Microsoft Word 2010

MISA AODA Web Accessibility Toolkit

MISA Ontario

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Creating Accessible Documents in Microsoft Word 2010

Use Microsoft Word to format your report to make it as clear of accessibility errors as possible before saving as a PDF. Then, follow the steps in the Adobe Acrobat Pro document that your organization uses to create your report.

Format Your Report in Word 2010

Clear, Useful Content

- Where possible avoid government jargon and use plain language that the average reader will understand (Grade 3-6 level is ideal but it is **important to know your audience and write to their level of understanding**).
- Keep your sentences and paragraphs short and succinct – use bulleted lists to set off key points or lists.
- Always provide meaningful content that is focused on your customers' needs.
- Consistency is key. Refer to your organization's Brand Guidelines or Writing Style Sheet.

Set up Microsoft Word

1. Navigation Pane (View > Check off Navigation Pane)
2. Ruler (View > Check off Ruler)
3. Check for Accessibility (File > Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility)

General Text Recommendations

- Use Quick Styles in the Home ribbon to change styles.
- Text should be at least 12 point.
- Multiple spaces are read as "blanks." Do not use more than 2 in a row.
- Don't create your own custom styles (different fonts, font styles, colours, etc.). or draw lines to break up content. Consider Colour Contrast.
- Format lines as part of the paragraph style.
- Don't use text boxes.
- Don't underline text or use contrasting text colour.
- Don't use multiple spacing or multiple tabs to align text in rows or columns.
- Use "space before" and "space after" style properties to create space between paragraphs. (Avoid using Enter to create space).
- Choose standard fonts, and avoid using decorative and handwriting-style fonts.

Document Properties

Descriptive details can be added to the document properties including Language, Author, Title, Subject, Status, Comments.

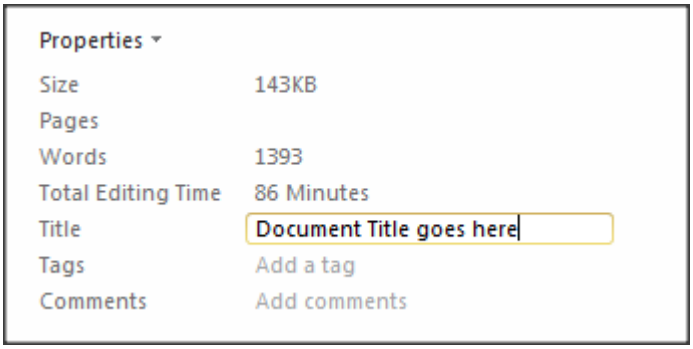
How add/change Document Properties:

1. Open the **File** tab > **Info**> **Properties** and place your cursor into a field on the right hand side of the Word document to update the title.
2. Add appropriate descriptive details to the document:

   Required – Title: The title of the document.

Optional:

- **Author**: The name of the individual or department who has authored the document
- **Subject**: The topic of the contents of the document.
- **Comments**: The summary or abstract of the contents of the document.
- **Keywords:** enhance search by providing two or three keywords about the document. Separate your keywords with commas.



Headings

- Headings provide a Table of Contents for users of adaptive technologies (i.e. screen readers) so they can 'jump' to a section they are interested in.
- Use headings (h1, h2) to convey document structure. Divide large blocks of information into more manageable groups or chunks (where natural and appropriate).
- Every content page must include:
  - Heading 1 <h1> at the top of the page.
  - Heading 1 is used only once per page. Subsequent headings must follow the logical/sequential order:
    - Heading 2 <h2> always follows a Heading 1 <h1>
    - Heading 3 <h3> always follows a Heading 2 <h2>
    - and so forth, up to Heading 6 <h6>, if needed.

How To Add Headings:

1. Highlight the text in the document that requires a heading style.
2. Select the **Home** tab in the top menu.
3. Select the required heading style in the Styles section of the menu.
   - **Heading 1** will apply the Heading 1 style to the selected text in the document. There should only be one Heading 1 per page.
   - **Heading 2** will apply the Heading 2 style; and so on up to Heading 6.

What headings do you have in your document?

Use the navigation pane by choosing the "View" tab and check "Navigation Pane."

