Accessibility Guide for Deposits to the MTSU Institutional Repository (JEWLScholar)

Accessibility is a crucial and often overlooked step in the publishing process. What is accessibility? Accessibility is "how a disabled person accesses or benefits from a site, system, or application.[1]"

Accessibility in publishing is important to MTSU, so consider implementing the following elements in your book and individual chapters:

1. Do not rely on **color** as a navigational tool or as the sole way to differentiate items. Perform a human check of color contrast; if you are unsure, consult the online resources listed at the end of this document.
2. Images should include **alt text** in the markup/code; complex images should have more extensive descriptions near the image (perhaps as a caption or descriptive summaries built right into a neighboring paragraph).
3. Apply **heading styles (H1, H2, H3)** to help screen readers effectively read the document. Make sure that they are labeled and applied correctly.
4. Ensure that **hyperlinks** are properly labeled and working at the time of publication. The screen reader will not register the hyperlink if it is not formatted correctly.
5. **Tables** are [formatted properly](#) and are readable.
6. The issue or article is run through an **accessibility checker**. Consult the resources in this document if this is new to you.

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[1] Taken from Usability.gov: https://www.usability.gov/what-and-why/accessibility.html#:~:text=Accessibility%20focuses%20on%20how%20a,considered%20throughout%20the%20development%20process.

Creating and Making Accessible PDFs

Making accessible documents can be very complicated and time-consuming. For this project, here are basic accessibility measures to implement:

1. Apply heading style (H1, H2, H3).

2. Use built-in list features in Word.

3. Add alternative text (alt text) to images.

4. Identify [document language](#).

5. Use data tables.

6. Export accessible versions.

See the University of Wisconsin-Madison's [Create Accessible Documents](#) guide for more detailed information.

What is an Accessible Document? Why Choose PDF?

An accessible document is a document that is universally easy to use and meets established accessibility standards. It enables most people to view, read, or interact with your document[2].

Why are we choosing to go with PDF as our document format? Adobe's accessibility features make it easier for disabled users to interact with documents when they are in PDF format. In addition, MTSU's institutional repository requires documents to be in PDF or HTML format. PDFs are the most popular and convenient format, so that is another reason they are recommended.

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[2] Taken from: https://www.adobe.com/acrobat/hub/what-is-an-accessible-pdf.html

Fix Accessibility Issues in PDFs

The first step in document accessibility is doing an accessibility check within Adobe Acrobat. It is important to note that depending on software and settings, users may see different options displayed than what is written in these instructions. For more help, search for tutorials using your specific software. These instructions are from Adobe's website[3]:

1. Open the PDF and then from the **All tools** menu on the left, select **View More** and then select Prepare for accessibility. Or, from the top menu, select See all tools. Then, scroll down to **Prepare** > **Prepare for accessibility** and select **Open**. It displays the **Prepare for Accessibility** page with a list of available actions displayed on the left panel.
2. From the **Accessibility Checker Options** dialog, select the options as required and then select **Start Checking**.
3. Once the check is complete, it displays a panel on the right that lists the accessibility issues. Select each issue type drop-down to view the details and make fixes, as suggested.
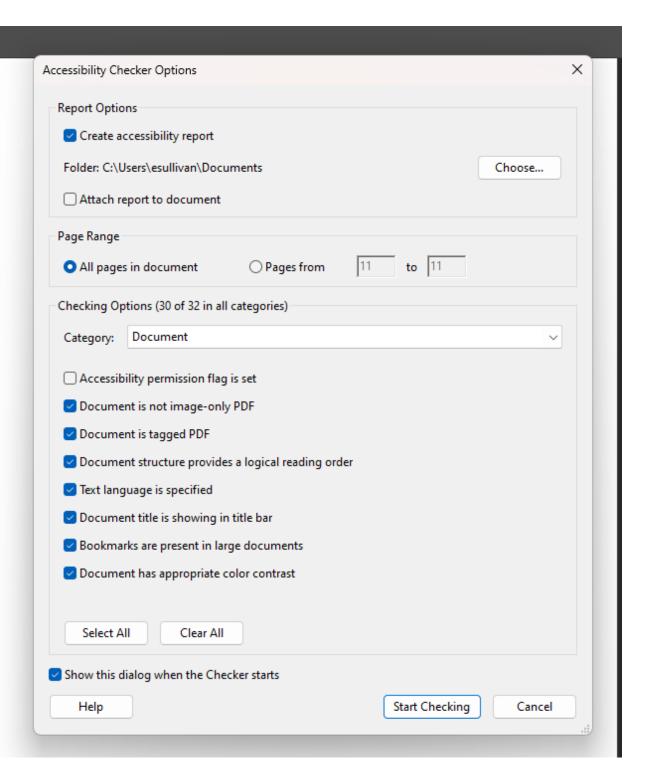
   Since the Accessibility Check feature does not distinguish between essential and nonessential content types, some reported issues may not affect readability. We suggest that you review all issues to determine the ones that need correction.

