Making ADA Compliant Documents

Making Ada Compliant documents is important for several reasons:

- It's the law. The ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) requires us to make accommodations for people with disabilities. This means that web content should be accessible to the blind, deaf, and those who must navigate by voice, screen readers or other assistive technologies.
- It's the right thing to do.

Making ADA Compliant Word Documents

- Naming Files:
  File names must be a continuous string of characters. This string should not contain any special characters. The only period in the file name should be the period that precedes the file extension. Use all lower case letters.
  > Yes: academiccalendar2020.docx
  > No: academiccalendar – 2020.docx

- Headlines & Subheads:
  Use Word's Built-in Headings instead of making headings and subheads bold, larger, or underlined. Do not use bold, larger text or underlines in your document.
  - Use Heading 1 for the Title of the document
  - Use Heading 2 for the document's main section headings
  - Use Heading 3 for subsection headings
  - Use Normal for regular paragraph text
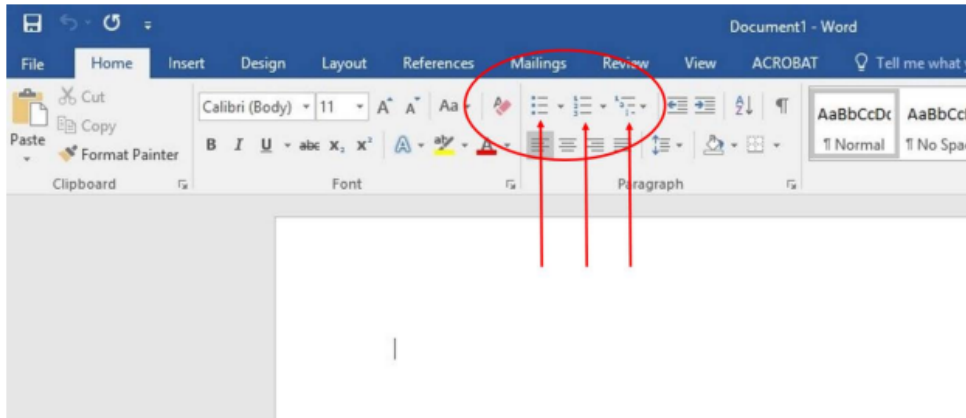
- Lists:
Use Word's bullet and numbering preformatted lists. Do not use dashes or any other symbol found on your keyboard.

- Alternative Text for Images:
Alternative text is used to provide a non-visual person a means to know what an image is about. If you inset an image into a Word document, it must have alternative text added to it. The alternative text should describe what is going on in the photo. Alternative text should be no more than 140 characters. Do not use phrases like 'image of'. When an image contains only text, such as a button that says, 'Read more', 'Read more' can serve as your alternative text.

  To set alternative text:
  1. Right click on the image
  2. Select Format Picture
  3. At the top, select the Layout & Properties Icon (3rd from left) or the Web tab, depending on which version of Word you have
  4. Select Alt Text or go straight to 5 - typing in your alternative text in the dialog box
  5. Write a short description in the dialog box
  6. Hit OK or simply close the window if there is no OK
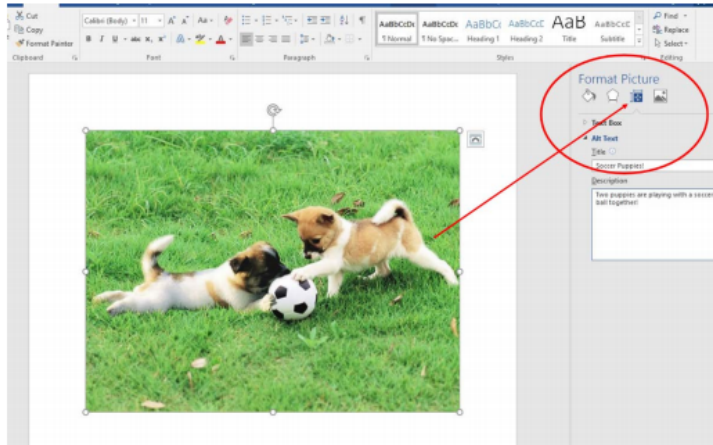
- Inserting Hyperlinks
    - Hyperlinks should be inserted instead of writing out a url. You will know if your hyperlink is correct and active because it will turn blue.
    - When creating language for your hyperlink, do not say, 'click here'. Choose words from your copy that best reflect where the hyperlink takes the reader to or what the hyperlink is about.
    Yes: Learn how to fill out your FAFSA application.
   No: Click here to learn how to fill out your FAFSA application.

