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Key Terms

Accessible/Accessibility

A document is accessible if it can be read by a screen reader in the proper order. A video is accessible if it is captioned. Audio is accessible if it has a transcript.

Alternative Text

Alternative Text (Alt Text) is a description of a graphic / picture. When a screen reader (JAWS) comes upon a graphic, it will announce that it is a graphic. Unless there is alternative text, the user will not know what the graphic is or why it is there.

Job Access with Speech (JAWS)

JAWS is a text-to-speech screen reader program. Users who are blind use this software to navigate the internet, Word and PDF documents, and other computer programs by only using the keyboard. Screen readers are also used by individuals with learning disabilities. A JAWS user can better navigate the Internet, Word, PowerPoint, Excel and PDF documents if they contain Headings, alternative text, and properly labeled links. JAWS reads documents from top to bottom, left to right.

Optical Character Recognition (OCR)

OCR is the electronic conversion of images to recognizable text. When users scan a document, the document is saved as an image. Once OCR has been performed, documents can be read by text to speech programs and text can be copied and pasted. The text will also be searchable.

Screen Reader

A text-to-speech program that allows the user to listen to what is on the screen.

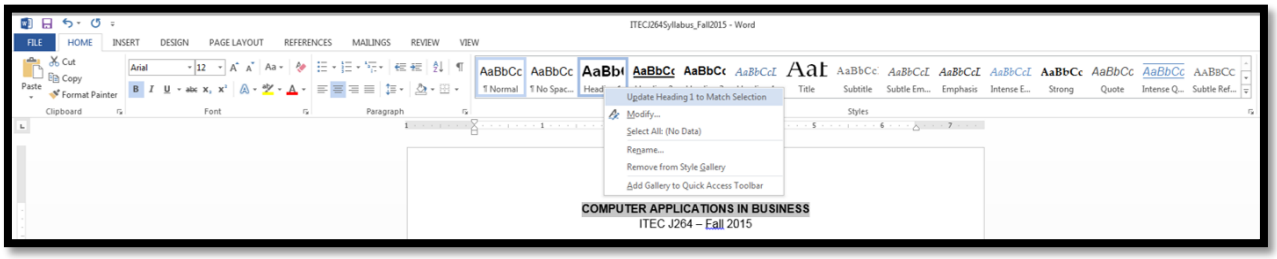
Usable

A document may be accessible because a screen reader can read it, but it may not be usable because a screen reader user may not be able to easily navigate through the document. By giving a document Headings, alt text for graphics, and properly labeled links, the document will be accessible and usable.

Microsoft Word

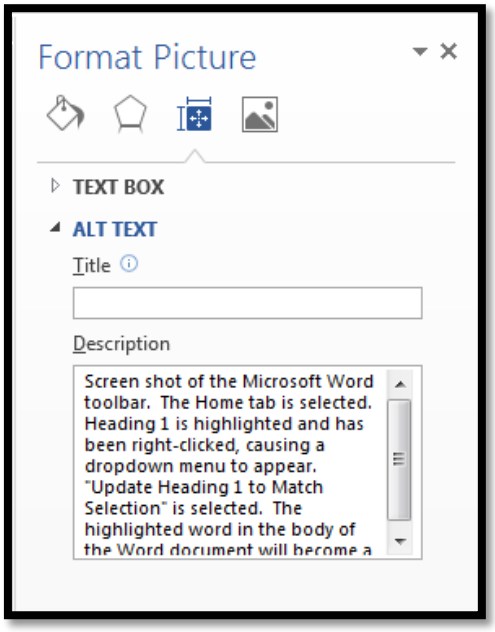
Properly format headings to structure documents.

1. Highlight the text you want to use as a heading.
2. Click “Home” on the Microsoft Word ribbon.
3. Right-click Heading 1 (or 2, or 3).
4. Select “Update Heading to Match Selection”.



Add alternative text (alt text) to images.

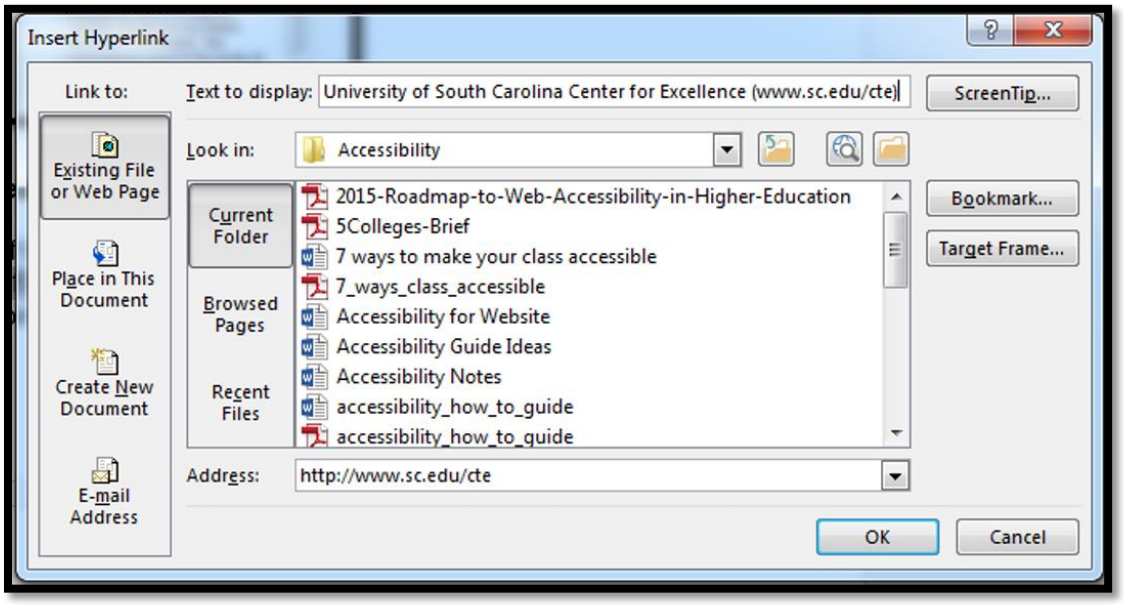
1. Right-click the picture.
2. Click “Format Picture”.
3. Click the “Layout & Properties” icon.
4. Type detailed alt text in the “Description” textbox.



