# Checklists for Accessible Documents

Please remember:

- You are creating content for students and your colleagues in the District, as well as anyone coming into contact with College of the Desert programs and services.
- These guidelines apply to any electronic information distributed online using District websites, the Portal, Canvas, or email.
- These guidelines are also highly recommended for content intended for use in face-to-face settings – it helps that the content is already accessible if an alternate format is requested.

## How to Use These Checklists

1. The General Checklist applies to any type of document or content.  Use it in Word, PowerPoint, even email messages in Outlook.
2. If you are creating tables in any type of document or content, also use the General Checklist for Tables.
3. Finish by using the checklist for a specific type of document or content.
4. Links to step-by-step resources are included if you have questions.
5. For additional assistance, contact Nicolás Crisosto, extension 4823.

## Checklists

## General Checklist for All Documents

| For All Documents | Yes |
| --- | --- |
| Did you use a legible font like Verdana 12 point for the text?<br>Fonts for the Web and Electronic Documents | |
| Did you use the built-in styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.) instead of changing font sizes and styles (bold, color, etc.) individually?<br>Add Heading Styles in Microsoft Office | |
| Did you use the built-in bulleted and numbered list tools instead of making them individually?<br>Make Lists in Microsoft Office<br>Working with Lists in Microsoft Word | |
| Do all images that communicate information have meaningful alternative text descriptions?<br>Add Alternative Text Descriptions in Microsoft Office<br>Create Meaningful Descriptions of Graphs and Charts | |
| Did you avoid using color as the only way to communicate information?<br>Tips to Not Rely on Color Alone | |
| Does all text have high contrast with the background?<br>Download an App to Check the Colors You Use for Good Contrast | |
| Did you change the display text for all links to ordinary language, describing the destination or purpose of the links?<br>Ten Tips for Writing Meaningful Link Text<br>Create Accessible Links | |
| Did you use underlining only for links?<br>Underlining of Links | |

# General Checklist for Tables in All Documents

| For All Tables | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you consider using columns to display side-by-side information instead of tables?<br>Creating Columns in Word | |
| Did you consider using headings and lists to organize information instead of tables?<br>Add Heading Styles in Microsoft Office<br>Make Lists in Microsoft Office | |
| Did you avoid merging or splitting cells?<br>Create Accessible Tables in Word | |
| Did you avoid creating empty cells in data tables? | |
| Do all table cells contain only text and not images or lists? | |
| Do all tables have a title row, caption, or alternative text description? | |
| Is the first row in all tables with data marked as the header row?<br>Mark a Table Row as the Header Row in Microsoft Office | |
| Is the header row repeated if the table spans multiple pages?<br>Repeat Table Header Rows in Microsoft Office | |

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## Word Checklist

In addition to using the General Checklist for All Documents, Microsoft Word has specific tools that can help find and fix several issues.

Columns are a great way to organize information. Plus, columns are usually easier to format and keep accessible. This is why a best practice is to avoid using tables for layout.

If your document uses tables for data, you will also want to review the General Checklist for Tables in All Documents.

| For All Word Documents | Yes |
| --- | --- |
| Did you use the Columns tool instead of typing spaces or Tab to layout side-by-side information?<br>Creating Columns in Word | |
| Did you use paragraph indenting to create blank space in front of or after text instead of typing spaces?<br>Paragraph Formatting | |
| Did you use paragraph spacing instead of creating blank lines with Enter?<br>Line and Paragraph Spacing in Word | |
| Did you check the outline view or print preview to make sure that all items in the document are in logical order?<br>Switch to the Outline View in Word | |
| Did you use the built–in Table of Contents tool instead of making one individually?<br>Use the Table of Contents Tool in Word | |
| Windows and macOS: Did you run the Accessibility Checker?<br>Run the Accessibility Checker | |

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## Email and Attachments Checklist

Microsoft Outlook has most of the same tools as Word. Remember to use the General Checklist for All Documents first.

