

In Macs: Make Accessible PDFs – 10 Easy Steps!

In general, it is essential to embed certain formatting and structure within a document so that, when it is converted to a PDF, assistive technology can follow the structure clearly and provide the information in a logical order to the disabled user. The basic steps are provided below for Word 2011 for Macs. See the [UC Electronic Accessibility website](#) for more detailed information and [instructions for making accessible pdfs](#).

Important – use an updated version of Microsoft Office 2011 Service Pack. From the Help menu, select Check for Updates.

1. Headings

Assign appropriate heading levels to all headings using Styles. The title of the document should be assigned Heading 1; subheads, or the next level down should be assigned Heading 2; continue to assign lower-level subheads Heading 3, Heading 4, as appropriate.

2. Body

Use the Normal text style for the body text of the document.

3. Paragraphs

Set the spacing between paragraphs instead of hitting Enter twice to create line spaces between paragraphs. From Home, go to Paragraph, then Spacing, and select a point size (e.g., 6 pt) in the Before and After fields.

4. Images

Use alt text to provide a short description for each image. Right click the image and select Format Picture. Select Alt Text. Provide a brief description in the Description field.

5. Hyperlink

Use link text that has meaning, such as “instructions for making accessible pdfs,” instead of “click here” or “more.”

6. Lists

Use the Bullets or Numbering list functions for all lists.

7. Tables

Use the Tables function to create tables.

8. Columns

Use the Columns function under Layout to create columns.

9. Convert

Install a free open-source program (Open Office, LibreOffice, NeoOffice) and use it to open the Word document. To then convert your accessible Word document into an accessible PDF, go to File, then Export as PDF. In the PDF Options window, check Tagged PDF, and click Export.

10. Check

Test your Word document for accessibility. Open the file in Adobe Reader, from the Edit menu go to Accessibility, and select Quick Check.