Properly label links with meaningful descriptions.

1. Type the description of the hyperlink.
    a. Ex. University of South Carolina Center for Excellence
2. Highlight the description and then right-click.
3. Select “Hyperlink”.
4. Enter the web address in the “Address” box.

5. In the “Text to Display” box, include the URL in parentheses after the description.
6. Click “OK”.



University of South Carolina Center for Excellence (www.sc.edu/cte)

Use pre-formatted list styles when making lists.

1. Select the text that should be made into a list.
2. Click “Home” on the Microsoft Word ribbon.
3. Select the “Bullets” or “Numbering” icon.

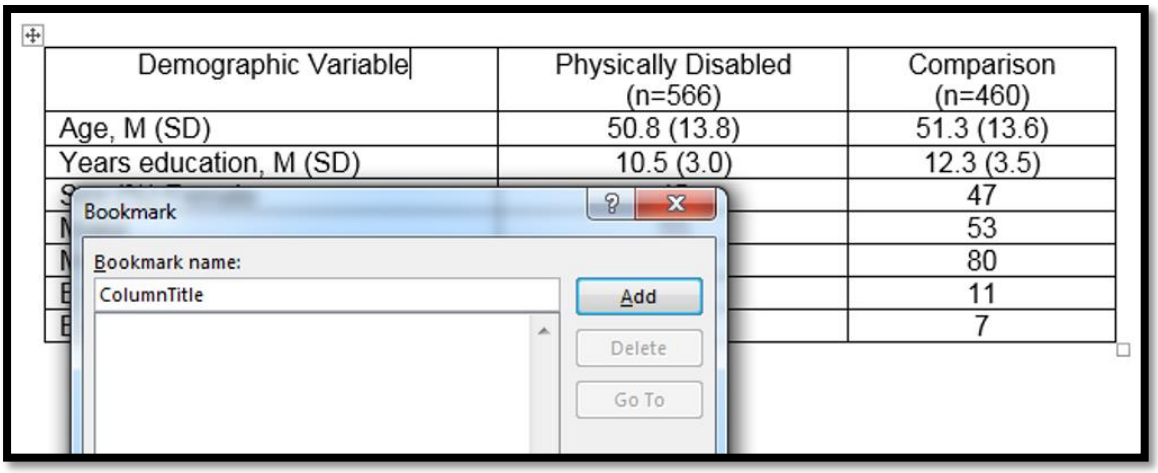
*Numbered lists should be used if order is important.

Bookmark tables.

If your table has only **column headings**, place the insertion point in any one cell within the row containing the headings.

1. Click “Insert” on the PowerPoint ribbon.
2. Click “Bookmark”.
3. Type ColumnTitle.
4. Press “Enter”.

*Bookmarking **one** column title will bookmark all columns in a table.



*For each additional occurrence of a table that uses a Column Title, change the name of the bookmark by adding _2, _3, etc. after the additional occurrence.

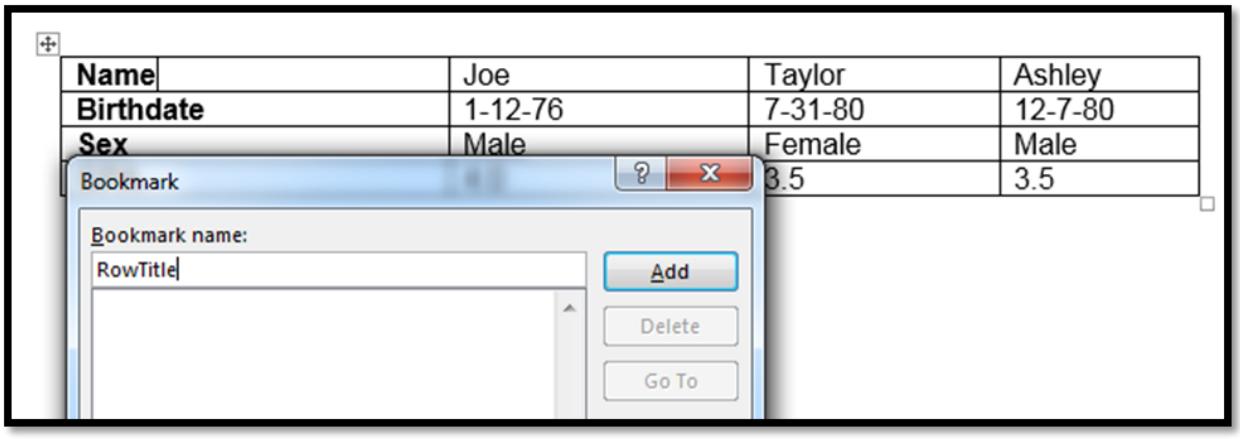
Example:

- ColumnTitle_2 (second occurrence of a Column Title in another table).
- ColumnTitle_3 (third occurrence of a Column Title in another table).

