

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

PDFs

NDSU

OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Use this list to make sure the final PDF document is accessible when converting documents into a PDF file. The first and most important thing is to ensure the document you are converting follows all accessibility standards. Once you have made sure there are no accessibility issues, follow these steps. The most common adjustments will be discussed below.

Save A Document As PDF

Why: In order to preserve the accessibility changes made in the PowerPoint or Word document, the PDF conversion has to be done in a specific way.

- » **How(For Mac):** Click file > Save As > Select PDF from the file format dropdown > In Microsoft word check the box labeled "Best for electronic distribution and accessibility" > Save.
- » **How(For Windows):** Click file > Save As > Select PDF from the file format dropdown > Options > In Microsoft word check the box labeled "Document structure tags for accessibility" > Ok > Click save.

Use The Accessibility Checker Feature

Why: The Accessibility Checker feature will automatically check to see if there are any accessibility errors. If you have used the accessibility checker features in other platforms, you will have minimal adjustments to make in a PDF.

- » **How:** Click Tools > Accessibility > Accessibility Checker > Start checking > The system will automatically check for accessibility issues and show if there are any issues. To resolve issues simply Right Click on the unresolved issue > Click Fix.

Add A Title To The Document

Why: Having a document title makes it easier for someone using a screen reader to know what document they are listening to. If you missed this, you can still do this during the PDF accessibility check.

- » **How:** Click Document > Title > Control + Click > Fix > Uncheck "Leave as is" and change document title.

Set The Appropriate Reading Language

Why: An appropriate language must be selected in the PDF properties so that the screen reader knows what language to read in.

- » **How:** Click File > Properties > Advanced > Reading Options > Select "English" or the appropriate language the document is written in.

Make Sure The Document Uses High Contrast

Why: Make sure that the document is in high contrast so that the text is easier to read for sighted and low sighted individuals. This means dark text on a light background or light text on a dark background.

- » **How(For Mac):** Open File in Adobe Acrobat DC > Click Acrobat Pro DC > Preferences > Select Accessibility > Check the "Replace Document Colors" box > Select "Use High-Contrast Colors" > From the dropdown list select "black text on white".
- » **How(For Windows):** Open File in Adobe Acrobat DC > Click Edit > Preferences > Select Accessibility > Check the "Replace Document Colors" box > Select "Use High-Contrast Colors" > From the dropdown list select "black text on white".

Set The Reading Order

Why: Since the reading order is unique to each document, the accessibility checker is unable to fully check the reading order. Double check that the PDF is reading the document in the intended order.

- » **How:** Click Tools > Accessibility > Accessibility Checker > Reading Order > Show Order Panel > Review the numerical order for each page. For items a screen reader would not read, click + ctrl or right click on the number of the item in the side panel. From the menu, choose what type of content it is. "Tag as Decorative/Background" will indicate that it is not content that adds meaning to the document.

For more information or assistance, contact:

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