

508 Compliance – Word Documents

In this introductory guide, we will discuss making a Microsoft Word document 508 accessible for all individuals to be able to read and understand. The trainings are made by the [General Services Administration](#) regarding the accessibility requirements for information and communication technology (ICT) covered by [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#) and Section 255 of the Communications Act.

“The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) Office of Government-wide Policy (OGP) is tasked under this law to provide technical assistance to help Federal agencies comply with these requirements, and ensure that covered ICT is accessible to, and usable by, individuals with disabilities.”

This guide is an overview of the “[How to Make an Accessible Document in Microsoft Word](#)” trainings.

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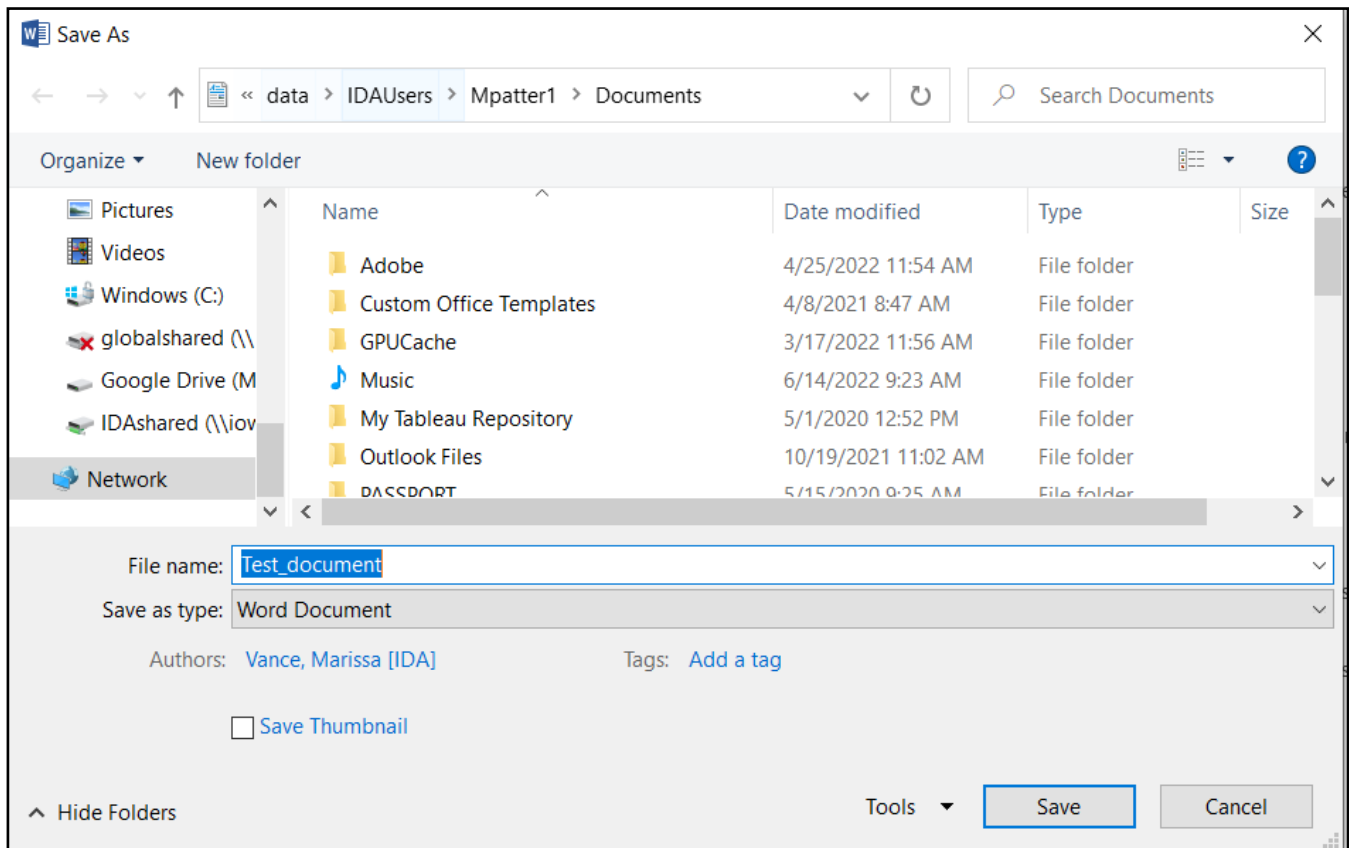
► Introduction and Background