If your table has only **row headings**, place the insertion point in any cell within the column containing the heading.

1. Click “Insert” on the PowerPoint ribbon.
2. Click “Bookmark”.
3. Type RowTitle.
4. Press “Enter”.

*Bookmarking **one** row title will bookmark all rows in a table.



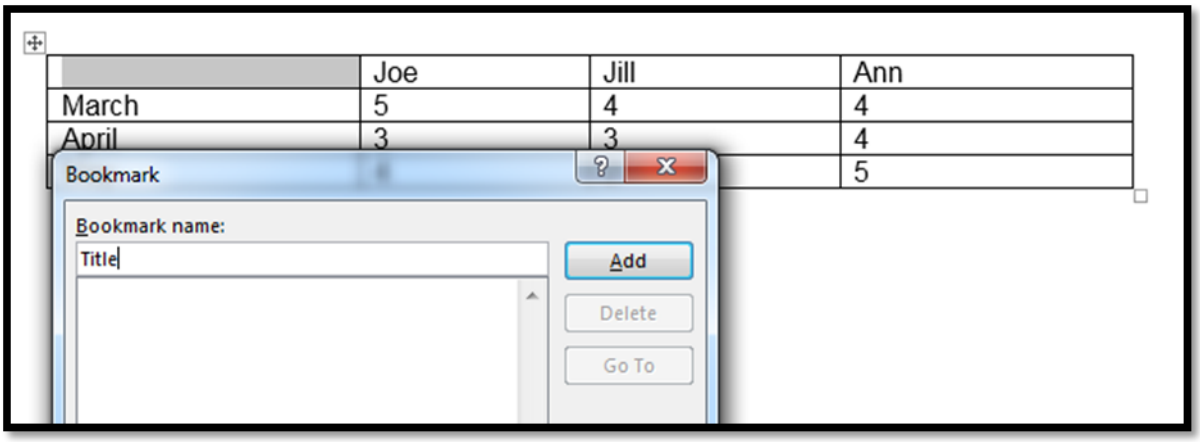
*For each additional occurrence of a table that uses a Row Title, change the name of the bookmark by adding _2, _3, etc. after the additional occurrence.

Example:

- RowTitle_2 (second occurrence of a Column Title in another table).
- RowTitle_3 (third occurrence of a Column Title in another table).

If your table has both **row and column headings**, place the insertion point in a cell where the row and column meet.

1. Click “Insert” on the PowerPoint ribbon.
2. Click “Bookmark”.
3. Type Title.
4. Press “Enter”.



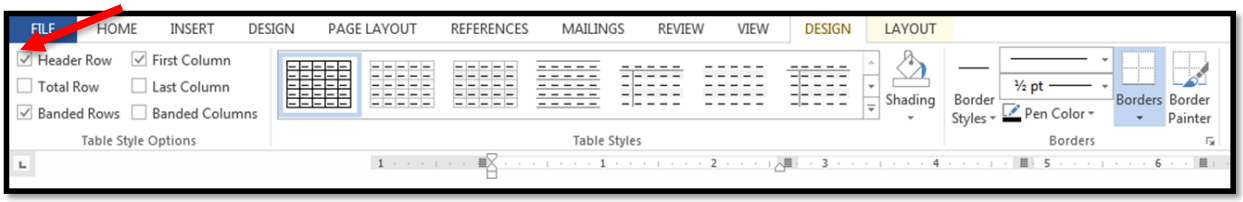
*For each additional occurrence of a table that uses a Title, change the name of the bookmark by adding _2, _3, etc. after the additional occurrence.

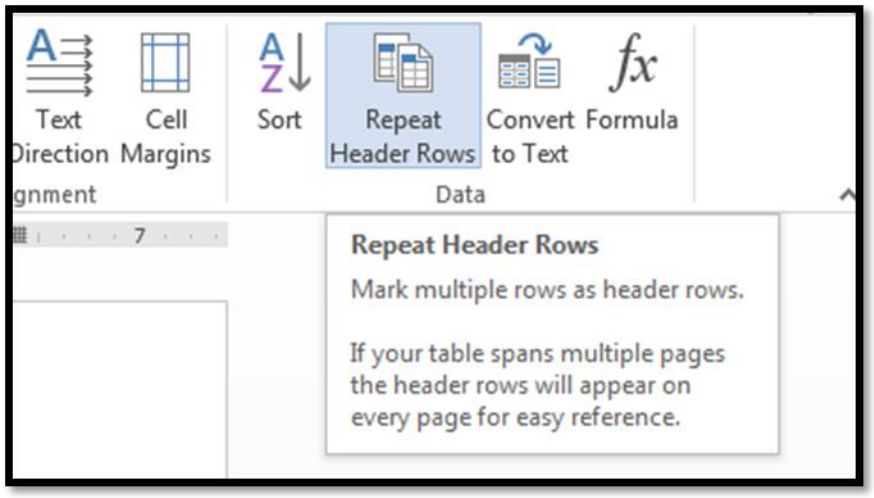
Example:

- Title_2 (second occurrence of a Column Title in another table).
- Title_3 (third occurrence of a Column Title in another table).

Indicate column headers for tables.

1. Place the cursor in the first row of the table.
2. Click “Design” under “Table Tools”.
3. Make sure that “Header Row” is selected.
4. Click “Layout” under “Table Tools”.
5. Click “Repeat Header Row”.





Check the reading order of tables by pressing the "Tab" keyboard key.

Screen readers read a table from left to right, and then top to bottom.

1. Place the cursor in the first cell in the table.
2. Press the "Tab" key on your keyboard to display the reading order of the table.