If your email message uses tables for data, you will also want to review the General Checklist for Tables in All Documents.

| For Email and Attachments | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you use paragraph spacing instead of creating blank lines?<br>Adjust Space between Sentences and Paragraph in Email | |
| Did you use the built-in bulleted and numbered list tools instead of making them individually?<br>Add Accessible Lists to Email | |
| Did you use the built-in table tool?<br>Add Accessible Tables to Email | |
| Did you review documents attached to the email with these accessibility checklists? | |
| Windows and macOS: Did you run the Accessibility Checker?<br>Run the Accessibility Checker | |

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## PowerPoint Checklist

| For PowerPoint Documents | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you use a PowerPoint template and apply layouts from a slide master such as "Title Slide" and "Slide with a Table"?<br><br>Use Slide Templates<br>Use Slide Masters | |
| Did you give each slide a unique title? | |
| Did you use a legible font size like Verdana 24 point for a presentation meant to be projected on a screen?<br><br>Font Size | |
| Did you use PowerPoint tables instead of screen shots of tables?<br><br>Insert a Table into a PowerPoint Slide | |
| Did you look at the Arrange: Selection Pane (Windows) or Reorder Objects (Mac) view on each slide to make sure all items on the slide are in the correct reading order?<br><br>Use the Selection Pane | |
| Did you avoid using flashing/flickering text, animations, and slide transitions in the document? | |
| Windows and macOS: Did you run the Accessibility Checker?<br><br>Run the Accessibility Checker | |

# Excel or Spreadsheet Checklist

Accessibility of a spreadsheet mostly comes from the design and layout of the information.

Keep in mind the General Checklist for Tables in All Documents.

| For All Excel or Other Spreadsheets | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you use Excel's table tools to turn the rows and columns in your document into a table?<br>Create more accessible tables in Excel (Windows)<br>Create and format tables in Excel (macOS) | |
| Did you provide a text alternative for embedded graphs or charts?<br>Add Alternative Text Descriptions in Microsoft Office | |
| Windows and macOS: Did you run the Accessibility Checker?<br>Run the Accessibility Checker | |

## Special Note

Spreadsheets are not fully accessible document formats.  Consider creating a Word version of the information or other alternate format.

## PDF Checklist

PDF files can be challenging to make fully accessible.  Even then, some users have difficulty with PDF files.  A best practice is to provide original Word, PowerPoint, or Excel files where possible.

The Information Technology Accessibility Specialist can work with you to help make sure PDF files are accessible.

Please note: If you are using PDF forms, you will need to work with the Accessibility Specialist for options to make the PDF files accessible.

| For All PDF Documents | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you start with an accessible document from Word or a similar program?<br><br>General Checklist for All Documents | |
| Did you create the PDF file using the "Create PDF" option from the Acrobat ribbon or "Save as Adobe PDF" option in a program like Microsoft Word?<br><br>Converting to PDF | |
| Did you run the Accessibility Checker in Adobe Acrobat Pro?<br><br>Create and Verify PDF Accessibility with Adobe Acrobat Pro | |
| If you made any changes to your PDF after creating the PDF, did you run the Accessibility Checker one more time to make sure there were no new issues? | |

# CANVAS and Web Page Editors Checklist

CANVAS and other web pages can be very accessible.  Just remember, when creating or editing web pages, the General Checklist for All Documents applies.  Also, if the web page contains a data table, you will want to review the General Checklist for Tables in All Documents.

CANVAS users can visit Accessibility within Canvas for more resources or contact the Distance Education and Instructional Design Coordinator.

For questions about web pages, contact the Webmaster.

| For All Online Content | Yes |
|---|---|
| Did you build the content in the rich text editor or remove all text formatting before copying and pasting from another program?<br>    Modify Text in the CANVAS Rich Content Editor<br>    Remove All Formatting Before Copying and Pasting | |
| Did you mark images and non-text elements as decorative if they do not communicate information? | |
| Do all videos have accurate and synchronized closed captions?<br>    Creating Accessible Videos | |
| Does all text have high contrast with the background, including text in banners and images? | |
| Is the first row in data tables marked as the header row?  If needed, is the first column in data tables marked as the header column? | |
| Did you review documents embedded or linked on the page with these accessibility checklists? | |
| In CANVAS, did you run the Accessibility Checker?<br>    Accessibility Checker in the Rich Content Editor | |