Accessibility Quick Card

Follow these best practices to help make workbooks accessible. For more information on Excel accessibility, visit the [MNIT Office of Accessibility website](#).

Give all sheet tabs unique names

Sheet names should provide information about what is found on the worksheet, making it easier to navigate through a workbook. Remove blank sheets.

Enter title and important information in first row and column

Enter title and important details, like company name, in cell A1. This is the first data cell to provide structure and navigation for assistive technology. It's ok to merge cells to center the title.

Structure content for better readability. Hide blank rows and columns.

Add structure by defining the title region (creating names for defined data ranges) and hiding unused rows and columns.

Avoid blank data cells in data ranges

When possible, mark any empty table data cell as "Cell intentionally left blank" or "No data."

Use alignment tools for layout and to create white space

Don't use blank rows/columns for spacing. Manage the layout by resizing rows and columns, and using the alignment tools to move content (top, bottom, left, right) as needed.

Specify table row and column headings

Check Table Design > Table Style Options to ensure proper header row and column elements are marked. Use Table Design > Properties to add/edit the table's name. It should be descriptive.

Add alt text to images and objects

Excel's alt text is not read by screen readers. Add informative and concise descriptions for important graphics or non-text elements directly in a cell near the image, not in the image's alt text section. Consider adding "Image description:" to the beginning of the alt text, to identify the use of an image to screen reader users. Use "Mark as decorative" checkbox as appropriate.

Include descriptions directly in data cells for any data visuals

When displaying a chart or graph within Excel, its complete description should be provided directly in a data cell near the visual, not in the visual's alt text.

Name hyperlinks appropriately

Links should contain meaningful text that describes the link's destination or subject. Do not use generic language, such as "click here." **Note**: Excel applies links to the entire cell, not just the link's text.

Use color carefully

Color contrast must meet standards throughout the workbook. High-contrast color schemes and texture variations in graphs improve readability. 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. Preview content in black & white or grayscale.

Fill in Document Properties

Enter title, subject, and author in the document's properties.

Use the Accessibility Checker tool

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

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