# Quick Reference: Testing Electronic Content for Accessibility

This document provides an overview of the requirements that should be met when creating electronic documents and other web-based resources. The information and examples are intended as a general guide and focus on the most common techniques and requirements for accessible web-based content. They are based on the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag) adopted by the U.S. Government.

## Non-text Content

Any information on a document or webpage that is not text-based needs to have appropriate, equivalent alternate text.

Examples of non-text content include pictures, charts, graphs and other decorative elements like clip art. These types of content need to be described or tagged using equivalent alternate text. Below are two examples of content that requires alternate text and the appropriate equivalent.



**Alternate Text Equivalent**: A lighthouse surrounded
by a rocky coastline overlooking the sea on a sunny day

**Alternate Text Equivalent:** Survey question: In what grade band
do you teach social studies? (1,858 responses). 1,202 or 64.7% teach pre-kindergarten and 35.30% or 656 teach grades 4 or 5.

## Color, Meaning and Fonts

Make sure information and/or instructions do not depend on color, sound, shape, size, or location. (Example: a beep indicates the correct answer or click on the orange square in the upper right-hand corner to access the study guide). Visually-impaired users are not able to or have difficulty reading certain colors (red and green can be particularly difficult) and following instructions that rely on location, shape or size.

Make sure your font color stands out from the background (use a [color contrast checker](https://developer.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser/) to be sure) and your text size is at least 12-points for normal text (paragraphs). Use fonts that are simple and widely available like Arial, Times New Roman and Verdana. Not only are they easier to read, but they also are available on most computers so you don’t run the risk of a font substitution being required. [Learn more about web-safe fonts](https://www.w3schools.com/cssref/css_websafe_fonts.asp).

## Hyperlinks

Look for links with ambiguous link text like “click here” and modify the wording so that the meaning behind the link is clear. For example, rather than wording a link as “Click Here for…” use wording like: Access the 2017 Social Studies Master Plan. Every link should make sense if the link text is read by itself.

## Test your web pages for accessibility

[WAVE](http://wave.webaim.org/) is a free accessibility evaluation tool that will test individual web pages and give a detailed report on its accessibility. Simply [cut and paste the web page address you want to test into the WAVE tool page](http://wave.webaim.org/) and press enter. Dynamic or protected content can be evaluated with the [WAVE Chrome extension](http://wave.webaim.org/extension). [Learn more and get help using the WAVE tool](http://wave.webaim.org/help).

## Test content scaling

Make sure text on a web page can still be properly viewed when people enlarge it. Enlarge the font (Ctrl and + on a Windows keyboard) in your web browser to ~150%. Is the page content readable and usable? Is horizontal scrolling minimized? Zoom the web page in your browser (enlarge fonts *and* images) to at least 200%. Is text on images readable?



Image example from Google Chrome's control tab.

**Note**: follow these steps in different browsers to text content scaling: Safari: **View** > **Zoom Text Only.**  Firefox: **View** > **Zoom** > **Zoom Text Only.** Internet Explorer: **View** > **Text size. Google Chrome: Ctrl and the + sign**

## Check web page keyboard accessibility

Navigate the web page using only the keyboard:

* **Tab**: Navigate to links and form controls.
* **Shift + Tab**: Navigate backwards.
* **Enter**: Activate links and buttons.
* **Spacebar**: Activate checkboxes and buttons.
* **Arrow keys**: Radio buttons, select/dropdown menus, sliders, tab panels, autocomplete, tree menus, etc.
* Is anything mouse-only (e.g., rollover menus)?

## Other Important Tips

* Check media for **captions** (applies to *all* video and live audio) and **transcripts** (applies to pre-recorded audio and video).
* Ensure the **page and/or document title is unique and descriptive** (i.e. web pages, Microsoft Word and PowerPoint documents).
* Ensure that animating or updating content or media can be paused and stopped.
* Look for flashing content/video that could cause seizures.

## Additional Resources

* [Creating Accessible Microsoft Word Documents](https://sway.com/PTDuv0jbkWQzfN6Y?ref=Link)
* [Creating Accessible Microsoft PowerPoint Documents](https://sway.com/pfGavXtHnUrKeHJX?ref=Link)
* [Web Page Accessibility Evaluation Tool](http://wave.webaim.org/) | [Wave Tool Help](http://wave.webaim.org/help)
* [Free Color Contrast Checker Tool](https://developer.paciellogroup.com/resources/contrastanalyser/)
* [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Overview](https://www.w3.org/WAI/intro/wcag)
* [Learn more about guidelines for media (video and audio)](https://www.w3.org/2008/06/video-notes)