



Digital Accessibility Training

WCAG • Section 508 • ADA Title II — practical guidance for creating accessible content

What you'll learn (and why it matters)

- Understand what **digital accessibility** means and why it matters in training and day-to-day work.
- Use the **POUR** principles to spot common barriers quickly.
- Explain (in plain language) how **WCAG, Section 508**, and **ADA Title II** relate.
- Apply a **practical checklist** in Word, Google Docs, PowerPoint, Google Slides, Canva, and basic HTML.

Accessibility in one sentence

Digital accessibility means people with disabilities can perceive, navigate, understand, and use your content with the assistive technology they rely on.

Accessibility is designing things—whether it's documents, websites, or environments—so everyone can use them, including people with disabilities.

It's about removing barriers and making sure people have equal access and a similar experience, no matter their ability, age, or situation.

Good accessibility follows guidelines like **WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines)** to help make that happen.

What is Accessibility?



Vision: Vision impairment is a general term that encompasses various visual limitations that cannot be fully corrected with glasses or contact lenses. This can include conditions such as mild vision loss, near blindness, complete blindness, low vision, restricted visual fields, sensitivity to light, color vision deficiencies, or difficulty seeing at night.



Hearing: Hearing impairment, or hearing loss, can impact a person's ability to hear sounds to varying extents. This can range from mild hearing loss, where there may be trouble hearing faint sounds or specific frequencies to profound hearing loss, where there is minimal or no hearing ability. Hearing impairment can affect one or both ears and may make it challenging to hear everyday conversations or loud noises.



Mobility: Mobility impairments restrict a person's ability to move or coordinate movements, affecting both large and small motor skills. They can involve difficulties with the lower body, requiring aids like wheelchairs or canes, or challenges with the upper body, such as limited hand or arms use. These impairments may also impact manual dexterity and coordination of body parts.



Cognitive: Cognitive impairment in the context of accessibility involves designing digital content and technology to support individuals with cognitive disabilities. These disabilities impact the way a person's brain processes information.

WCAG basics: the POUR principles

- **P — Perceivable:** Users can detect the information (captions for video, meaningful alt text for images, color is not the only cue).
- **O — Operable:** Users can navigate and interact (keyboard access, logical focus order, no “keyboard traps”).
- **U — Understandable:** Users can understand content and controls (clear labels/instructions, predictable navigation, helpful errors).
- **R — Robust:** Content works with assistive technology now and in the future (correct headings/structure, compatible markup).

POUR quick reference (what to look for)



Perceivable:

- **Alt Text:** Provide text alternatives for all non-text content (images, icons).
- **Captions/Alternatives:** Provide captions and audio descriptions for multimedia.
- **Contrast:** Ensure a minimum color contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for text and 3:1 for large text.



Operable:

- Content should be presented in different ways
- **Operable Keyboard Accessible:** All functionalities must be operable via keyboard, not just a mouse.
- **Navigation:** Provide mechanisms to help users navigate and find content (e.g., skip navigation links).
- **Time Constraints:** Allow users to turn off, adjust, or extend time limits.



Understandable:

- **Readability:** Ensure text is legible and understandable.
- **Predictability:** Pages and tools should operate in a consistent, predictable manner.
- **Input Assistance:** Help users avoid and correct mistakes (e.g., form validation).



Robust:

- **Compatibility:** Maximize compatibility with current and future user agents, including screen readers.

WCAG conformance levels (A, AA, AAA)

- **Level A:** The basics—addresses the most blocking barriers (minimum).
- **Level AA:** The most common target—covers the biggest real-world needs for many users.
- **Level AAA:** The highest bar—great when feasible but not usually required for full-site compliance.

WCAG vs. Section 508 vs. ADA Title II (simple comparison)

Item	What it is	Who it applies to (plain terms)	What you do with it
WCAG	A worldwide set of guidelines for making websites, apps, and documents usable by people with disabilities.	Anyone creating digital content—often used as the main yardstick for accessibility.	Use it as a checklist to test and fix issues (many teams aim for Level AA).
Section 508	A U.S. law requiring certain government technology to be accessible.	U.S. federal agencies—and organizations that build or sell technology to them.	Ensure the tech you buy/build is accessible; you may need a Voluntary Product Accessibility Template (VPAT) to show compliance.
ADA Title II	A U.S. civil rights law requiring public services not to exclude people with disabilities.	State and local government agencies—and vendors running services for them.	Ensure public-facing digital services (sites, apps, forms) are accessible; WCAG AA is commonly used as the target.

