



Checklist for Accessible PDF 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. Links to step-by-step resources are included if you have questions.
4. For additional assistance, contact [Nicolás Crisosto](#), extension 4823.



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? 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? Converting to PDF	
Did you run the Accessibility Checker in Adobe Acrobat Pro? 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?	



General Checklist for All Documents

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



General Checklist for Tables in All Documents

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