



Accessible Word Document Checklist

Best Practices

1. Getting Started

- I used the Accessible Word Template (or my campus/office template).

2. Document Structure

- I used a clear, meaningful file name.
- I updated the document properties (Title and Author).
- I used built-in Word **heading styles** (Heading 1, Heading 2, etc.).
- I used Word's **built-in bullet and number** tools.
- I avoided text boxes; if used, I set them to **Inline with text**.
- I did **not** use tables for layout.
- I used Word's **column** feature when needed.
- I inserted page breaks using **Insert** → **Page Break**, not the Enter key.

3. Data Tables

- I placed the table title **above** the table.
- I marked the header row.
- I did **not** merge or split cells.
- Table colors meet **contrast guidelines**.
- I did not use color alone to show meaning.



- For documents over 5 pages, I used an **automatic Table of Contents**.

4. Content Best Practices

- I used a readable font (Arial, Verdana, Times New Roman) at **size 12+**.
- All text is **left-aligned**.
- I used **underlining only for links**.
- I used **bold**, not all caps or italics, for emphasis.
- I followed **plain language**: short sentences, clear wording, no jargon.
- I used **descriptive link text** (e.g., “2023 Financial Statement”).

5. Images & Charts

- I added **alt text** for all images.
- For charts, I included **alt text + a written chart description**.
- All images/charts are set to **Inline with text**.
- I gave charts **titles** and, when needed, **axis labels**.
- I added **data labels** (categories + numbers/percentages).
- I chose an **accessible color palette** (monochrome or colorblind-safe).

6. Final Steps

- I ran Word’s Accessibility Checker.
- I avoided saving as a PDF unless ***absolutely necessary***.