   The report displays one of the following statuses for each rule check:

   a) Passed: The item is accessible.

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[3] Taken from: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/create-verify-pdf-accessibility.html

b) Skipped By User: Rule was not checked because it wasn't selected in the Accessibility Checker Options dialog box.

c) Needs Manual Check: The Full Check/Accessibility Check feature couldn't check the item automatically. Verify the item manually.

d) Failed: The item didn't pass the accessibility check

4. To view a complete report of the check, from the left panel, select *Accessibility Report*. It displays a detailed report in the right panel.

Accessibility Checker Options   ✕

Report Options

☑ Create accessibility report

Folder: C:\Users\esullivan\Documents   [Choose...]

☐ Attach report to document

Page Range

◉ All pages in document   ○ Pages from [11] to [11]

Checking Options (30 of 32 in all categories)

Category: [Document   ▾]

☐ Accessibility permission flag is set

☑ Document is not image-only PDF

☑ Document is tagged PDF

☑ Document structure provides a logical reading order

☑ Text language is specified

☑ Document title is showing in title bar

☑ Bookmarks are present in large documents

☑ Document has appropriate color contrast

[Select All]   [Clear All]

☑ Show this dialog when the Checker starts

[Help]   [Start Checking]   [Cancel]

Fixing a Failed Check

To fix a failed check after running the **Prepare for Accessibility check[4]**, right-click (Windows) or Ctrl-click (Mac OS) the item in the **Accessibility Checker** panel and select one of the following options from the context menu:

1. **Fix**: Acrobat can fix some items automatically (i.e., bookmarks), but most items require manual intervention. For those that cannot be fixed automatically, follow the following steps:

    a. **Skip Rule**: Deselect this option in the Accessibility Checker Options dialog box for future checks of this document and change the item status to Skipped. It is helpful to use **Skip Rule** on items that require manual checks, such as color contrast.

    b. **Explain**: Opens the online Help where you can get more details about the accessibility issue. This is helpful when you are not sure how to fix an issue. If this is not helpful, check the Adobe website for more information.

    c. **Check Again**: Runs the checker again on all items. Choose this option after modifying one or more items. It will indicate if the changes were successful.

    d. **Show Report**: Displays a report with links to tips on how to repair failed checks. Checking this provides a detailed account of issues.

2. **Options**: Opens the Accessibility Checker Options dialog box, so you can select which checks are performed. This is helpful if you are only looking for specific issues.

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[4] For a step-by-step guide, see: https://helpx.adobe.com/acrobat/using/create-verify-pdf-accessibility.html

For more information on making existing PDFs accessible, please visit Indiana University's [Make an Existing PDF File Accessible](#) guide.

Submitting Works to the Institutional Repository

After you have run your book through the accessibility checks described above, submit that copy to the institutional repository for preservation.

1. To submit your work, click on the submit button on the JEWLScholar homepage at http://jewlscholar.mtsu.edu. Enter your Pipeline credentials to login. This takes you to the submission form where you enter your name and a few details about your work.
   a. For the Publisher, put Middle Tennessee State University.
   b. For the URL, put the URL to your Pressbooks site.
   c. Fill out the rest of the form and attach the accessible book copy.
   d. Agree to the deposit license.
2. Once submitted, the library will upload the item to the repository and email you a link to its permanent URL once complete.

   Items archived in the institutional repository are discoverable in search engines and databases which increase readership worldwide.

Helpful Resources

1. [Accessibility in Word Documents](#)
2. [Accessibility in Adobe PDFs](#)
3. [Basic Accessibility Checklist](#)
4. [U.S. Government Resources and Guidelines](#)

Need Additional Help?

Still have questions or need help troubleshooting an issue? Fill out the [Help Ticket](#).