Helpful tips (any platform)

- **Use plain language:** write for clarity; define acronyms the first time you use them.
- **Break up text:** short paragraphs (2–3 sentences) and meaningful headings.
- **Be consistent:** same terms, same structure, same patterns—this reduces cognitive load.
- **Design for zoom:** your content should still work at 200% and 400% zoom. While 200% is the baseline for general text resizing (WCAG 1.4.4), 400% is the standard for checking responsive "reflow" (WCAG 1.4.10) to ensure content remains readable without horizontal scrolling.

How to use: As you review a document or slide deck, check each box (☐) once the item is complete.

Microsoft Word Structure (Headings & Lists) WCAG guidelines; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Avoid placing important heading text within the actual top-of-page "Header".
- ☐ Use built-in Heading styles (Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3) so the Navigation Pane shows a clean outline (only **ONE** title per document and **ONE** Heading 1).
- ☐ Don't skip heading levels (e.g., Heading 1 → Heading 3).
- ☐ Use Word's bulleted/numbered list buttons (don't type dashes manually).
- ☐ Use tables for true data (not for page layout).
- ☐ Don't fake columns with tabs/spaces.

Microsoft Word Text (Readability); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use minimum 12 pt+ for body text and keep fonts simple (e.g., Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, Times New Roman).
- ☐ Left-align text; avoid centering.
- ☐ Adequate spacing between letters, words, and lines (1.5-line spacing is recommended).
- ☐ Add paragraph spacing instead of Manual Hard Returns.
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.

Microsoft Word Color & Contrast; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.
- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

Microsoft Word Images (Alt Text); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Add Alt Text to meaningful images (right-click image → Edit Alt Text).
- ☐ Mark decorative images as decorative (or use empty alt text where appropriate).
- ☐ Don't place critical info only inside an image of text—repeat it as real text.
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

Microsoft Word Reading Order; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Avoid floating text boxes for main content when possible.
- ☐ Left column → right column (if using columns).
- ☐ Keep meaningful images “In Line with Text” to reduce order issues.
- ☐ If you embed audio/video in the document, provide captions (video) and a transcript (audio) in the document or alongside it.

Microsoft Word Captions & Audio Transcript; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ If you link to media, ensure the destination video has captions and the audio has a transcript.
- ☐ Don’t rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms.
- ☐ Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”).

Microsoft Word Links; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ If helpful, include destination or file type (e.g., “Policy (PDF)”).
- ☐ Explain destination when it’s not obvious (e.g., “Download the benefits guide (PDF)”).
- ☐ Make sure linked text is visually distinct beyond color (underline is safest).
- ☐ Reserve underline for links.
- ☐ Add URL to link for printed materials.
- ☐ Check Accessibility and fix issues.

Microsoft Word Final Check; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Captions/transcripts included (or linked) for any audio/video used.
- ☐ Save with a clear file name and (if used) document title.
- ☐ Quick test: zoom to 200% and confirm it’s still readable.
- ☐ Ensure to set document language.

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — Microsoft Word (by area)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | Headings & list structure: Review → Check Accessibility (structure flags) + View → Navigation Pane (confirm heading outline). Lists: use built-in Bullets/Numbering. |
| ☐ | Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands |
| ☐ | Text readability: Accessibility Checker catches some issues; also do a manual pass for 12 pt+ font, spacing, and avoiding long all-caps/underlines. |
| ☐ | Color & contrast: Some issues may be flagged, but verify key combinations with WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA). |
| ☐ | Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Manual check—if you embed/link media, confirm captions exist and provide a transcript (in the doc or a clearly labeled companion file). |
| ☐ | Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Checker flags missing alt text; add via right-click image → Edit Alt Text; mark decorative images as decorative when appropriate. |
| ☐ | Links: Checker may flag some issues; always ensure link text makes sense out of context (avoid “click here”). |
| ☐ | Reading order (and keyboard order): Keep content linear (top → bottom). Avoid text boxes for main content; keep images “In Line with Text” when possible; do a quick keyboard pass (Tab through links/controls). |