Use sufficient color contrast.

It is important for there to be enough color contrast between background colors and text in documents. Many users may have difficulty perceiving text if there is too little contrast between background colors and text.

Visit the WebAim Color Contrast Checker (http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/) page to check your color contrast.

Do not use color alone to convey messages.

Users with visual impairments, such as color blindness, may not be able to understand the content being presented if color alone is used to convey messages. Additionally, if information is printed using a black and white printer, the message will not be conveyed.

Use san-serif fonts.

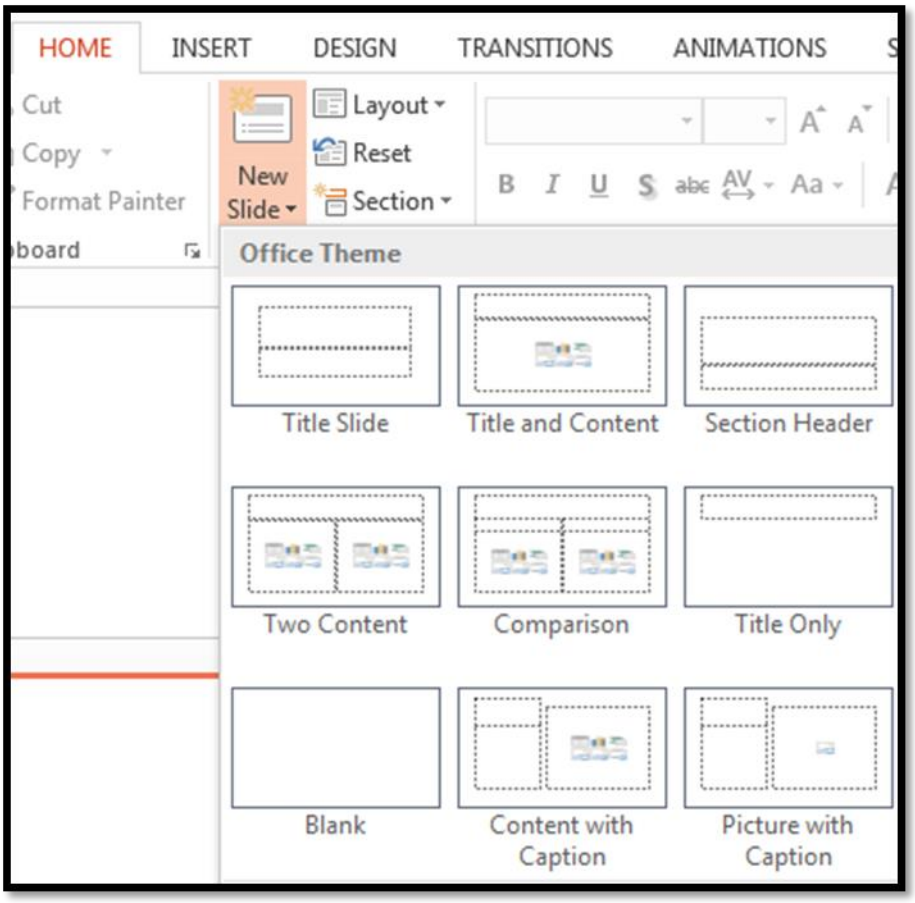
The type of font used in documents can make it easier or more difficult for a visually impaired person to read the material. The best fonts to use are san-serif fonts (ex. Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, Tahoma, Antique Olive).

Microsoft PowerPoint

Use the provided PowerPoint slide layouts.

1. Click "Home" on the PowerPoint ribbon.
2. Click "New Slide".
3. Select a theme.

*Using the provided PowerPoint slide layout helps you keep the reading order intact.

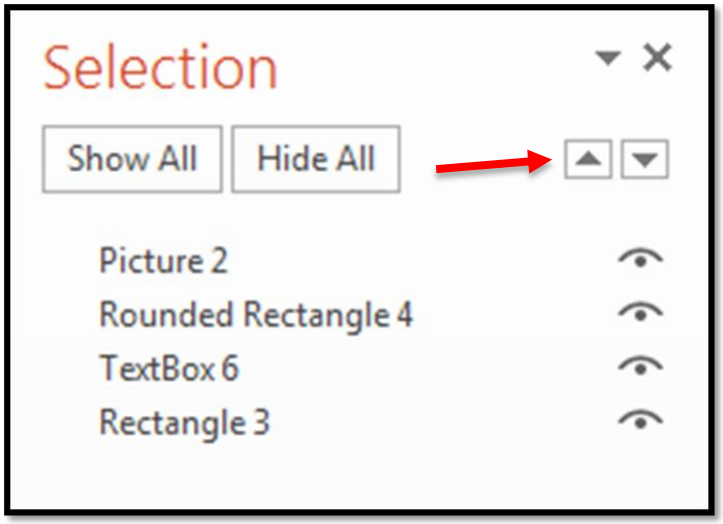


Check the reading order of slide contents.

1. Select the slide without clicking information on the slide.
2. Press Tab on your keyboard.

To modify slide placeholders,

1. Click “Home” on the PowerPoint ribbon.
2. Click “Arrange”.
3. Click “Selection Pane”.
4. The last item will be read first. To change the order, select the item and the click up or down arrow icon.