- Individuals with disabilities must have access to the same information as those without disabilities
- Discussed below are the minimum steps to make an electronic Microsoft Word document 508 compliant
- In this guide/training you will learn how to:
 - Author Accessibly
 - Check Your Work
 - Identify Inaccessible Content
 - Identify Accessible Content

Download the [guide](#)

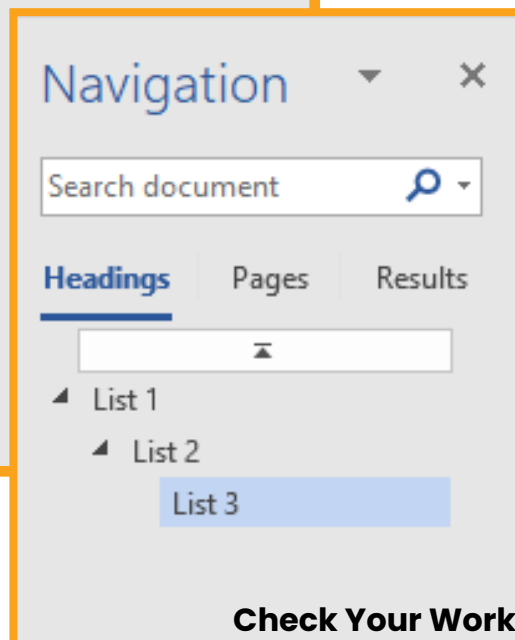
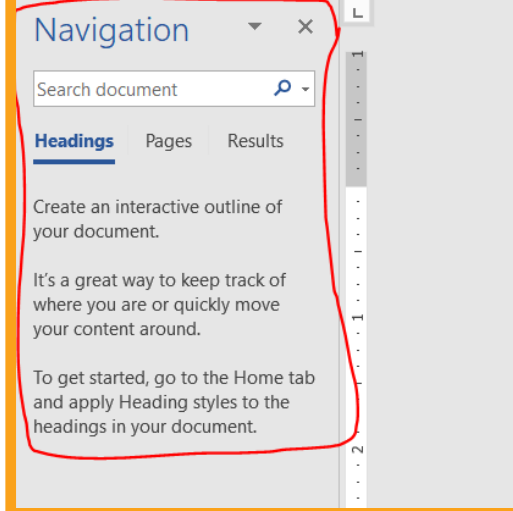
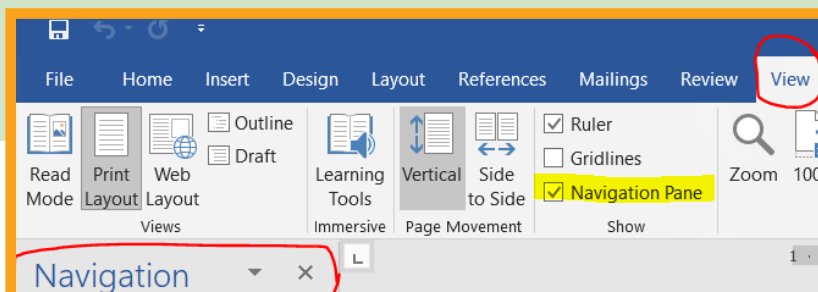
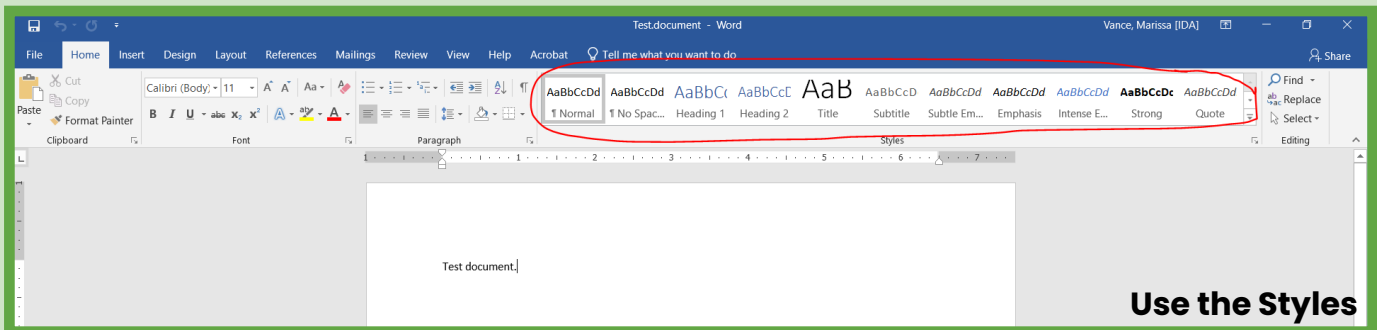
► Save as a Word Document with a Descriptive Filename