Google Docs Structure (Headings & Lists) WCAG Guidelines; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Avoid placing important heading text within the actual top-of-page "Header".
- ☐ Document Title must be specified.
- ☐ Apply heading styles (Format → Paragraph styles) so the document outline is usable.
- ☐ Don't skip heading levels (e.g., Heading 1 → Heading 3) so the Navigation Pane shows a clean outline (only **ONE** title per document and **ONE** Heading 1).
- ☐ Use tables for true data (not for page layout).
- ☐ Don't fake columns with tabs/spaces.

Google Docs Text (Readability); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use minimum 12 pt+ for body text and keep fonts simple (e.g., Calibri, Arial, Helvetica, Tahoma, Times New Roman).
- ☐ Left-align; avoid centering.
- ☐ Adequate spacing between letters, words, and lines (1.5-line spacing is recommended).
- ☐ Add paragraph spacing instead of Manual Hard Returns.
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.

Google Docs Color & Contrast; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.
- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

Google Docs Images (Alt Text); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Add Alt Text to meaningful images (right-click image → Edit Alt Text).
- ☐ Decorative images (right-click the image, select **Alt text**, and leave the "Description" field blank, or type alt="" in it).
- ☐ Don't place critical info only inside an image of text—repeat it as real text.
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

Google Docs Reading Order; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Keep layout simple so content reads top → bottom.
- ☐ Avoid floating text boxes for main content when possible.
- ☐ Left column → right column (if using columns).
- ☐ Keep meaningful images “In Line with Text” to reduce order issues.

Google Docs Captions & Audio Transcripts; Accessibility Understandable & Robust

- ☐ You cannot directly embed a video player into Google Docs, but you can add a clickable video preview. The best method is to use Smart Chips.
- ☐ If you link to media, ensure the destination video has captions and the audio has a transcript.
- ☐ Don’t rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms.

Google Docs Links; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”).
- ☐ If helpful, include destination or file type (e.g., “Policy (PDF)”).
- ☐ Explain destination when it’s not obvious (e.g., “Download the benefits guide (PDF)”).
- ☐ Make sure linked text is visually distinct beyond color (underline is safest).
- ☐ Reserve underline for links.
- ☐ Add URL to link for printed materials.

Google Docs Final Check (Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu); Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Check Accessibility and fix issues.
- ☐ Enable Accessibility Tools
 - Screen reader Supports
 - Captions
- ☐ Captions/transcripts included (or linked) for any audio/video used.
- ☐ Save with a clear file name and (if used) document title.
- ☐ Quick test: zoom to 200% and confirm it’s still readable.
- ☐ Ensure to set document language.

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — Google Docs (by area)

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu. They scan, identify, and help fix accessibility issues to ensure documents meet WCAG and PDF/UA standards. |
| ☐ | Headings & list structure: Format → Paragraph styles + the document outline. For automated checks, use the Grackle Docs add-on (Google Workspace Marketplace). |
| ☐ | Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands |
| ☐ | Text readability: Manual check for size/spacing; Grackle Docs can flag some content/formatting concerns. |
| ☐ | Color & contrast: Mostly manual—use WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA) to validate text/background (especially over images/gradients). Grackle may flag certain contrast problems. |
| ☐ | Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Manual check—if you embed/link media, confirm captions exist and provide a transcript (in the doc or a clearly labeled companion file). |
| ☐ | Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Image options → Alt text; Grackle Docs can flag missing/poor alt text. |
| ☐ | Links: Manual review—ensure descriptive link text and links are identifiable beyond color (underline is safest). |
| ☐ | Reading order (and keyboard order): Keep layout simple; avoid multi-column layouts made from tables/positioned objects. Export and spot-check if distributing as PDF. |

Microsoft PowerPoint Structure (Heading & Lists) WCGAG Guidelines Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Ensure every slide has a descriptive unique title.
- ☐ Use built-in slide layouts/placeholders (don't build slides from scattered text boxes).
- ☐ Use real lists inside placeholders.
- ☐ Use pre-set placeholders or use line spacing 1.2 to 1.5.