To Insert a Hyperlink:
1. Highlight the text that you would like to be your active link.
2. Right click on the highlighted text.
3. Click on 'Hyperlink'.
4. Paste the URL that will be the destination in the field marked 'Address'
5. Click OK
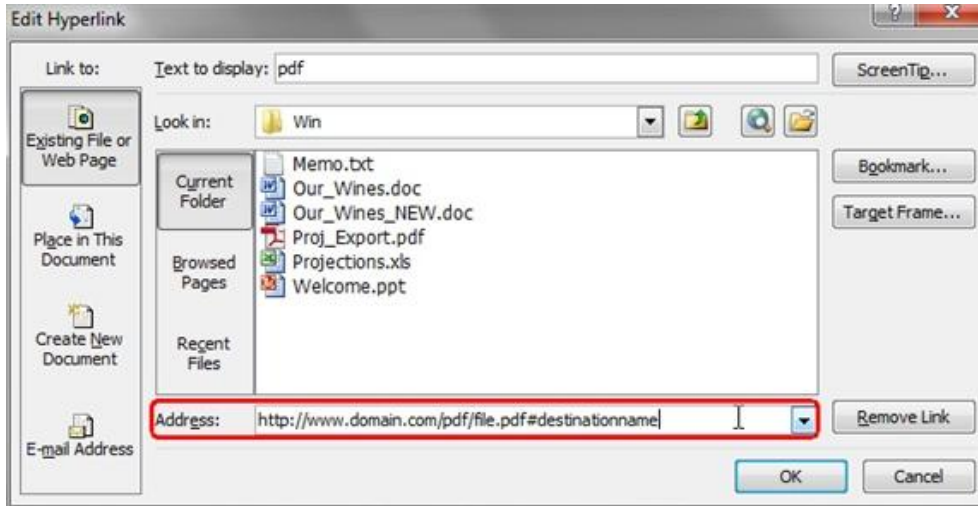
- Creating Tables

Microsoft Word does not provide an easy method for creating accessible tables. If you have complex tables it is highly recommended that a description or explanation of the table contents be included in the text of the document. If at all possible, construct the table so it will read logically from left to right, top to bottom order. Tables with column headings in the top row must have the top row formatted as a header row.

- To Create a Table Header Row:
  1. Highlight the top row of the table
  2. Right click to display editing options
  3. Select 'Table Properties' from the list
  4. Click the 'Row' tab in the Table Properties window
  5. Check the option 'Repeat as header at the top of each page'
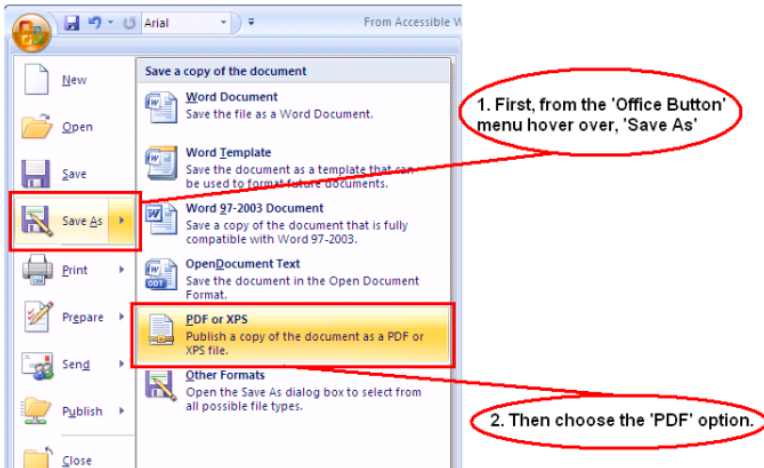 6. Click OK
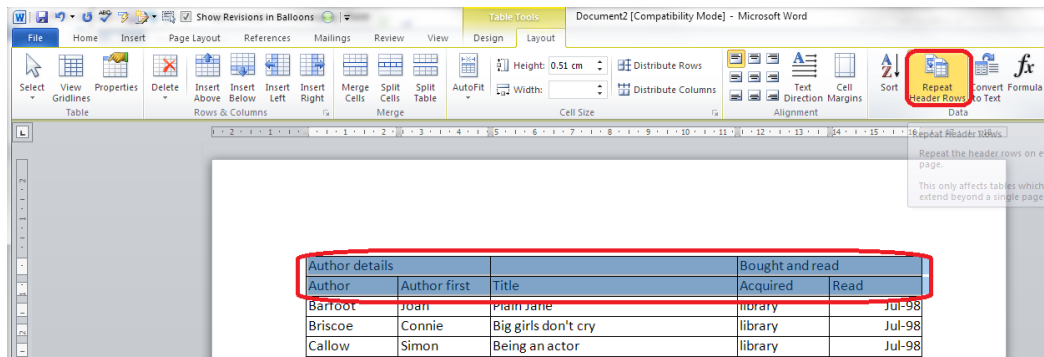
- o Prevent Table Rows for Splitting Across Pages
    1. Click the Table selection button at the left top of the table to select the entire table.
    2. Click the Table Tools/Layout tab
    3. Click Properties in the Table group
    4. Click the Row tab
    5. Uncheck the box for allow row to break across pages
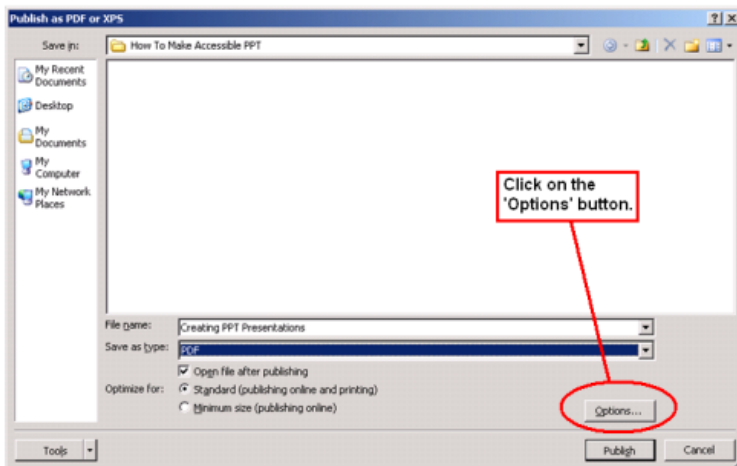   6. Click OK
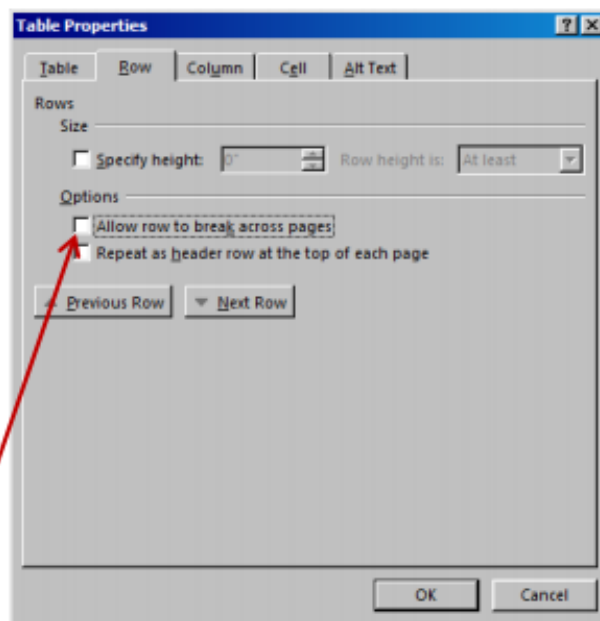
Making ADA Compliant PDFs

