

Microsoft Word Accessibility Quick Reference



Providing Quick Tips and
Technical Assistance to Our
Nation's
AT Act Programs



OVERVIEW

Eight ways to create a more accessible Microsoft Word Document.

Screenshots and instructions are based on Microsoft Word 2013.

Add a Document Title

File Tab > Title field (at right of screen)

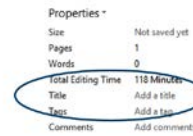
Info



Protect Document
Control what types of changes people can make to this document.



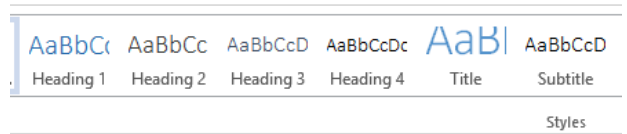
Inspect Document
Before publishing this file, be aware that it contains:
Document properties and author's name



Use Word Heading Styles

Home Tab > Styles Group > Select "Heading 1", "Heading 2", "Heading 3", etc.

Each Heading Style should match the logical heading structure of the document.



Use Word List Structure

- Home Tab > Paragraph Group > Bullets (for bulleted list)
- Home Tab > Paragraph Group > Numbering (for basic numbered list)
- Home Tab > Paragraph Group > Multilevel list (for more complex numbered list)



Add Alternative Text to Meaningful Images and Figures

Alternative Text conveys the intended meaning of an image or figure.

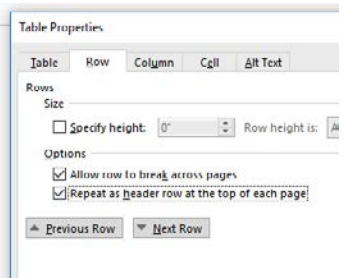
- Right click image/select Image and hit Shift + F10 > Format Picture > Layout & Properties > Alt Text > Description
- Type alternative text into Description field



Identify Column Headers in Table Row

Select top row of table > Right click/Shift + F10 > Table Properties > Row tab > select "Repeat as header row at the top of each page" checkbox

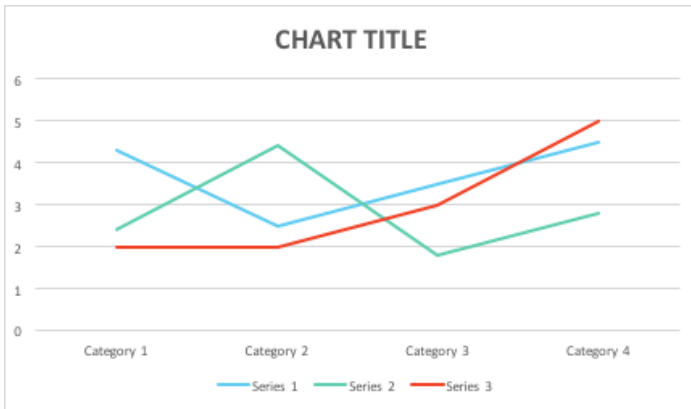
Yes votes	No votes
12	19



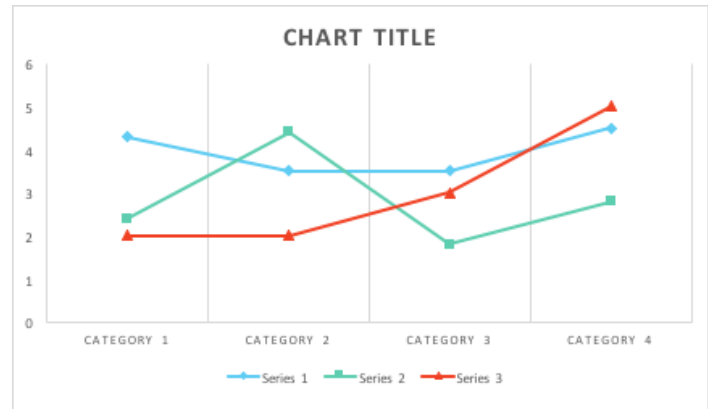
When Color Conveys Meaning, Use Color Plus Another Visual Cue

Use markers, text labels or different patterns for charts and graphs

1: Line graph with no markers



2: Line graph with markers



Use additional formatting for text, or a symbol such as an asterisk

Required fields are in red

First Name

Required fields are in red and indicated

First Name (required)

Use Good Color Contrast

Check that contrast between text and background colors is at least 4.5:1 for regular text and 3.0:1 for large text.

- [The Paciello Group Colour Contrast Analyser](https://www.paciello.com/resources/contrastanalyser/) lets you easily check color contrast (<https://www.paciello.com/resources/contrastanalyser/>)

Use Descriptive Link Text

Make descriptive link text the active link in a document, and put the actual web address (URL) in plain text. This makes sure that people can use the link whether the document is digital or printed.

In the Insert Hyperlink window, "Text to display" is the descriptive link text and "Address" is the actual web address.