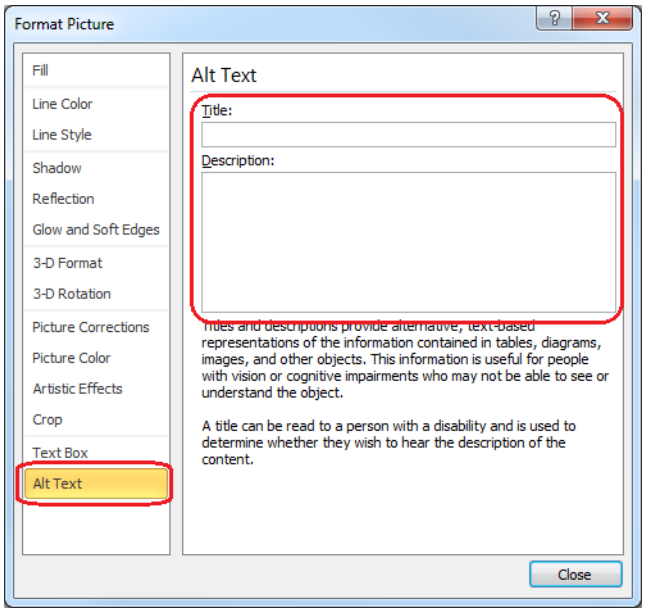
Images, Pictures, Logos, and Graphs

- Use an Alt Description that is less than 75 characters in length, and include enough information for a visually-impaired reader to easily understand what the image is showing.
- Alt Descriptive text is read by screen readers to describe graphics and images for people who are blind or have low vision.
- Do not use “image of”, “picture of” as most screen readers will already state this.

Good Alt Description: *Teacher talking to a student in a classroom.*
Poor Alt Description: *Picture of female teacher talking to a teenage male student with a yellow t-shirt and jeans.*

How to Add Alt Descriptions to Images:

1. Right-click on the image to be formatted. The **Format Picture** box.
2. Click on the **Alt Text** tab.
3. Add the appropriate Alt Description for the image. **You do not need to add a Title**.
4. Click on **Close** to apply the changes.



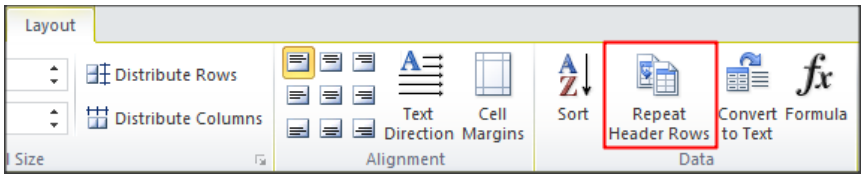
Tables

Use tables conservatively and primarily to represent tabular data – avoid using tables if there is a simpler way to represent the information (text).

- Don't use tables to format or layout content on a page, such as to position columns.
- Keep tables simple by avoiding merged cells and dividing complex data sets into smaller tables, where possible.

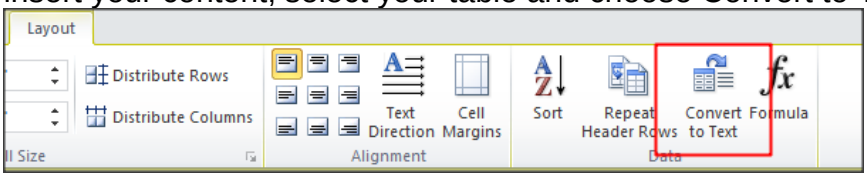
Table cells should be marked as table headers when they serve as labels to help interpret other cells in the table. Ensure your table header cell labels should be concise and clear.

1. Go to menu item: **Insert**
2. In the **Tables** section, select the **Tables** icon
3. Select the number of rows and columns you would like your table to have.
4. Select the table and a **Table Tools** menu item should appear.
5. Go to menu item: **Table Tools > Design**
6. In the **Table Style Options** section, select the **Header Row** check box
   Note: Whenever possible, keep tables simple with just 1 row of headings.

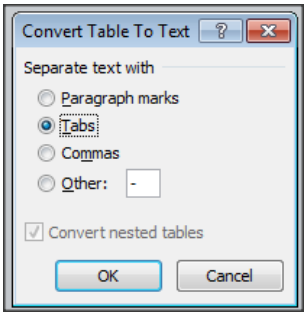


Other Helpful Tools:

The convert to text tool can be used if you use a table for layout purposes. Create a table, insert your content, select your table and choose Convert to Text.



Choose tabs to keep the formatting of your table.



Descriptive Links

Every hyperlink in a Word document needs to be accessible for all readers. Ensure your links are contextual. Don't use words such as "Click Here" or "For more information" to create your link. Screen readers read these words out loud instead of the actual link.