- A descriptive filename is one that identifies the document or the purpose
- It is required as it helps individuals
 - Locate
 - Open
 - Switch between documents easier
- Files must be saved in docx format
 - File > Save As > Word Document
- Ensure that the saved filename is descriptive and identifies the document or the purpose of the document
- Use underscores between words



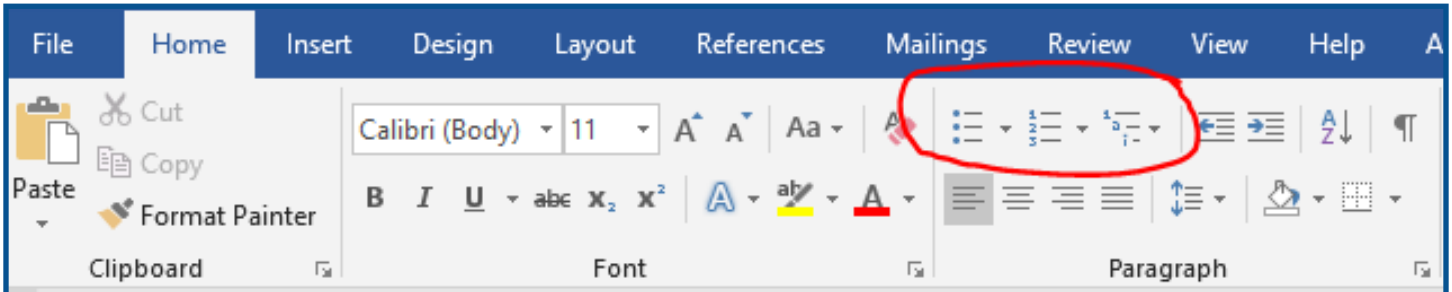
► Use Styles to Create Headings

- Headings
 - Break-up content
 - Make finding information easier
- Assistive technology cannot infer meaning from formatting characteristics alone
 - Bolded
 - Underlined
- Author Accessibly
 - Use the styles (H1, H2, H3, etc.)
 - There are some available to you to choose from
 - Use a separate style for each heading level
- Check Your Work
 - View > Navigation Pane > Check that all headings are there and match the outline



► Use Built-In Features to Create Lists

- Lists can help
 - Break-up information
 - Simplify information
- Assistive technology cannot infer meaning from visual formatting alone
- Home > Bullets, numbering, etc. feature
- Check Your Work
 - Place cursor at the end of the list and select one > Make sure bullets/numbering are highlighted above
 - Shift + F1
 - Look under Bullets and Numbering



Use Bullets, Numbering, etc. Feature

Reveal Formatt... x

Selected text

Sample Text

Compare to another selection

Formatting of selected text

Paragraph

From Paragraph Style: List

Paragraph

PARAGRAPH STYLE:

List Paragraph

ALIGNMENT

Left

INDENTATION

Left: 0.5"

Right: 0"

SPACING

Before: 0 pt

After: 8 pt

Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style

Line spacing: Multiple 1.08 li

Direct Formatting

INDENTATION

Hanging: 0.25"

Bullets and Numbering

List:

Numbered

Level: 1

Numbering Style: 1, 2, 3, ...