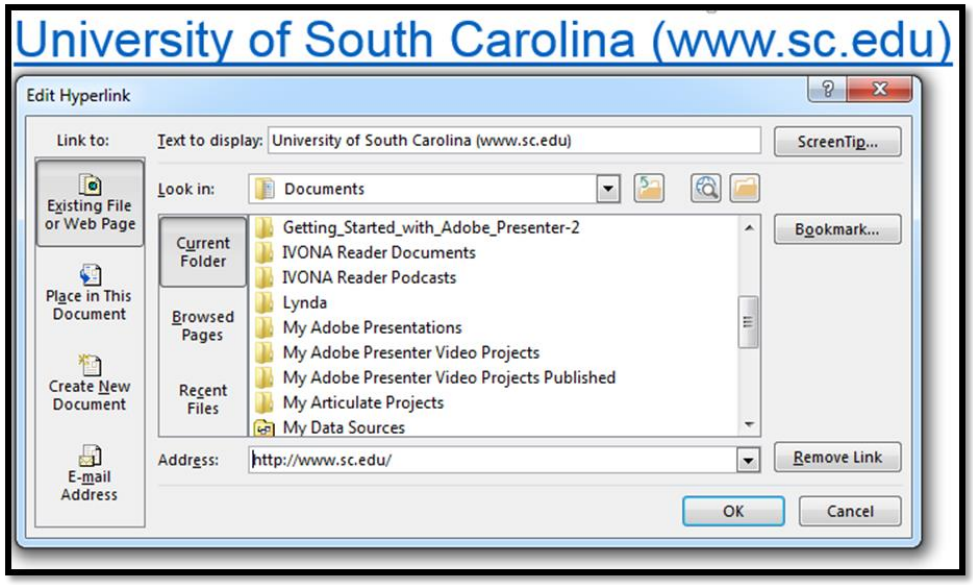


Add alternative text to images and shapes.

1. Right-click the image.
2. Click “Format Picture”.
3. Click the “Size & Properties” icon.
4. Click “Alt text”.
5. Enter alternative text in the “Description” textbox.

Properly label links with meaningful descriptions.

1. Type the description of the hyperlink.
    a. Ex. University of South Carolina
2. Highlight the description and then right-click.
3. Select “Hyperlink”.
4. Enter the web address in the “Address” box.
5. In the “Text to Display” box, include the URL in parentheses after the description.
6. Click “OK”.



Use pre-formatted list styles when making lists.

1. Select the text that should be made into a list.
2. Click “Home” on the PowerPoint ribbon.
3. Select the “Bullets” or “Numbering” icon.

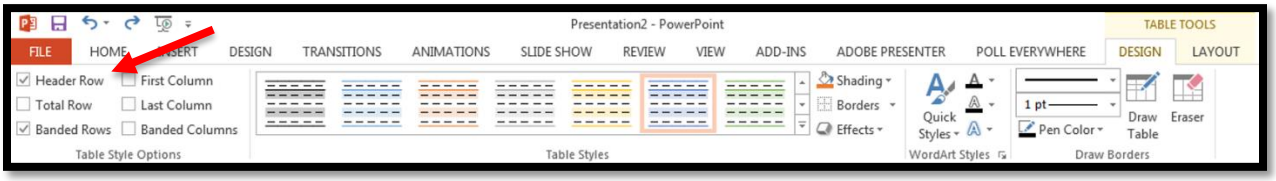
*Numbered lists should be used if order is important.

Set videos to start automatically.

1. Insert your video.
2. Select your video.
3. Click “Playback” under “Video Tools”.
4. Click the down arrow next to “Start On Click”.
5. Select “Automatically”.

Indicate column headers for tables.

1. Place the cursor in the first row of the table.
2. Click “Design” under the “Table Tools”.
3. Make sure “Header Row” is selected.



Check the reading order of tables by pressing the “Tab” keyboard key.

Screen readers read a table from left to right, and then top to bottom.

1. Place the cursor in the first cell in the table
2. Press the “Tab” key on your keyboard to display the reading order of the table.

Include unique titles for slides.

1. On the PowerPoint ribbon, click “View”.
2. Click “Outline View”.
3. Check your slide titles for uniqueness.
4. If you need to change a slide title, double click the bolded title and then type your information.

Use sufficient color contrast.

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Use san-serif fonts.

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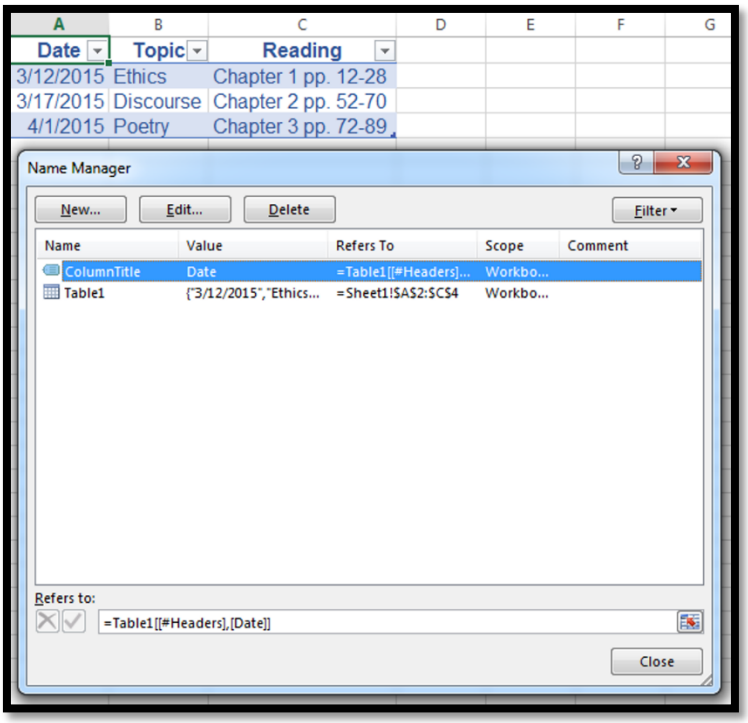
Microsoft Excel

Give column titles / column and row titles to spreadsheets.