Microsoft PowerPoint Layout Accessibility Principle: Operable & Understandable

- ☐ Keep slides uncluttered (one main idea per slide).
- ☐ Avoid overlapping elements; keep a predictable reading flow.
- ☐ Left align text.
- ☐ Use built-in slide layouts/placeholders (don't build slides from scattered text boxes).
- ☐ Avoid putting key content only in footers or tiny text.

Microsoft PowerPoint Text (Readability) Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use large font sizes (24 pt+ preferred; avoid tiny text). Keep text minimal per slide.
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.

Microsoft PowerPoint Color & Contrast Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.
- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

Microsoft PowerPoint Images (Alt Text) Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Add Alt Text to meaningful images (right-click image → Edit Alt Text).
- ☐ Mark decorative images as decorative (or use empty alt text where appropriate).
- ☐ Don't place critical info only inside an image of text—repeat it as real text.
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

Microsoft PowerPoint Reading Order Accessibility Perceivable

- ☐ Check reading order in the Selection Pane (screen readers read bottom to top layers).
- ☐ Avoid overlapping elements. Too many layers create significant barriers for users with Alternative Technology (AT) devices
- ☐ Please remove any content located off-slide (in the grey margin area), as screen readers will still detect and read this information.

Microsoft PowerPoint Captions & Audio Transcripts Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ If you embed audio/video in the document, provide captions (video) and a transcript (audio) in the document or alongside it.
- ☐ If you link to media, ensure the destination video has captions and the audio has a transcript.
- ☐ Don't rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms.
- ☐ Provide Alt text to video and give the video a Title.
- ☐ Ensure there is audio control.

Microsoft PowerPoint Links Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”).
- ☐ If helpful, include destination or file type (e.g., “Policy (PDF)”).
- ☐ Explain destination when it's not obvious (e.g., “Download the benefits guide (PDF)”).
- ☐ Make sure linked text is visually distinct beyond color (underline is safest).
- ☐ Reserve underline for links.
- ☐ Add URL to link for printed materials.

Microsoft PowerPoint Final Check Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Check Accessibility and fix issues.
- ☐ Captions/transcripts included (or linked) for any audio/video used.
- ☐ Save with a clear file name and (if used) document title.
- ☐ Quick test: zoom to 200% and confirm it's still readable.
- ☐ Ensure to set document language.

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — PowerPoint (by area)

☐	Headings & list structure: Review → Check Accessibility and use built-in slide layouts/placeholders for structured content. Use real bullets inside placeholders.
☐	Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands
☐	Text readability: Accessibility Checker + manual check for minimum sizes (commonly 18 pt+ body; 24 pt+ preferred) and low-density slides.
☐	Color & contrast: Some issues may be flagged, but verify key combinations with WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA).
☐	Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Manual check—if you use video/audio, provide captions/transcripts (slides, speaker notes, or companion doc). Re-check after exporting and when presenting.
☐	Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Checker flags missing alt text; also add an on-slide takeaway for charts/graphs (don't rely on the visual alone).
☐	Links: Checker may flag some link issues; manually ensure link text makes sense out of context (avoid “click here”).
☐	Reading order (and keyboard order): Use Selection Pane to set reading order (screen readers follow bottom to top reading order), then run Review → Check Accessibility.

Google Slides Structure (Heading & Lists) WCGAG Guidelines; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Ensure every slide has a descriptive unique title.
- ☐ Use built-in slide layouts/placeholders (don't build slides from scattered text boxes).
- ☐ Use real lists inside placeholders.
- ☐ Use pre-set placeholders or use line spacing 1.2 to 1.5.

Google Slides Layout; Accessibility Principle: Operable & Understandable

- ☐ Keep slides uncluttered (one main idea per slide).
- ☐ Avoid overlapping elements; keep a predictable reading flow.
- ☐ Left align text.
- ☐ Use built-in slide layouts/placeholders (don't build slides from scattered text boxes).
- ☐ Avoid placing key content only in speaker notes.