How To Add A Hyperlink To A Document:

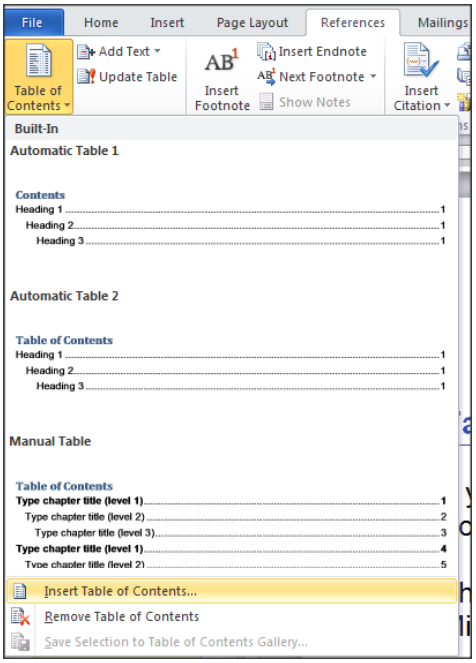
1. Highlight the text in the Word document that represents the link.
2. Open the **Insert Hyperlink** box:
   - Click on the **Insert** tab. Select **Hyperlink**; or
   - Right Click on the highlighted text. Select **Hyperlink**.
3. Select an Existing File or Web Page.
4. Click on OK to apply the changes.

Table of Contents

If you a creating a longer document, insert a table of contents for all users to quickly navigate from page to page of your document.

The table of contents will pull from the headings you have labeled using the Quick Styles in Microsoft Word 2010.

1. Select the References Ribbon
2. Choose Table of Contents
3. Select “Insert Table of Contents”



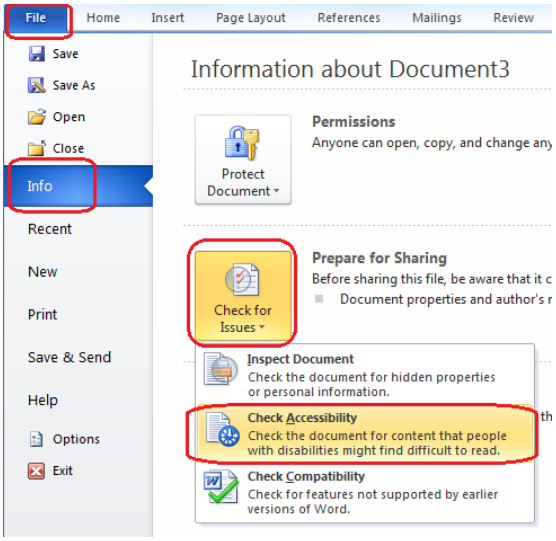
4. Ensure “Use hyperlinks” is selected

Perform an Accessibility Check in Word 2010

You can perform a **preliminary accessibility check within Microsoft Word** 2010 to see how accessible your document is.

This check does not guarantee compliance with AODA standards, but can be used as a starting point in ensuring your document is on its way to becoming accessible.

1. Within the *File* tab > *Info*> *Check for Issues* > *Check Accessibility*.
2. A panel on the right side of your screen will appear, highlighting any Errors, Warnings, and Tips regarding the content of your page.
3. Fix the listed errors, and check accessibility again until you receive a message that there are no accessibility issues in your document.



The following errors can be ignored

Hyperlink text is meaningful – just make sure you haven't used words such as "click here" and "for more information" as your links.

Missing Alt Text – Table – only skip this rule when it applies to a table. Adobe Acrobat Pro does not keep the table summary tag when converted from Microsoft Word 2010. We will need to manually add in a summary to all our tables in Adobe Acrobat Pro.

Save Word 2010 Document as a PDF

Once you have created your Word 2010 document (with accessibility in mind), it can be converted to a PDF file. The "Save file as PDF" option does not guarantee accessibility of the PDF, and all content within the document **should still be manually reviewed** to make sure it is accessible.

1. Click on File > *Save As*.
2. Name your PDF file appropriately.
3. Select "*Save as PDF*" from the "*Save as type*" drop-down menu.
4. Click on *Save*.

You are now ready to check your PDF for accessibility in Adobe Acrobat Pro 9, 10 or 11. Use the corresponding document in the MISA toolkit to continue creating an accessible PDF document.