Column Titles

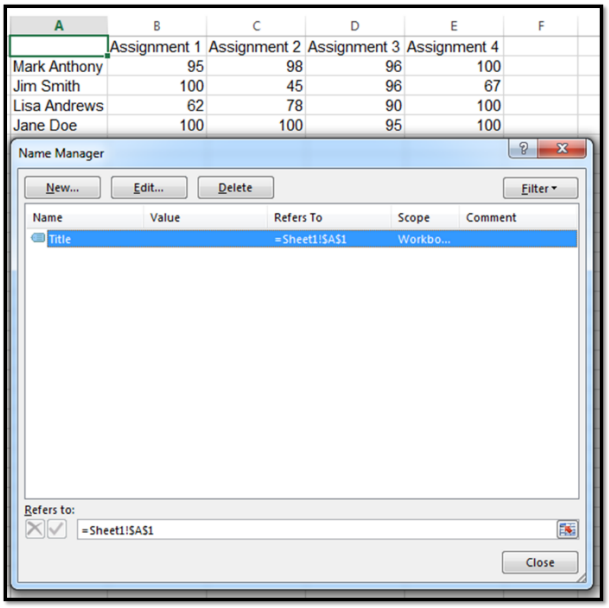
1. Create your spreadsheet.
2. Click on the first cell in the row of column titles.
3. Click on the “Formulas” tab.
4. Click “Name Manager”.
5. Click “New”.
6. In the name field, type “ColumnTitle”.
7. Click “OK” and then “Close”.

*If you are defining column titles for a worksheet other than worksheet 1, you must add the sheet number into the formula. Example: "ColumnTitle2" for Sheet 2. "ColumnTitle3" for Sheet 3.



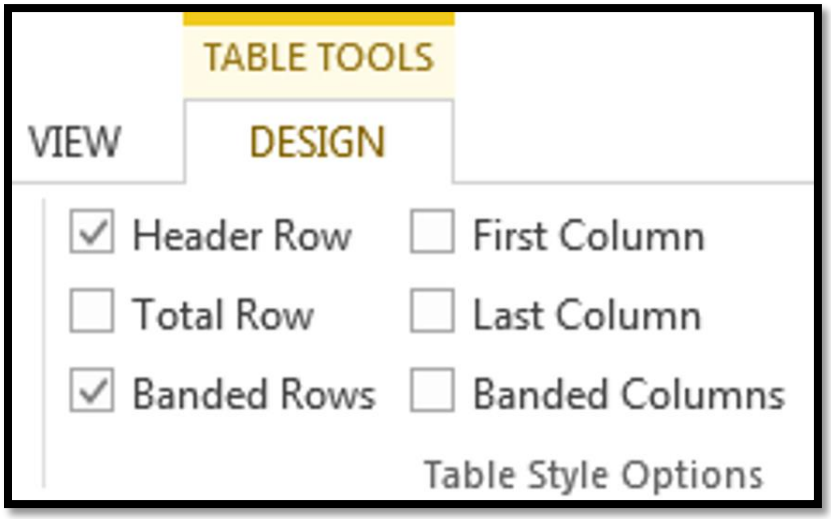
Column and Row Titles

1. Create your spreadsheet.
2. Click on the cell where the **row** and **column** intersect.
3. Click on the “Formulas” tab.
4. Click “Name Manager”.
5. Click “New”.
6. In the name field, type “Title”.
7. Click “OK” and then “Close”.



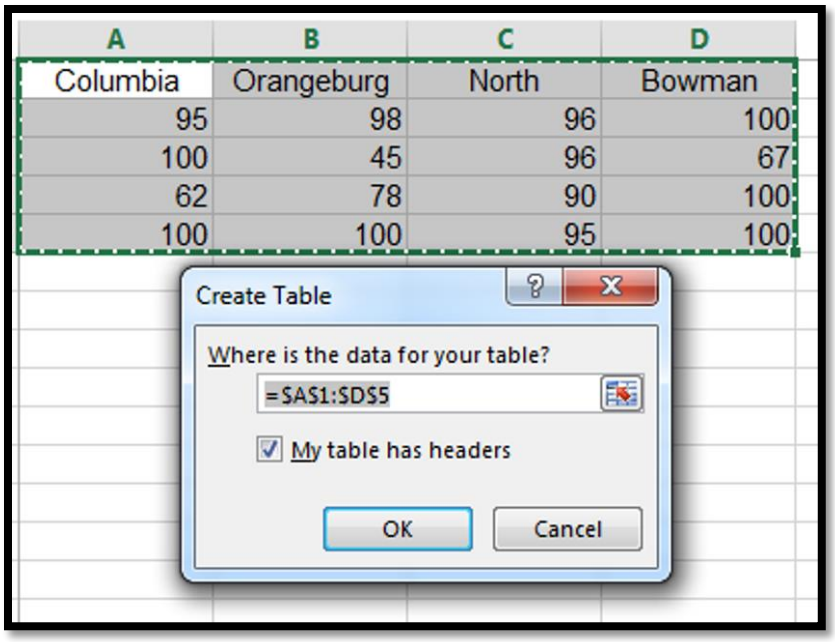
Specify Column Header Information

1. Click anywhere in the table.
2. Click the “Design” under the “Table Tools” tab.
3. Make sure that the “Header Row” check box is selected.