Google Slides Text (Readability); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use large font sizes (24 pt+ preferred; avoid tiny text). Keep text minimal per slide.
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.
- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.

Google Slides Color & Contrast; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

Google Slides Images (Alt Text); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Add Alt Text to meaningful images (right-click image → Edit Alt Text).
- ☐ Mark decorative images as decorative (or use empty alt text where appropriate).
- ☐ Don't place critical info only inside an image of text—repeat it as real text.
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

Google Slides Reading Order; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Check reading order in the Selection Pane (screen readers read from the **back layer to the front layer**).
- ☐ Avoid overlapping elements. Too many layers create significant barriers for users with Alternative Technology (AT) devices
- ☐ Avoid placing key content only in speaker notes.
- ☐ If you link to or embed a video, ensure captions are available and accurate.

Google Slides Captions & Audio Transcripts Final Check; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ If you link to media, ensure the destination video has captions and the audio has a transcript.
- ☐ Don't rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms.
- ☐ Ensure there is audio control.
- ☐ Provide Alt text to video and give the video a Title.
- ☐ Ensure there is audio control.

Google Slides Links; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”).
- ☐ If helpful, include destination or file type (e.g., “Policy (PDF)”).
- ☐ Explain destination when it's not obvious (e.g., “Download the benefits guide (PDF)”).
- ☐ Make sure linked text is visually distinct beyond color (underline is safest).
- ☐ Reserve underline for links.
- ☐ Add URL to link for printed materials.

Google Slides Final Check (Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu); Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Check Accessibility and fix issues.
- ☐ Captions/transcripts included (or linked) for any audio/video used.
- ☐ Enable Accessibility Tools
 - Screen reader Supports
 - Captions
- ☐ Save with a clear file name and (if used) document title.
- ☐ Quick test: zoom to 200% and confirm it's still readable.
- ☐ Ensure to set document language.

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — Google Slides (by area)

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu. They scan, identify, and help fix accessibility issues to ensure documents meet WCAG and PDF/UA standards. |
| ☐ | Headings & list structure: Format → Paragraph styles + the document outline. For automated checks, use the Grackle Docs add-on (Google Workspace Marketplace). |
| ☐ | Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands. |
| ☐ | Text readability: Manual check for size/spacing; Grackle Docs can flag some content/formatting concerns. |
| ☐ | Color & contrast: Mostly manual—use WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA). to validate text/background (especially over images/gradients). Grackle may flag certain contrast problems. |
| ☐ | Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Manual check—if you embed/link media, confirm captions exist and provide a transcript (in the doc or a clearly labeled companion file). |
| ☐ | Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Image options → Alt text; Grackle Docs can flag missing/poor alt text. |
| ☐ | Links: Manual review—ensure descriptive link text and links are identifiable beyond color (underline is safest). |
| ☐ | Reading order (and keyboard order): Keep layout simple; avoid multi-column layouts made from tables/positioned objects. Export and spot-check if distributing as PDF. |

Canva Structure (Heading & Lists) WCGAG Guidelines; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Go to **File > Accessibility > Edit text semantics** to define headings (H1–H6), Paragraphs, or Quotes.

Canva Layout; Accessibility Principle: Operable & Understandable

- ☐ Keep layouts simple and predictable. Avoid complex reading paths for content that must be read in order.
- ☐ If exporting to PDF, spot-check reading order; be prepared to provide a companion accessible version for complex designs.

Canva Text (Readability); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use clear fonts and adequate size (14 pt+ is a good starting point; larger for presentations).
- ☐ Avoid decorative fonts for body text.
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.

Canva Color & Contrast; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.
- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

Canva Images (Alt Text); Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Click the three-dot **More** menu, and choose **Alternative text**.
- ☐ Mark decorative images as decorative (or use empty alt text where appropriate).
- ☐ Don't place critical info only inside an image of text—repeat it as real text.
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

Canva Reading Order; Accessibility Principle: Perceivable

- ☐ Build designs in a clear top → bottom / left → right flow.
- ☐ If exporting to PDF, spot-check reading order in a PDF viewer; provide a companion accessible version for complex layouts.

