Link Text Best Practices

Rule	Purpose/benefit	DO example	DO NOT example
Avoid generic or ambiguous link text that relies on additional context or user action to be understood.	SR users may encounter link text on its own, without other content or context; plus, all users benefit from knowing a link's destination without having to read more than the link text.	(Either of the following links) Visit the Electronic Accessibility website to learn more about accessibility at UC.	(Any of the following links) Visit the Electronic Accessibility website to learn more about accessibility at UC. Also: "Click here" or "here"; "link"; "pdf," "video"; any URL etc.
Do not use URLs as link text (except in print).	URLs are often long and do a poor job of conveying the link's destination/purpose.	For additional information, visit the Board of Regents website.	For additional information: https://regents.universityofcalifornia.edu/
Use descriptive link text, instead: link text that describes the link's specific purpose and/or destination.	See above; plus, alignment between link text and link purpose and/or destination helps assure users the link functioned as intended.	Visit the Electronic Accessibility website to learn more about accessibility at UC.	Visit the Electronic Accessibility website to learn more about accessibility at UC.
Use unique link text: no two links in the same environment should use the same exact link text unless they direct to the same exact destination.	If two links use the same exact link text, users are forced to rely on additional context or user action to differentiate the two links.	You can learn about electronic accessibility through the Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI), and you can learn about electronic accessibility through WebAIM.	You can learn about electronic accessibility through the Web Accessibility Initiative, and you can learn about electronic accessibility through WebAIM.
Include the file type in the link text when linking to a file.	This prepares users to expect unique behavior (e.g., "open or save file" dialog) and informs them what software is needed.	The UC IT Accessibility policy (pdf) is expected to be updated in 2025.	The UC IT Accessibility policy is expected to be updated in 2025.
Reserve underline for link text (and citations) and/or use a link text color that achieves 3:1 contrast with body text (and contrasts with its background color as necessary)	These methods allow color blind users to differentiate link text from body text, while making it easier for all sighted users to quickly recognize link text.	These **best practices** will help you craft more accessible hyperlinks.	These best practices will help you craft more accessibility hyperlinks. (i.e., avoid using underline for emphasis; use bold or italics instead)
If an image hosts a hyperlink, its **alt serves as its link text** and should be chosen accordingly.	If an image hosts a hyperlink, the link destination/purpose is the most important thing about the image users need to know.	Alt text for UCOP logo in UCOP website banner: "UC Office of the President"	"UCOP logo" (because this would make users think the link directs to an image of the UCOP logo)