

# Inclusive Design Basics

Create and Publish Materials for All Audiences

## Visual Hierarchy

### Negative Space

**Less is more.** Instead of including as much information as possible in a small space, use negative space to set content apart. Guide the reader toward what is essential and provide a place to go to learn more.

### Add Visual Interest

Avoid large chunks of text and highlight important information with **photography**, **icons**, and **clear visuals**. Consider using **ordered lists** for procedures and **bullets** for lists in place of long sentences or paragraphs.

### Group Content for Better Understanding with a Logical Heading Structure

The page or document title should be a heading level 1. Break the rest of the document into sections using descriptive subheadings (H2, H3, etc.).

Nest headings without skipping levels. For example, H2 under H1, H3 under H2, and so on.

[tsd.org/accessible-headings](https://tsd.org/accessible-headings)

### Formatting Considerations

- Keep sentences less than 20 words.
- Keep paragraphs to 2-3 sentences.
- Do not justify text. Avoid centering multiple lines of text.
- Use a single space after a sentence.
- Keep line height at least 1.5 times the font size.
- Maintain spacing between paragraphs at least 2 times the font size.

## General Media Concepts

### Typeface Considerations

✔ Start with the **Lexend** typeface.

[tsd.org/accessible-type](https://tsd.org/accessible-type)

⚠ Try to use typefaces without **mirroring**, **ambiguous characters**, or **tight letter spacing**.

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✘ Avoid typefaces like **Comic Sans** with abnormal word shapes that are more difficult to decode.

### Color Contrast

Ensure a sufficient color contrast ratio between text and background color.

4.5:1 for normal text

3:1 for large text

14 pt / 19 px bold or 18 pt / 24 px

3:1 for graphics and user interface components

[tsd.org/color-contrast](https://tsd.org/color-contrast)

### Emphasize without Barriers

✔ Size

✔ Varying **weights**      ✔ Spacing

⚠ *Italics*

⚠ **SHOUTING**

⚠ When emphasizing with **color**, include other ways to differentiate content.

✘ Avoid **underlined text** in digital media, unless it is a hyperlink.

## Digital Media Concepts

### Meaningful Links

Ensure hyperlinks describe the linked resource.

✘ [Click here](#) for instructions

✘ [Learn more](#) about enrollment

✔ [View Enrollment Options](#)

### Alternative Text

Avoid images of text and use descriptive alternative text for screen readers.

[tsd.org/alt-text](https://tsd.org/alt-text)

### Tables

Only use tables for displaying data with proper headings and no merged cells.

[tsd.org/accessible-tables](https://tsd.org/accessible-tables)