Start at: 1

Alignment: Left

Aligned at: 0.25"

Indent at: 0.5"

Section

Check Your Work



► Use Built-In Features to Organize Content

- Columns are used to break-up information and organize content within a document
- Assistive technology devices cannot present information in the correct reading order if only 'tabs' or spaces are used to create the appearance of columns
- Read top to bottom and left to right
- Use the columns feature
 - Page layout section
 - Type text> Highlight> Select number of columns desired
- Check Your Work
 - Shift +F1
 - Columns is under "Section"

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface. The **Layout** ribbon is active, with the **Columns** group highlighted. The ribbon includes options for **Breaks**, **Line Numbers**, **Hyphenation**, **Indent**, **Spacing**, **Position**, **Wrap Text**, **Bring Forward**, **Send Backward**, **Selection Pane**, **Align**, **Group**, and **Rotate**. The main document area contains the text "Test document." followed by four bulleted items: "List 1", "List 2", "List 3", and "List 4".

The **Reveal Formatting** pane is open on the right, showing the formatting for the selected text. The pane is divided into sections: **Paragraph** (From Paragraph Style: Normal), **Section**, **MARGINS**, **LAYOUT**, **PAPER**, and **COLUMNS**. The **COLUMNS** section is circled in red and shows "Number of columns: 2".

Check Your Work



► Use Built-In Features to Create Layout and Data Tables

- Layout Tables – accessible friendly
 - Table using cells to layout or format images or text
 - Does not require row or column headers
 - Use built-in table features > Left to right and top to bottom
 - Steps:
 - Ensure you have a reading order that matches the visual layout
 - Ensure the table is placed 'in-line with text' so AT can access
 - Insert > Table > Format rows and columns > fill with content
 - Check Your Work
 - Cursor in 1st cell and tab through the table to check reading order
 - Right click > Check properties > In-line with text
- Simple Data Tables – accessible friendly
 - Need information from the row and/or column header to understand data in the cell
 - Do not have merged or split cells
 - Steps:
 - Insert or create table in Word
 - Keep the data table simple – do not merge or split headings, rows/columns
 - Identify the header row
 - Ensure the table is placed 'in-line with text' so AT can access
 - Insert > Table > Insert Table > enter row and column numbers > Add data
 - Headers first > Select row > Layout > Repeat Header Rows
 - Check Your Work
 - Click on table (make sure not a picture)
 - Verify it is simple – has header row and no merged/split cells (view gridlines)
 - Identify header row > Click in header row > shift +F1 > Make sure repeat as header row is there
 - Ensure the table is placed 'in-line with text'
- Complex Data Tables – not accessible in Word
 - Need information from the row and/or column header to understand data in the cell
 - Have multilevel heading and/or merged cells

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface. The ribbon is set to 'Table Tools' with the 'Design' and 'Layout' tabs selected. The document content includes the text 'Test document.', a list of four items, and a table with three columns: 'Person', 'Color of Eyes', and 'Color of Hair'. The table contains the following data:

Person	Color of Eyes	Color of Hair
Marissa	Blue	Brown
Erin	Blue	Blonde

The 'Reveal Formatting' task pane on the right shows the formatting for the selected table. The 'Table' section is highlighted with a red circle, showing the following settings:

- Table**
- From Table Style:** Table Grid
- TABLE STYLE**
- Table Grid**
- OPTIONS:** Don't resize to fit contents
- Direct Formatting**
- PREFERRED WIDTH**
- OPTIONS:** Resize to fit contents
- Cell**
- PREFERRED WIDTH**
- 2.16"**

► Identify Distinct Languages

- You do not have to set a language for proper names, technical terms, or foreign words that have become a part of the common English language usage.
- Select text in different language > Review > Language > Set Proofing Language > Select language > OK
- Check Your Work
 - Click in other language text
 - Review Tab
 - Language
 - Set Proofing Language
 - Verify correct language is selected

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface with the Review tab selected. The 'Language' button in the ribbon is circled in red. Below the ribbon, the text 'Test document.' is followed by a list of four items: 'List 1', 'List 2', 'List 3', and 'List 4'. A 'Language' dialog box is open, showing a list of languages with 'English (United States)' selected. The 'OK' button in the dialog box is highlighted in yellow. In the bottom left corner of the document area, the text 'Check Your Work' is displayed.

