



Adobe Acrobat

Accessibility Quick Card

Follow these best practices to help make PDFs accessible. It's always best to start with an accessible source document (e.g., Word). Then use the Acrobat tab to create the PDF. For more information on PDF accessibility and training, visit the [MNIT Office of Accessibility website](#).

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Use the Accessibility Checker tool

This built-in tool provides details on potential issues and gives suggestions to correct them. Perform manual checks in addition to the automated accessibility checker.

Convert scanned text

Make sure the document contains real text (scanned documents often render text as unreadable). If it does not, recreate the PDF file using the source document or convert it to include true text.

Check Document Properties

Confirm title, subject, and author are entered and correct. Verify the language setting matches the document's language.

Review alt text

Make sure informative and concise alt text descriptions exist for important non-text elements.

Check color contrast

Color contrast must meet standards throughout the document. Normal text to background ratio is 4.5:1. Non-text elements and large text (a minimum of 14pt bold or 18pt) ratios are 3:1. Fix source document, if needed.



Artifact decorative images

Artifacts are elements that are ignored by a screen reader, such as a background texture that does not contain important text. The element can be changed to or from an artifact using the Accessibility tags panel or the Reading Order tool.

Check for tags

Check the Accessibility tags panel to ensure there are tags, and if not, add them. Tags contain the contents of the document and make it possible for assistive technologies to read and interact with PDF content. Headings <H1>, paragraphs <P>, and images or charts <Figure> are examples of tag types.

Check logical reading order

“Walk the tag tree.” Review the order of the tags in the Accessibility tags panel to confirm logical reading order.

Check tag structure

While walking the tag tree, check whether tagged elements are properly structured. This includes headings, tables, lists, and links.

Check form fields and buttons

If the PDF is intended to be an interactive document, add tooltips to the fillable form fields and buttons. Set the tab order for the form fields and ensure proper keyboard focus.

Check tab order and hyperlinks

Use the Tab key to check the tab order of all interactive elements. These include form fields, buttons, and links.