# Accessibility in Word

* Add title
	+ File > Info > Properties
* Check Accessibility
	+ Accessibility: Investigate (Bottom of the page) **OR**
	+ Review > Check Accessibility
* Add/Check Alternative Text (Alt Text)
	+ Alt text – Description of image read by the screen reader
	+ Don’t use automated alt text
	+ Right Click Image > View Alt Text **OR**
	+ Review > Check Accessibility > Alt Text
	+ Mark any irrelevant images as decorative
		- Images that are only there for decoration and don’t add to the content may become audio clutter if read by a screen reader
* Alt Text Guide
	+ Not the same as a caption — don’t add extra information such as photo credits, only what is visible in the image
		- This is reverse discrimination, as someone without assistive technology may not be able to access it
	+ No need to add “picture of—” since it’s already assumed to be a picture, only clarify if it’s something such as an illustration
	+ Keep it short and concise
	+ Only describe what is necessary in the given context
	+ Add a period at the end so the screen reader knows to pause before continuing to the text
	+ Helpful resource: <https://asuo-ai-labs.streamlit.app/Image_Accessibility>
		- Use only as a guide — double check generated alt text and rewrite as needed
* Styles
	+ Defines what the text *is* in the structure
		- Heading, Normal Body Text/Paragraph, Hyperlink, List, Caption, et cetera
	+ Adds tags and lets people walk through the document — like a map
	+ No matter what text looks like, it won’t be defined as a certain structure type unless a Style is added
	+ Styles go by the block of text, not line-by-line or by character (so there’s no need to highlight everything)
		- Except Character Styles
* Headings
	+ Use Heading Level 1 rather than Title
	+ Screen readers recognize 6 headings (even though Word has the option to go up to 9)
	+ Hierarchy that organizes the information so visually impaired users can navigate the document since they can’t rely on sight to find and jump to certain sections
	+ Just because a section heading is bolded in large text, does not mean a screen reader will recognize it as a heading and categorize it as one!
	+ Is an outline of the document
	+ Also creates bookmarks to help sighted users navigate the document!
		- Navigation Pane (Ctrl+F **OR** View > Show > Navigation Pane)
	+ Section levels can stay the same, go down by one, or jump back up one or more. They can’t skip numbers going down!
	+ Skipping down means a person will be confused and think they missed something, skipping up means they know they’re starting a new section
* Open Styles Menu (Middle of Home Tab)
	+ Update to Match Selection **OR**
	+ Choose to format as an existing Style **OR**
	+ Create a New Style
		- A+ button
* If you can’t find the Style you want:
	+ Options > Show: All Styles > Sort: Alphabetical
* Editing Styles
	+ Automatically updates all instances of the Style (or Styles based on it) in the Document
	+ Keeps things within the document consistent and makes editing easier
* When adding Styles, don’t forget:
	+ Character Styles
		- Italics – Emphasis
		- Bold – Strong
	+ In general, only use these when needed, as they may be difficult for some people with disabilities to read and aren’t specified by a screen reader
	+ To signify important information, consider adding a symbol such as an asterisk(\*)
* Stay away from formatting from the top — Font and Paragraph — especially for lists!
	+ The options in the Styles menu are the same, only more accessible
	+ Manual formatting may confuse screen readers (especially lists)
	+ Character Style is unnecessary when the paragraph style is already defined as being bold, italics, et cetera.
* Show Paragraphs — ¶
	+ Delete any extra blank space
		- Editing > Replace > Special > Paragraph Mark (replace two with one)
		- Paragraph mark also written as ^p
	+ Empty paragraphs are read by screen readers as “blank”
* Edit Styles
	+ Syles > Modify
	+ Add Spaces
		- Format > Paragraph > Spacing
	+ Can turn on Gridlines if you want to compare with the original document
		- View > Show > Gridlines
* Make sure objects are Inline (unless they are marked decorative)
	+ Right Click Image > Wrap Text > In Line with Text
	+ Drag to anchor the image before/after the appropriate line of text
	+ This affects the reading order, which is otherwise irrelevant since Word is text-based and reads left to right and top to bottom
* Stay away from textboxes
	+ They mess up the flow of text
	+ If you have a document with a lot of design elements, utilize the IFAS Communications Graphic Design service, they will keep you on brand and ADA compliant ([https://branding.ifas.ufl.edu](https://branding.ifas.ufl.edu/))
	+ It's not that it can get complicated, it will get complicated
* To give buffer room, add border
	+ Picture Format > Picture border > More Lines
	+ Increase the width as desired then change the color to blend into the background
* Add Footnote
	+ References > Insert Footnote
	+ To Edit:
		- Footnote and Endnote > Format
	+ Will add the Footnote Text Style
* Add Link
	+ Type text – either the URL (web address) or something descriptive, rather than “click here”
	+ If it’s a web address, Word should automatically make it a hyperlink. If not:
	+ Highlight > Right Click > Link
		- Add address and ScreenTip
	+ ScreenTip = Alternative Text
* Tables
	+ Insert > Table (Draw or Insert)
	+ Make sure to have a Header Row and/or First Colum
		- Table Design > Table Style Options (check the relevant boxes)
	+ Columns go down, Rows go across.
	+ Don’t merge or split cells
	+ Don’t leave the first cell blank
* Final notes:
	+ Headers and Footers will be automatically artifacted, meaning they won’t be read by a screen reader so keep important information in the main document
	+ Symbols
		- Only Unicode symbols will be read by a screen reader
		- Insert > Symbol
		- This includes special bullets in a list (best to keep it simple)
* Converting to PDF
	+ File > Save As > PDF (\*.pdf) > More options… > Options… > PDF Options > PDF/A compliant
		- PDF/A compliance ensures long term file accessibility
* Questions? Contact:
	+ Tracy Bryant, Director of Creative Services (tracydz@ufl.edu)
	+ Courtney McGillicuddy, Accessibility Document Specialist (cmcgillicuddy@ufl.edu)