

# Creating Accessible Documents

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We are required by law to provide documents that are accessible to individuals with visual disabilities. This is true whether these documents are uploaded to our websites or intended to be distributed to students, used as handouts for meetings, or will be printed programs for a community event.

- ❖ For documents that will be uploaded to our websites, you must use sans serif fonts, careful color choices and especially the layout features of your word processing software so that these documents can be deciphered by screen readers.

This document is a tutorial on creating documents that are accessible. The links in this document will take you to “how to” information created by two universities, University of Washington and Michigan State University, as well as by Microsoft.

## Core Steps Overview

- Fonts
  - Use sans serif fonts such as **Arial** or **Verdana** (goodbye fancy fonts such as script fonts, Comic Sans Serif, or serif fonts like Times New Roman)
  - Avoid using only uppercase characters
  - Choose a minimum of 12 point font size for **printed documents**
  - Avoid underline, condensed or italic fonts as they are more difficult for some people to read
  - Provide strong color contrast between the text and the paper, or between text and “fill”
  - Avoid using patterned backgrounds
  - Don't use color to distinguish lists or choices (all color looks the same with a screen reader). For example, a green check, an orange check and a red check to indicate “go,” “caution,” “avoid”
- Use built-in headings and formatting provided by your word processing software
- Add alternate text (“alt text”) to all images
- Use tables wisely
- When **saving as a PDF**, follow these steps:
  - Click “file/save as” and select PDF
  - Select “minimum size” and then click on “Options’ and select “Document Structure Tags for Accessibility”

## How to Apply These Core Steps to Your Documents

- [Creating Accessible Documents in Microsoft Word](#)
- [Creating Accessible Google Drive Documents](#)
- [Creating Accessible Flyers, Programs, etc, using Microsoft Publisher](#)
- [Creating Accessible Excel Spreadsheets](#)
- [Creating High Quality, Accessible Scanned Documents](#)