**Heading 1: Creating Accessible Documents in Word 2013 & 2016**

**Heading 2: Requirements to Make a Document Accessible**

**Heading 3: Introduction**

Accessibility of our Electronic and Information Resources (or EIR), is becoming more important as legislation, publicity and outreach programs focus attention on making more resources available to people with disabilities, including employees and the public. Microsoft Word, for example, is commonly used both at the workplace and at home, and is now providing more tools than ever to improve accessibility.

Unfortunately, a “make accessible” button does not exist on our computers, so it’s necessary for us to know how to create accessible documents on our own.

People with visual impairments frequently use assistive technologies to read a document. This is typically software that reads a computer screen out loud. These screen readers detect the structure and features of a document by underlying code. When the document is coded looking at the document’s properly, it is accessible.

## Seven Requirements

There are **seven requirements** to make a Word document accessible related to

• Document Structure

• Figures

• Hyperlinks

• Lists

• Columns

• Color and Contrast

• Tables

The other modules in this course will explain these in more detail.

**Structure**

First, and most important, a document must have **Structure**. You structure and organize the Word document by applying heading styles. Microsoft provides multiple levels of heading styles, with the highest and most important level listed as Heading 1. As heading levels decrease in importance, the heading number increases. Most documents use only three or four heading levels.

You can think of document structure as an outline. Word lets you view this structure, or outline, using Document Navigation. When you look at the Document Map in the Navigation Pane, notice that each descending level of heading style is indicated by an indentation to the right, similar to the appearance of an outline. The Document Map allows you to see the organization of the document and easily move through it by clicking on appropriate headers.

A properly structured document also lets you create an automated Table of Contents with two simple clicks.

**Figures**

Another requirement concerns **Figures**. A figure can be a photograph, drawing, chart, graph, or another image. You will need to add Alternate Text, which is a brief description of the figure, and position the figure properly. The Figures module provides more details.

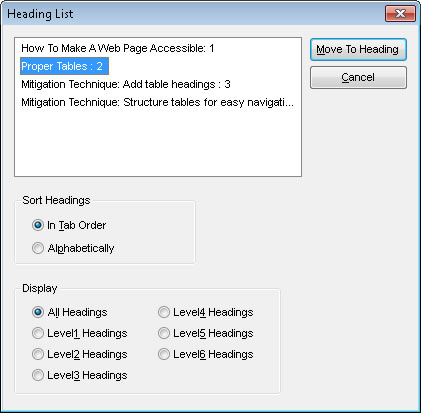


Figure 1 Heading List in JAWS



**Hyperlinks**

Descriptive **Hyperlinks** are important to accessibility. Use meaningful text for hyperlinks, instead of the once common “Click Here” or “For More Information”. Screen readers vocalize the document’s hyperlink. Imagine the confusion when hearing this list of links: “click here, click here, click here.”

### Avoid:

[Click here](https://products.office.com/en-us/business/get-latest-office-365-for-your-business-with-2016-apps?wt.srch=1&wt.mc_id=AID522514_SEM_Ffi9Z0hI)

**Click here to access the Microsoft Office Website:** <http://bit.ly/2pV1j7P>

**For more information about Microsoft tools** [click here](http://bit.ly/2pV1j7P)

### Use:

**For more information about Microsoft tools, please visit the** [Microsoft Office Website](https://products.office.com/en-us/business/get-latest-office-365-for-your-business-with-2016-apps?wt.srch=1&wt.mc_id=AID522514_SEM_Ffi9Z0hI) **is the best way to incorporate a hyperlink.**

## Lists

Use list styles when making **Lists**. Microsoft offers a variety of list styles, including bulleted, numbered (or lettered), and paragraph. The Lists and Columns module provides more information.

## Columns

**Create Columns** with the Columns Tool in the **Layout** group. If you are not familiar with this feature, you may be tempted to create the appearance of columns by using the **Tab** key to format. Columns are meant to be read from top to bottom, and left to right, like articles in a newspaper, and lists created with tabs do not work that way. Using the Columns tool ensures that screen readers can read the document properly. Plus, that makes it much easier to edit text within the columns.

## Color and Contrast

**Color and contrast** are important accessibility considerations. If you convey any information via color you must also communicate it in another way. Many people are colorblind and may not be able to distinguish a color you use in a document. Good contrast is essential for many readers. Black and white is a good default combination, while red on black, for example, may be nearly invisible. Some useful websites and tools that determine acceptable color contrast combinations are discussed in the Colors and Contrast module.

## Tables

If your document includes **tables**, you **must** format them correctly to make them accessible. How to properly format a table is covered in the Tables module. We can note now, however, that screen readers cannot handle split or merged table cells.

## Things to Avoid

1. Avoid use of **text boxes or paragraph frames** in your documents. They are intended to direct attention to areas of text, but are completely inaccessible to screen readers because they read right over them. Instead, try adding borders to a selected area of text.
2. Don’t use **watermarks** on your document. It’s invisible to screen readers, and it’s also very hard to read for those with low vision.
3. Do not use **Drop Caps** in your document. They may look fancy, but they are invisible to those using a screen reader.
4. Avoid using **Text Art.** They are done in text boxes, so as mentioned before, they are read right over by screen readers.

This concludes our overview of what is required to make a document accessible. Please proceed to the next modules in this series.

**Table Exercise**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Agenda** | | | |
|  | **AGENDA ITEM** | **TIME** | **STRATEGIC PLAN COMMITMENTS**  **(IF APPLICABLE)** |
| 1. | Call to Order and Overview of Meeting Goals | 6:00 PM |  |
| 2. | Public Comment | 10 min | 9, 10 |
| 3. | Approval of Minutes (November 13, 2018) | 5 min |  |
| 4. | Presentation and Discussions |  |  |
| 1. Project and Financial Updates | 20 min | 8, 9, 10 |
| 1. HUB Update | 15 min | 8, 9, 10 |
| 1. Design Presentation – New Southwest Elementary School | 20 min | 8, 9, 10 |
| 1. Budget and Austerity Planning Relationship to Bond Implementation | 20 min | 8, 9, 10 |
| 1. Upcoming Groundbreakings and Site Dedications | 5 min | 8, 9, 10 |
| 5. | Discussion of Committee Operations, Future Meetings Dates and Agenda Items | 5 min | 9, 10 |
| 6. | Adjourn | 7:40 PM |  |

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**Resources**

[Accessibility Resources: Self-Paced Training](https://www.austinisd.org/accessibility-resources/training)