Canva Captions & Audio Transcripts; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ If you link to or embed a video, ensure captions are available and accurate.
- ☐ If you link to media, ensure the destination video has captions and the audio has a transcript.
- ☐ Don't rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms.
- ☐ Ensure there is audio control.
- ☐ Provide Alt text to video and give the video a Title.
- ☐ Ensure there is audio control.

Canva Links; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”).
- ☐ If helpful, include destination or file type (e.g., “Policy (PDF)”).
- ☐ Explain destination when it's not obvious (e.g., “Download the benefits guide (PDF)”).
- ☐ Make sure linked text is visually distinct beyond color (underline is safest).
- ☐ Reserve underline for links.
- ☐ Add URL to link for printed materials.

Canva Final Check (Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu); Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Check Accessibility and fix issues.
- ☐ Captions/transcripts included (or linked) for any audio/video used.
- ☐ Enable Accessibility Tools
 - Screen reader Supports
 - Captions
- ☐ Save with a clear file name and (if used) document title.
- ☐ Quick test: zoom to 200% and confirm it's still readable.
- ☐ Ensure to set document language.

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — Canva (by area)

☐	Use third-party add-ons like Grackle Doc or Accessibility Checker for Docs via the Extensions menu. They scan, identify, and help fix accessibility issues to ensure documents meet WCAG and PDF/UA standards.
☐	Headings & list structure: No single built-in checker; consider Grackle Slides add-on for automated checks and fixes. Otherwise, rely on consistent layouts and manual review. If you need true heading/list semantics for wide distribution, provide a companion Word/HTML version.
☐	Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands
☐	Text readability: Use Canva's Design Accessibility checker for typography flags; Grackle Slides (if available in your Workspace) can flag issues.
☐	Color & contrast: Mostly manual—use WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA). to validate text/background (especially over images/gradients). Grackle may flag certain contrast problems.
☐	Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Use Canva caption features for video where applicable; verify captions in the final published/exported format. Provide a transcript as a companion document/web page for audio-only.
☐	Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Add alt text where supported and run Canva's checker. For exported PDFs, alt text/structure may not fully carry in complex layouts—plan a companion accessible version if the graphic contains essential info.
☐	Links: If displaying a URL in a design, keep it short and readable; if exporting to a non-interactive format (PNG/print), provide the link destination elsewhere (companion page/doc).
☐	Reading order (and keyboard order): Build designs in a clear top → bottom / left → right flow. If exporting to PDF, spot-check reading order in a PDF viewer; be prepared to provide a companion accessible version for complex designs.

HTML (basics)

HTML Structure (Heading & Lists) WCGAG Guidelines; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use semantic headings in order (h1, h2, h3...).
- ☐ Don't skip heading levels.
- ☐ Use real lists (/) for lists.
- ☐ Don't use headings just to style text.

HTML Layout; Accessibility Principle: Operable & Understandable

- ☐ Ensure layout supports reflow/zoom and doesn't hide content at 200% zoom.
- ☐ Avoid using Cascading Style Sheets (CSS) positioning to visually reorder meaningful content away from the Document Object Model (DOM) order.

HTML Text (Readability); Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use readable font sizes (commonly 16px+ for body text) and comfortable line spacing (around 1.5).
- ☐ Avoid all-caps for long phrases and avoid underlining non-links.
- ☐ Avoid conveying meaning only through styling (color/position).

HTML Color & Contrast; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Use high contrast between text and background.
- ☐ Don't rely on color alone to show meaning (add labels/icons/text).
- ☐ Avoid light gray text on white.
- ☐ Aim for at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

HTML Images (Alt Text); Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ Click the three-dot **More** menu, and choose **Alternative text**.
- ☐ Mark decorative images as decorative **Null (Empty) Alt Attribute**: The standard way to mark an image as decorative is by using an empty alt attribute: .
- ☐ Keep descriptions short (ideally under ~150 characters / one sentence).

HTML Reading Order; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- ☐ HTML code (the **Document Object Model** or **DOM**) should follow the same logical path as they appear visually on the screen
- ☐ Test keyboard navigation (Tab/Shift+Tab) through interactive elements.