Test document.

List 1
List 2
List 3
List 4

Language

Mark selected text as:

- English (Trinidad and Tobago)
- English (U.A.E.)
- English (United Kingdom)
- English (United States)
- English (Zimbabwe)
- Estonian
- Faroese
- Filipino

The speller and other proofing tools automatically use dictionaries of the selected language, if available.

Do not check spelling or grammar
 Detect language automatically

Set As Default OK Cancel

Check Your Work

► Create Unambiguous Names for Links

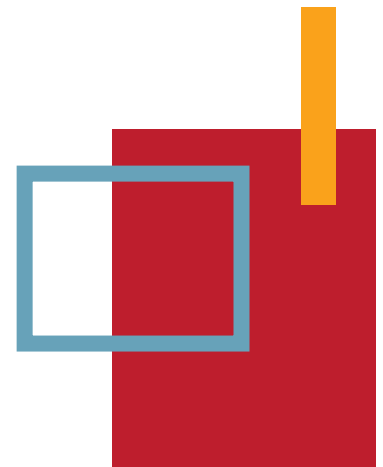
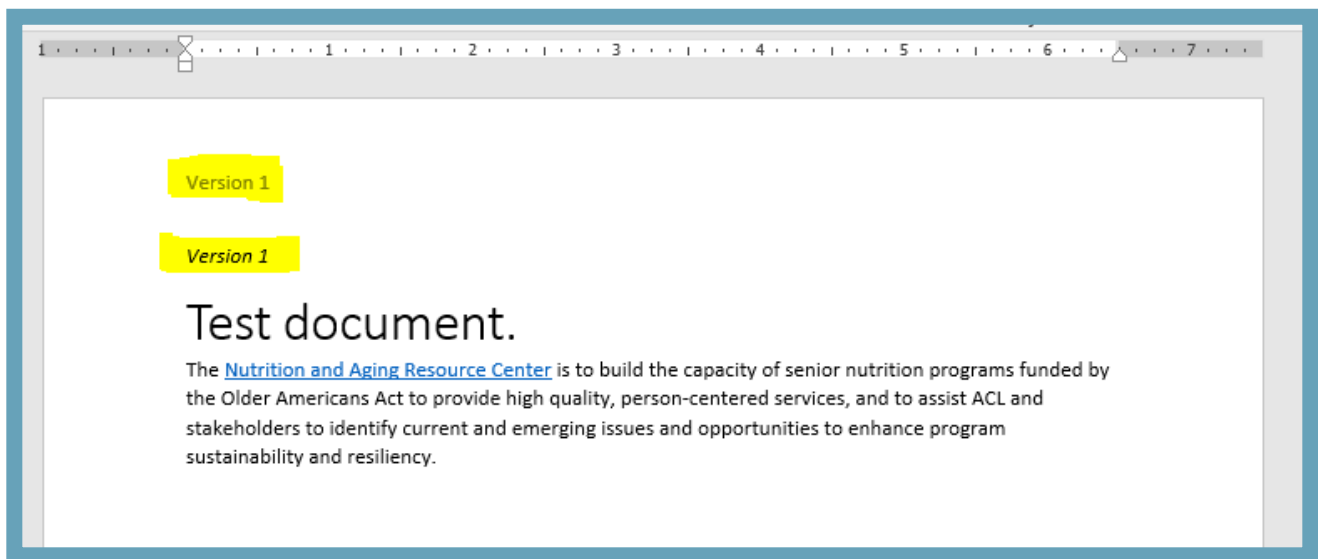
- Link names should describe their – destination, function, or purpose
- “Click Here” does not work for assistive technology as it will not be able to convey information that distinguished one link from another
- 2 ways to create
 - Ensure the destination, purpose, or function of each link is described in surrounding text
 - Create a hyperlink using the descriptive text
 - Type text> Insert Tab> Select Hyperlink> paste URL in appropriate field
 - Place in this document> Select appropriate line from box
 - Email address> Type in email address in appropriate field
- Check Your Work
 - Very the link(s) can be determined within the text and/or has an name that describes the destination, function, or purpose

