



Accessible Word Document Training

The module names (Heading 2) are not voiced, but module section names (Heading 3) are. Any other non-voiced content is marked at the beginning and end with a double asterisk (). Keyboard keys are listed as they appear on the keyboard (Ctrl, Alt, etc.).**

Module 1: Introduction to Accessible Documents

State of Minnesota Accessible Word Document Training Training Module 1: Introduction to Accessible Documents. This course has no captions because the slide text provides the full transcript. Select the Next button to begin.

Audio Volume

Select the audio button to control the slide audio volume. If you want to turn off the narration, mute the audio with Ctrl +Alt + M.

Introduction

Welcome to accessible Word document training. The state of Minnesota developed this course to help you create documents that are accessible for everyone. To use this, training provides step-by-step instructions for using the accessibility features available in Microsoft 365's word program. However, the concepts and guidelines will help you create accessible documents in general, regardless of the software that you use.

About this Module

In this module you will learn about:

- Disabilities.
- Digital accessibility.
- The Minnesota Digital Accessibility standard.
- Assistive technology
- Accessible Microsoft Word templates.

Defining Disability

According to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) a person with a disability is someone who has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activities.

When thinking about disability, it's helpful to approach it from an environmental and social perspective rather than as a condition that needs to be fixed or treated. It's not the disability that creates barriers for people, but the way society is set up. We can all play a role in reducing those barriers, for example adding automatic door openers means people with physical disabilities can more easily enter a building.

More about Disabilities

A disability can be temporary (broken leg) or permanent (hearing loss). It can also be visible (in a wheelchair) or invisible (autism).

You cannot tell by looking at someone if they have a disability and anyone can acquire a disability at any time. Disability impacts all of us, so it's important to incorporate accessibility into everything we do.

Did you know? Up to one in four adults in the United States has a disability. Cognitive disabilities like depression and dyslexia are the most common type.

Accessibility is a State Standard

The state of Minnesota is committed to providing digital access to all individuals with or without disabilities. To meet this goal, the state created a Digital Accessibility Standard. One of the standard requirements is that agencies must develop documents that anyone can use and understand, including people who use assistive technologies.

The state of Minnesota's accessibility standard incorporates:

- Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (as amended).
- Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.1, level AA

The standard applies to external and internal documents.

Understanding Assistive Technology

Now let's look at how different assistive technologies work. Select the play button to play the video.

****[Assistive Technology video](#) Transcript****

Some people with disabilities may use assistive technology or AT to access content or perform tasks. This can be any equipment, software or product that is used to increase, maintain, or improve a person's functional capabilities. There's a wide variety of AT products and applications that enable people to improve their ability to access technology.

AT doesn't necessarily need to be high tech or expensive. Did you know that if you are wearing glasses you are using AT? Do you use post it notes to help with reminders? These are both inexpensive tools that can help improve your ability to perform a task and can be used by people with and without disabilities.

Sumitra, an engineer at Microsoft, uses JAWS, a third-party screen reader that works with Windows to navigate her computer. Using the keyboard. JAWS allows Sumitra to hear everything on the screen as she navigates. She uses JAWS to help code, read and edit documents and emails, and much more.

[JAWS voice] Main landmark featured story slideshow. Heading level 2. Welcome. Heading level 2.

And Jackson, a technical program manager at Microsoft, uses Magnifier, built right into Windows 10 to enlarge text on the screen, making it easier to complete tasks and thrive in workplace. Jackson also uses additional Windows 10 features in the Ease of Access center, including enlarging his mouse pointer so he can locate it on the screen more easily, text cursor indication to help locate the small blinking cursor, and color filters to adjust color schemes when he has eye fatigue.

Assistive technology comes in many forms and can be personalized to fit the person's preferences and needs.

Why Accessibility Matters

To understand the need for accessible documents, let's listen to a screen reader read 2 versions of the same document. One inaccessible and one accessible

Select video 1 to hear the inaccessible document. Notice how the screen reader can't identify the picture and how difficult it is to understand the table.

Select Video 2 to hear the accessible document. This document is much more informative. It is structured using headings and alternative text that describe the image.

****Video 1: Inaccessible Document Transcript read by JAWS****

Section one column one of one. Why accessibility matters, continuous section break. Section two, column one of two. Disability in America. Disability effects many of us, making it important to foster accessibility wherever we can. Whether you are already familiar with accessibility or just now learning about it, there is a high chance you or someone you know relies on it day-to-day. According to the American Community Survey, 13%, or roughly 42.5 million, of Americans reported at least one disability condition in 2021.

Graphic column two of two continuous section break. Section three column one of one Disability status by age group. As you age, your likelihood of having a disability increases.