HTML Links; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ☐ | Provide captions for video (use caption tracks such as WebVTT). |
| ☐ | Provide transcripts for audio-only content (and for video when helpful). |
| ☐ | Don't rely on auto-captions only—review and correct captions for names, numbers, and key terms. |
| ☐ | Ensure media controls are keyboard accessible and labeled. |

HTML Final Check; Accessibility Principle: Understandable & Robust

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| ☐ | Use descriptive link text (avoid “click here”). |
| ☐ | Reserve underline for links. |
| ☐ | Add URL to link for printed materials. |
| ☐ | Run an automated audit (e.g., Lighthouse or WAVE) and fix issues. |
| ☐ | Do a manual keyboard-only + screen reader spot-check on key pages/templates. |

Accessibility Checkers & Tools — HTML (by area)

☐	Headings & list structure: Use automated audits (e.g., Lighthouse) and browser extensions like WAVE to review headings/lists/landmarks; confirm headings are in order (h1, h2, h3...) and lists use / .
☐	Jaws is a screen reader for Windows (commonly installed on HP/Windows computers) and it does not work on Mac ; NVDA is a free Windows screen reader that can also be used to read and navigate content and to spot-check accessibility (headings, links, reading order) with keyboard commands. Apple VoiceOver with a keyboard allows users, primarily those who are blind or have low vision, to navigate, control, and interact with Apple devices (Mac, iPhone, iPad) entirely through keyboard commands
☐	Text readability: Use Lighthouse for quick flags; then manual checks for responsive/reflow, zoom to 200%, and readable line length/line-height (often ~1.5).
☐	Color & contrast: Mostly manual—use WebAIM Contrast Checker or TPGi Colour Contrast Analyser (CCA). to validate text/background (especially over images/gradients). Grackle may flag certain contrast problems.
☐	Captions (video) & transcripts (audio): Use caption tracks for video (commonly WebVTT) and provide a transcript page/section for audio; verify media controls are keyboard accessible and labeled.
☐	Images (alt text, decorative images, charts): Use automated audits (Lighthouse) and extensions (WAVE, axe DevTools) to flag missing/empty alt; manually confirm alt text is accurate and decorative images use empty alt (alt="").
☐	Links: Use automated audits (Lighthouse) and extensions (WAVE, axe DevTools) to flag empty/ambiguous links; manually test keyboard focus visibility and Tab navigation across links.
☐	Reading order (and keyboard order): Test keyboard navigation (Tab/Shift+Tab) and ensure DOM order matches the visual/reading order (avoid reordering meaningful content only with CSS). Use WAVE (Order/Structure views) and Lighthouse as quick checks.

Quick knowledge check

1. **POUR:** Which letter connects most to captions and alt text? **Answer:** Perceivable.
2. **Links:** What's wrong with "Click here" as link text? **Answer:** It's not meaningful out of context.
3. **Structure:** Why use built-in Heading styles instead of bolding text? **Answer:** Headings create structure that assistive technology can navigate (and they're more consistent).

One-page quick reference

STRUCTURE (Headings & Lists)

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Use Heading 1 (Title) Only use 1 Time	Don't just bold text
Use Heading 2 (Sections)	Don't skip heading order
Use Heading 3 (Subsections)	Don't use random font sizes
Use bullet/numbered lists	Don't type dashes manually

TEXT (Readability)

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Use 12pt+ font	Avoid tiny text
Use simple fonts (Arial, Calibri)	Avoid decorative fonts
Left-align text	Avoid centering long text

COLOR & CONTRAST

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Use high contrast	Avoid light gray text
Use color + labels	Don't rely on color only

IMAGES (Alt Text)

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Add alt text	Don't leave blank
Describe meaning clearly	Don't write 'image'

LINKS

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Use descriptive links	Avoid 'click here'
Explain destination	Avoid vague links

READING ORDER

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Top → bottom flow	Avoid scattered text boxes
Use layout structure	Avoid overlapping elements

FINAL CHECK

✓ DO	✗ DON'T
Run accessibility checker	Don't skip check
Fix all issues	Don't ignore warnings