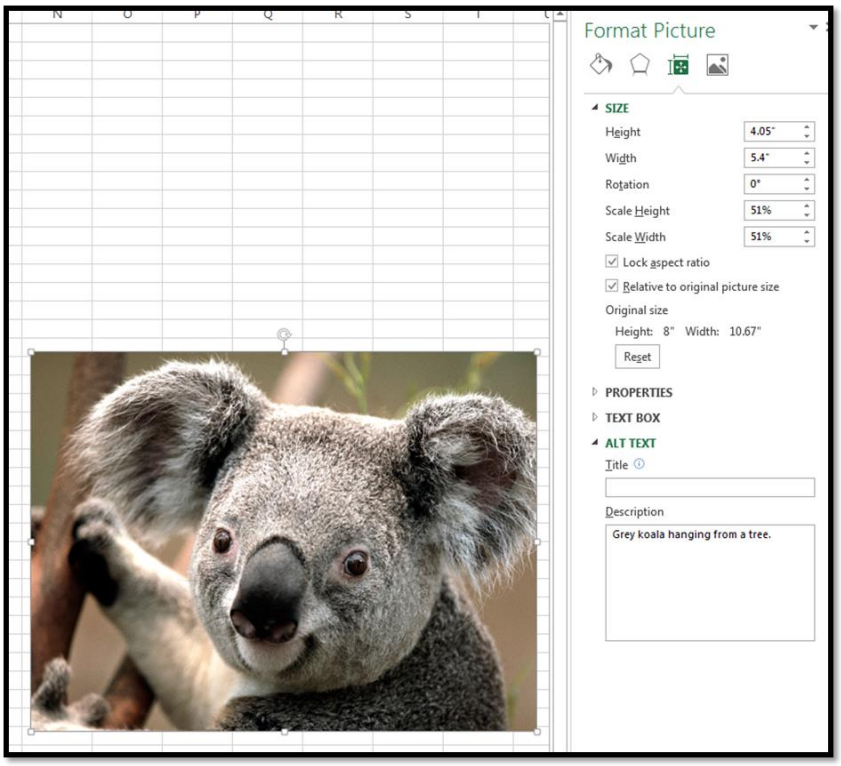
If you are including new information as a table,

1. Highlight the information to be included in the table.
2. Click “Insert” on the Excel ribbon.
3. Click Table.
4. Make sure that “My table has headers” is checked.



Add alternative text to images and objects.

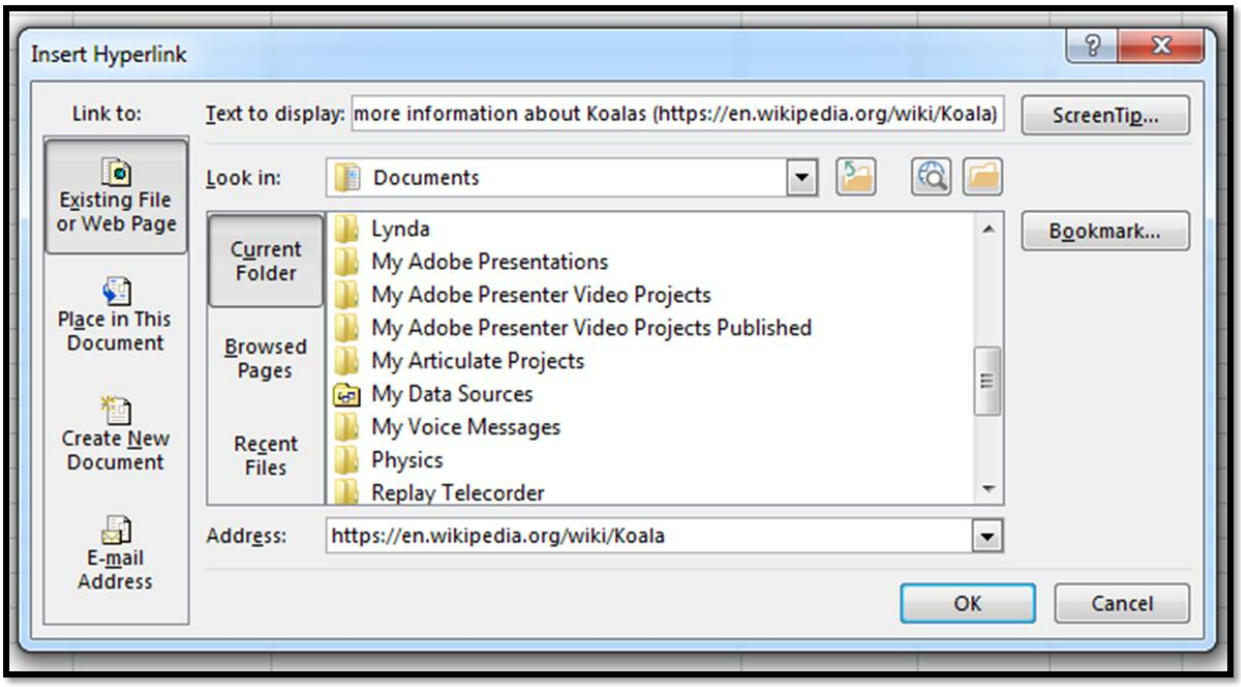
1. Right-click the picture, click the “Layout & Properties” icon.
2. Type detailed alternative text in the “Description” textbox.



Properly label links with meaningful descriptions.

1. Type the description of the hyperlink.
    a. Ex. Learn more about Koalas.
2. Highlight the description and then right-click.
3. Select “Hyperlink”.