Once your Word doc is ADA compliant, the steps for saving it as an ADA compliant PDF are simple:

1. Go up to File and hit 'Save As'. Depending on which version of Microsoft you have, you might have to choose where you want to save the file to first.

2. Choose the PDF option.

3. In the 'Publish as PDF' menu, enter the file name and then click on the 'Option' button. File names must be a continuous string of characters. This string should not contain any special characters. The only period in the file name should be the period that precedes the file extension.

4. In the Options menu box make sure the 'Document structure tags for accessibility' box, is checked. Click on OK and then Publish.

Make sure the 'Document structure tags for accessibility' box is 'checked'
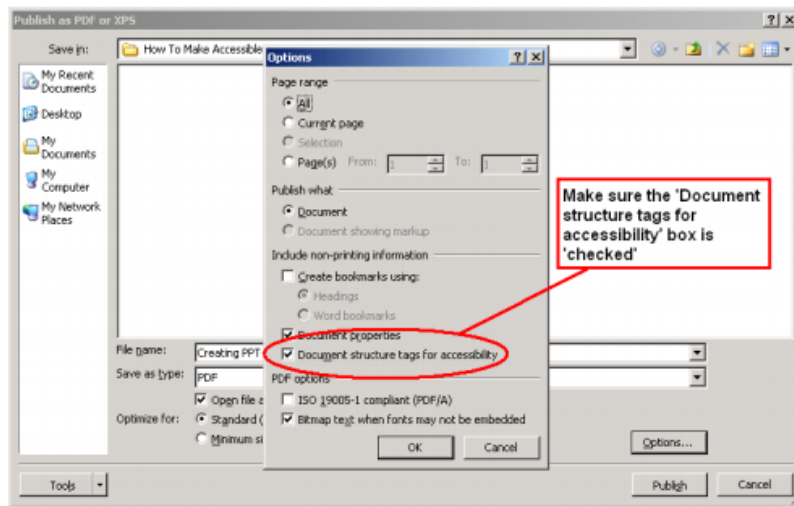
Helpful Online Resources

[Adobe Acrobat Help for PDFs](#)

[Univerity of Washington's Resources](#)

[Adobe InDesign Accessible PDFs](#)

[Free Online PDF checkers](#)