as possible. For example, use “Download the FY24 Report (PDF)” instead of “Click Here”.
- The link should make sense even out of context.
- Avoid using full or raw URLs as they are confusing to a screen reader.
- For content that will be viewed online and in print
 - Use descriptive links for digital content.
 - Include a shortened URL for printed copies (for example, using TinyURL.com).
 - Add a QR code when appropriate.

[Battle of Red Horse Tavern](#)

tinyurl.com/BattleRedHorseTavern



This allows users of both digital and printed versions of the content to access the website.

Create Accessible Tables

Tables can create difficulties for screen readers unless there is a clear distinction between header and data cells.

- If available, use built-in table tools to insert simple data tables.
- Do not use nested rows, columns, or merged cells
- Mark the header row and, when applicable, the first column as headers.
- Avoid blank rows, columns, and cells.
- Do not use tables for layout or formatting purposes.
- If you need to provide complex data in table format, attach the information as an accessible document.

Checklist

- Meaningful page title
- Content is written in plain language
- Proper heading structure
- Logical organization
- Alt text for images
- Sufficient color contrast
- Keyboard navigation support
- Accessible forms
- Captions/transcripts for media
- Descriptive links
- Tested with accessibility tools