4. Enter the web address in the “Address” box.
5. In the “Text to Display” box, include the URL in parentheses after the description.
6. Click “OK”.



Learn more information about Koalas (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Koala)

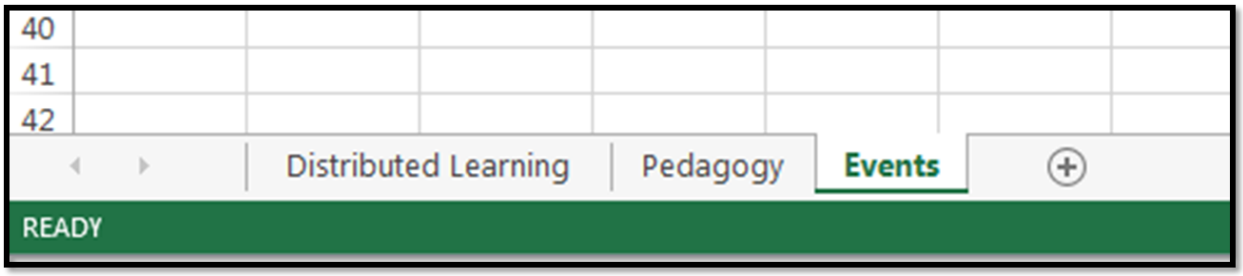
Avoid using blank columns, rows or blank cells for formatting.

Avoiding using columns, rows or blank cells for formatting because a screen reader user may think that the table does not contain additional information.

Provide all sheet tabs unique names.

Including unique names on sheet tabs provide information found within worksheets and makes it easier to navigate through a workbook. Remove blank worksheets from a workbook.

1. Right click the sheet tab.
2. Click “Rename”.
3. Type the unique sheet name.
4. Click “Enter” on your keyboard.



Use sufficient color contrast.

It is important for there to be enough color contrast between background colors and fonts in spreadsheets. Many users may have difficulty perceiving text if there is too little contrast between background colors and fonts.

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Users with visual impairments, such as color blindness, may not be able to understand the content being presented if color alone is used to convey messages. Additionally, if information is printed using a black and white printer, the message will not be conveyed.

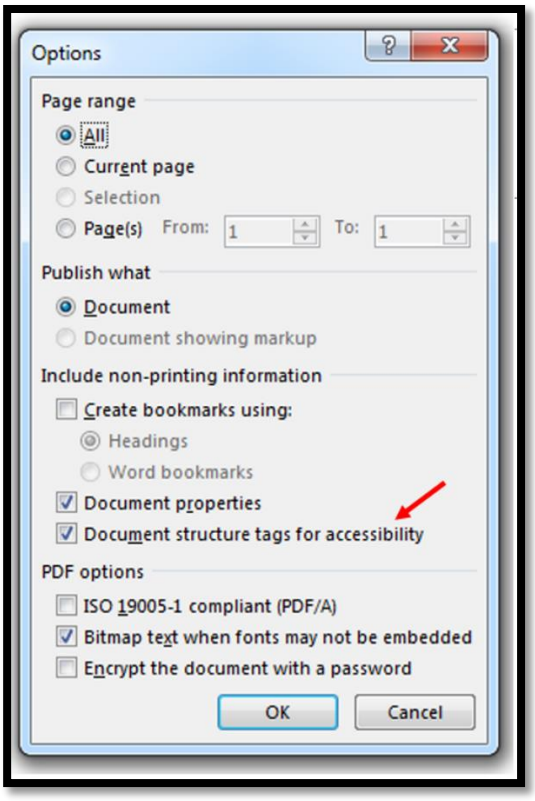
Use san-serif fonts.

The type of font used in spreadsheets can make it easier or more difficult for a visually impaired person to read the material. The best fonts to use are san-serif fonts (ex. Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, Tahoma, Antique Olive).

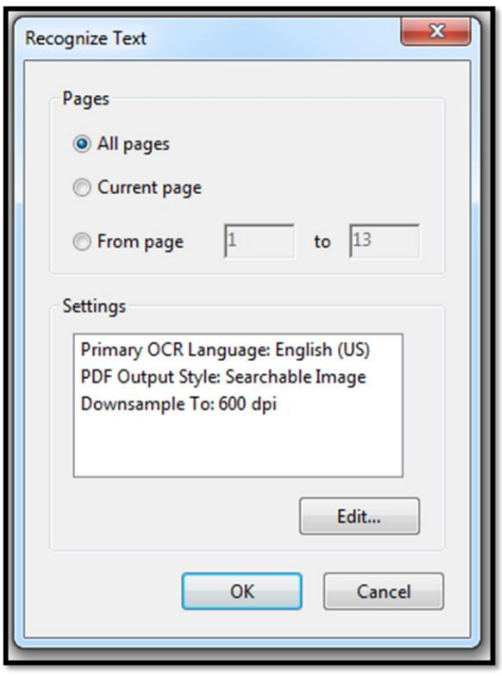
PDF

Convert accessible Microsoft Office documents to accessible PDF documents.

1. Open the document that has already been made accessible.
2. Click “File”.
3. Click “Browse”.
4. Browse to where you want to save the document.
5. Click the arrow for “Save as type:”.
6. Click “PDF”.
7. Click “Options”.
8. Ensure that "Document structure tags for accessibility" is selected.
9. Click “OK”.
10. Click “Save”.



Run Optical Character Recognition (OCR) on all scanned documents.

You will need Adobe Acrobat Pro or the ability to OCR a document while scanning it into your computer.

1. Click “Tools”.
2. Click “Recognize Text”.
3. Click “In this File”.
4. Click “OK”.