Table with six rows and three columns. Level one row one column two Percentage of Americans with a disability. Column three Estimated number of Minnesota with a disability*. Column four, row two, column one under 18, column two 4.6%. Column three 250,000. Column four, row three column one, column two, column three. Column four. Row four, column one 18 to 64 years, column two 10.7% column three 588,000 column four. Row five column one, column two, column three, column four. Row six, column one 65 years and older, column two 32.6% column three 1,790,000 column four.

Out of table * Based on a population of 5.5 million people.

****Video 2: Accessible Document read by JAWS****

Heading level one, Why accessibility matters, continuous section break. Heading level two, section two, column one of two, Disability in America. Disability effects many of us making it important to foster accessibility wherever we can. Whether you are already familiar with accessibility or just now learning about it, there is a high chance you or someone you know relies on it day-to-day. According to the American Community Survey, 13%, or roughly 42.5 million, of Americans reported at least one disability condition in 2021.

Heading level two, graphic a family of five with a daughter in a wheelchair gazing at a waterfall. Column two of two continuous section break. Heading level two, section three, column one of one Disability status by age group. As you age, your likelihood of having a disability increases.

Table with four rows and three columns. Level one row one column one Age Group, column two percentage of Americans with a disability. Column three Estimated number of Minnesotans with a Disability* column four. Row two Age Group, column one under 18, percentage of Americans with a disability. Column two 4.6%. Estimated number of Minnesotans with a disability*. Column three 250,000. Column four. Row three age group column one, 18 to 64 years. Percentage of Americans with a disability. Column two 10.7%. Estimated number of Minnesotans with a disability*. Column three 588,000, column four row four. Age group column one 65 years and older. Percentage of Americans with a disability column two 32.6%. Estimated number of Minnesotans with a disability* column three 1,790,000 column four.

Out of table. *Based on a population of 5.5 million people.

Use an Accessible Word Template

Now that you know how challenging it can be to read an inaccessible document, let's explore techniques for creating accessible documents.

A great first step is to start with an accessible template. The state of Minnesota has several word templates available for staff that are preformatted with accessibility in mind. For some agencies, these branded templates are conveniently loaded directly into your word program. If you don't have the templates, contact your agency's Digital Accessibility Coordinator. (see link in the resources tab) or communications department.

If you don't work for the state, check the resources section of this module for other accessible template options.

Start Small but Start Now

Creating accessible documents may seem overwhelming at first, but it gets easier. Start small, but start now. Practice your accessibility skills by building it into your everyday work. Accessibility is easier if you incorporate it into your document from the beginning.

The skills you learn in this course provide other advantages as well.

- Accessibility features like headings provide time saving benefits such as an easily updated table of contents.
- The effort you put into making your Word document accessible will transfer over when converted to a PDF.

Check for Understanding: Question 1

Choose the correct answer, then select submit below.

An accessible document:

- A. Allows assistive technologies to deliver content to the user.
- B. Helps people understand information quickly, regardless of their ability.
- C. Makes it easier to create a table of contents.
- D. All of the above.

****If A, B, or C is selected****

Incorrect. An accessible document has multiple benefits. Please try again.

****If D is selected****

Correct. Accessible documents not only enable assistive technologies to deliver content correctly, but they also improve understanding and readability for everyone. Please select Next to continue.

Check for Understanding: Question 2

Choose the correct answer, then select submit below.

Digital accessibility is:

- A. A way to reduce barriers for people with disabilities.
- B. A Minnesota State Standard
- C. Something you add to your document at the end.
- D. D Both A and B

****If A is selected****

Incorrect. Digital accessibility is more than just universal design. Please try again.

****If B is selected****

Incorrect. Digital accessibility reduces barriers for people with disabilities and is a Minnesota State standard. Please try again.

****If C is selected****

Incorrect. Accessibility should be incorporated into your document from the beginning. Please try again.

****If D is selected****

Correct. Accessible documents use universal design and are a state standard. Incorporate accessibility from the beginning, adding it in at the end will likely require more effort and extra time. Please select Next to continue.

Check for Understanding: Question 3

Choose your answer, then select submit below.

Accessibility is easier if you start with an accessible word template.

- True.
- False

****If True is selected****

Correct. Accessible templates are preformatted for accessibility and allow quick changes to the entire document. Please select Next to continue.

****If False is selected****

Incorrect. An inaccessible template will require more work to make it accessible. Please select Next to continue lesson.

Lesson Complete

Congratulations! You have completed Module 1: Introduction to Accessible Documents.

The Office of Accessibility would like to thank you for your hard work. Additional resources, such as a summary guide for this module are available in the Resources menu in the top right.

Click the Exit button to continue with the Course.