The screenshot shows the Microsoft Word interface with the 'Insert' tab selected. The 'Link' button in the ribbon is circled in red. Below the ribbon, the 'Insert Hyperlink' dialog box is open. In the dialog, the 'E-mail Address' option is circled in blue. The 'Text to display' field contains 'Nutrition and Aging Resource Center'. The 'Address' field contains 'https://acl.gov/senior-nutrition/about-us'. The 'Look in' dropdown is set to 'Documents', and a list of folders is visible. The 'Address' field is highlighted in yellow.

Inserting Links

► Duplicate Vital Information in Headers, Footers and Watermarks

- Screen readers do not automatically read information contained in the headers, footers, and watermarks of Word documents
 - If vital information such as; response date, security levels, distribution instructions, etc. - this information must be duplicated at or near the start of the main content area
- Check Your Work
 - Check for vital information in the header, footer, and watermarks
 - Make sure information is duplicated in a secondary location



► Create Accessible Images and Other Objects

- AT cannot infer meaning from images or other graphical objects such as
 - Pictures, images of text, images of tables, shapes, icons with hyperlinks, graphs, charts, etc.
 - Make accessible> Place in-line with text and add descriptive text
 - Text description of information conveyed through the image or picture
- Add descriptive text
 - Add alt text
 - Use captions
 - Include information in surrounding text or appendix
 - Text should describe the purpose and/or function of meaningful objects, if image or object is decorative or not meaningful you should use a space, or " ", if the object is an image of text then the alt text much match the text verbatim
- Place in-line with text
 - Click on image or object> Page Layout Tab> Position> In-line with text
- Add Alt Text
 - Right click on image or object> Select format picture/object/chart> click on 'layout and properties' icon> Select 'Alt Text'> add information in description (keep brief 250 characters or less)
- Check Your Work
 - Verify all images/objects are 'in-line with text' and descriptive text is present as alt text or as a caption, description or appendix
 - Use the Accessibility checker

Mailings Review View Help Acrobat Format Tell me what you want to do

Picture Border Picture Effects Picture Layout

Alt Text Position Wrap Text Bring Forward Backward

Picture Styles Accessibility Arrange

Version 1

Place In-Line with Text Add Alt Text

Version 1

Test document.

The [Nutrition and Aging Resource Center](#) is to build the capacity of senior nutrition programs funded by the Older Americans Act to provide high quality, person-centered services, and to assist ACL and stakeholders to identify current and emerging issues and opportunities to enhance program sustainability and resiliency.

Use the Accessibility Checker

Info

Test.document

Documents

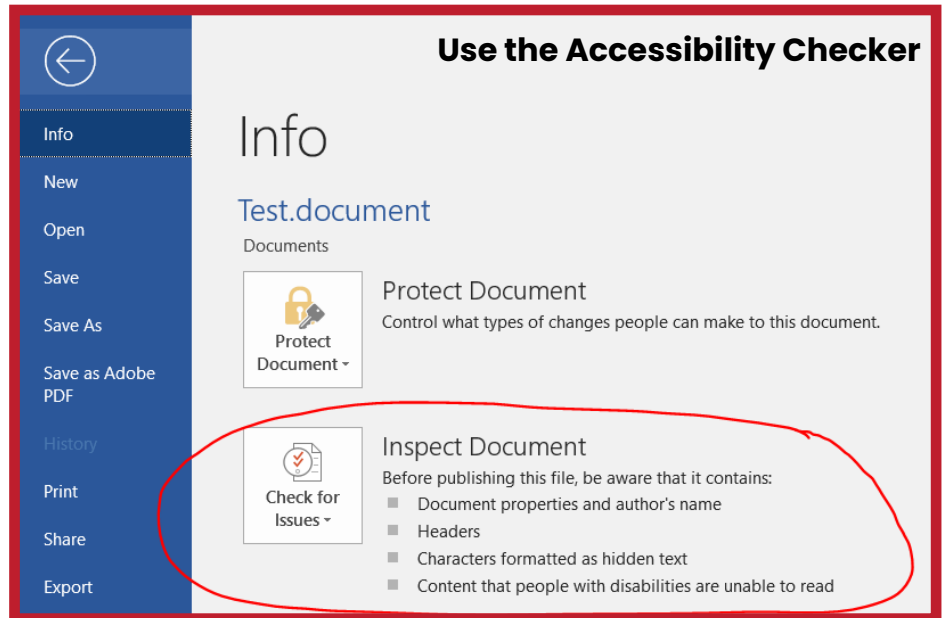
Protect Document
Control what types of changes people can make to this document.

