



# CREATING ACCESSIBLE MICROSOFT WORD 2013 DOCUMENTS (WINDOWS)



## Heading Styles

Create a uniform heading structure through use of styles in Word. This allows screen readers to navigate a document and improves accessibility for everyone.

### Adding and Editing Headings

1. Select the text and *choose the appropriate style* under *Styles* on the *Home* ribbon. (e.g., "Heading 1")
2. Headings 1, 2, or 3 can also be assigned using **CTRL + ALT + 1, 2, or 3**, respectively.

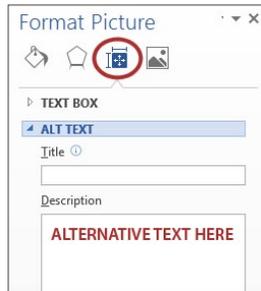


## Alternative Text for Images

Images can be given appropriate alternative text in Word. This alt text is read by a screen reader in a Word file and should remain intact when exporting to HTML or PDF.

### Adding Alt Text

1. Right-click on the image and choose *Format Picture*.
2. Select the *Layout & Properties* icon and choose *Alt Text*.
3. Enter appropriate alt text only in the *Description* field (not the *Title* field).

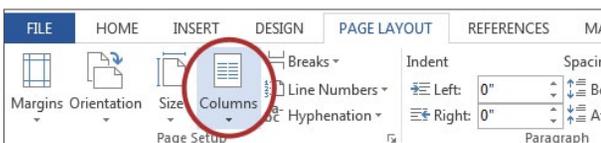


## Columns

When creating columns, *always use true columns*, not columns created by hand with the *Tab* key.

### Creating Columns

1. Select *Page Layout* on the ribbon.
2. Select *Columns* under *Page Setup* and choose the *appropriate number of columns*.

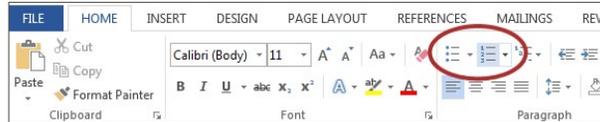


## Lists

Use *true numbered and bulleted lists* to emphasize a point or a sequence of steps.

### Creating Lists

1. Select the *Numbered List* or *Bulleted List* option on the *Home* ribbon, under the *Paragraph* section.

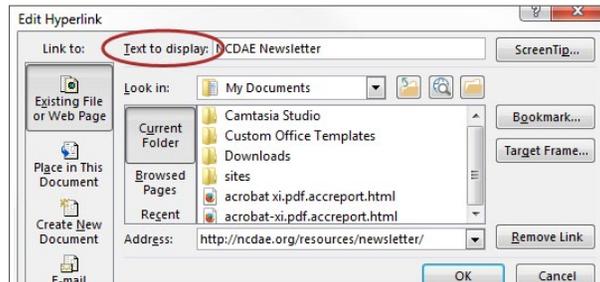


## Links

Word *automatically creates a hyperlink* when a user pastes a full URL onto a page. These may not make sense to screen reader users, so *more information is needed*.

### Adding Hyperlinks

1. Select the text you want linked, right click, and select *Hyperlink* or **CTRL + k**.
2. Make sure the text in the *Text to Display* field is a meaningful description and type the link URL in the *Address* bar.

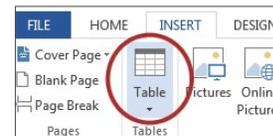


## Data Tables

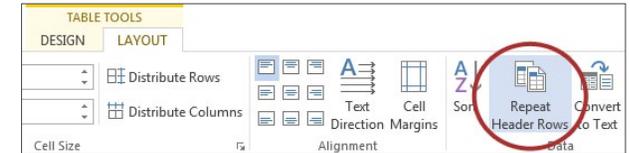
Accessible tables need a *clear table structure* and *table headers* to help guide a screen reader user.

### Creating Tables

1. Select the *Insert* tab on the ribbon, then select *Table > Insert Table*.



2. To add table headers to the first row, select *Table Tools > Layout* on the ribbon, then choose the *Repeat Header Rows* option in the *Data* section.

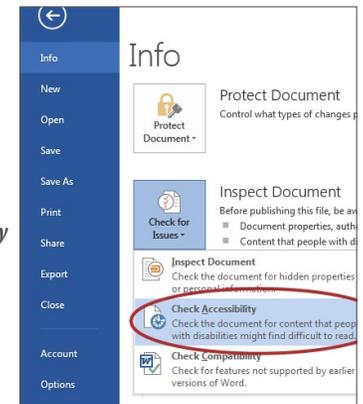


Options in the *Design* tab may be used to change appearance but will not provide the necessary accessibility information.

## Accessibility Checker

Word includes an accessibility resource that *identifies accessibility issues*.

1. Select *File > Info*.
2. Select the *Check for Issues* button and choose *Check Accessibility*.
3. The Accessibility Checker task pane will show *accessibility errors, warnings, and tips* on how to repair the errors. Select specific issues to see *Additional Information* at the bottom of the task pane.



## Other Principles

- Ensure that font size is sufficient, around **12 points**.
- Provide *sufficient* contrast.
- Don't use color *as the only way* to convey content.
- Provide a *table of contents* for long documents.
- Use *simple* language.