Inspect Document
Before publishing this file, be aware that it contains:

- Document properties and author's name
- Headers
- Characters formatted as hidden text
- Content that people with disabilities are unable to read

► Create Accessible Textboxes

- AT cannot access information in text boxes unless they are placed 'in-line with text' – text boxes must be in-line
- Select text box > Page Layout > Position > choose in line with text
- Check Your Work
 - Run accessibility checker



► Use Color and Other Sensory Characteristics Plus Text to Convey Meaning

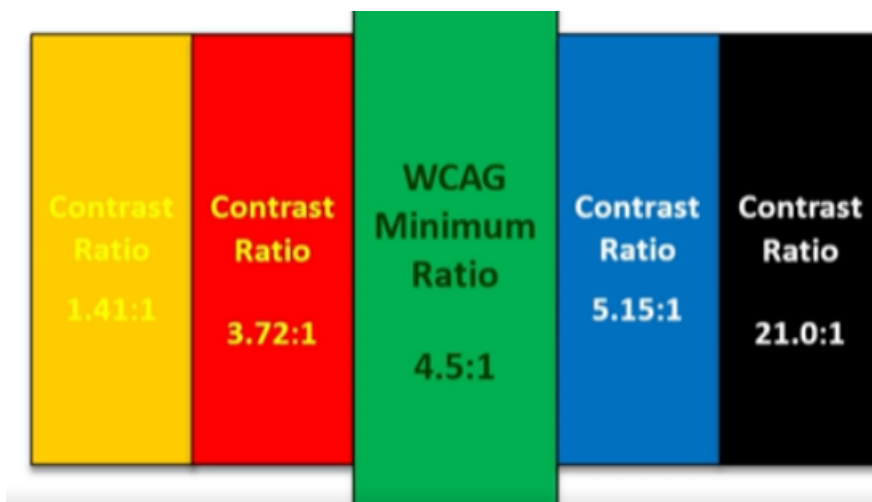
- Sensory characteristics include: size, shape, position, etc.
 - Include text to duplicate the meaning of color or sensory characteristic(s)
- Check Your Work
 - Use a layout table that includes color and text to convey information
 - Individuals who cannot see the colored boxes would not be able to determine the status of the projects without the words included

Project A	Completed
Project B	At Risk
Project C	Incomplete



► Create the Required Color Contrast

- A high level of contrast allows people to see and use your content more easily
- Standard size text should have a contrast ratio of greater than or equal to 4.5:1
 - Large size text (at least 14 point and bolded or 18 point and regular weight must have a contrast greater than or equal to 3:1
- Create content with text or images of text that use color or shading with sufficient color contrast
- Check Your Work
 - Use the '[colour contrast analyser](#)' to ensure content has correct color contrast ratio
 - Available for download at <https://paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser>
 - Use application > place crosshair on the text for the foreground > do same for the background color
 - Displays a fail or pass



► Create Accessible Embedded Files

- If you embed an audio-only, video-only, or multimedia file into your document you must provide additional information so that individuals with disabilities have comparable access to that information
- Audio-only
 - Include an accurate and complete transcript in the word document
- Video-only
 - Include an accurate and complete text description in the word document
- Multimedia file
 - Provide accurate and complete synchronized captions and audio description
- Check Your Work
 - Activate the audio-only, video-only, or multimedia file - while it is playing, compare the corresponding transcript, description or synchronized captions and audio description to ensure it is accurate and complete

