

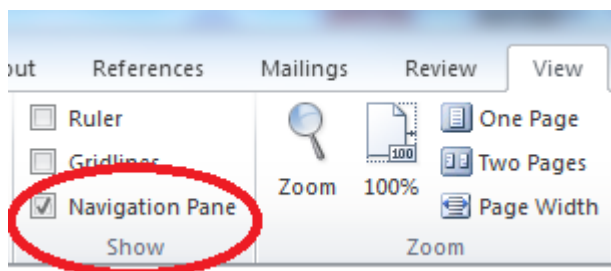
# Creating accessible Word documents

An accessible source document is the first step to an accessible PDF. This guide covers a short tutorial on creating an accessible Word documents which can then be used to generate an accessible PDF file.

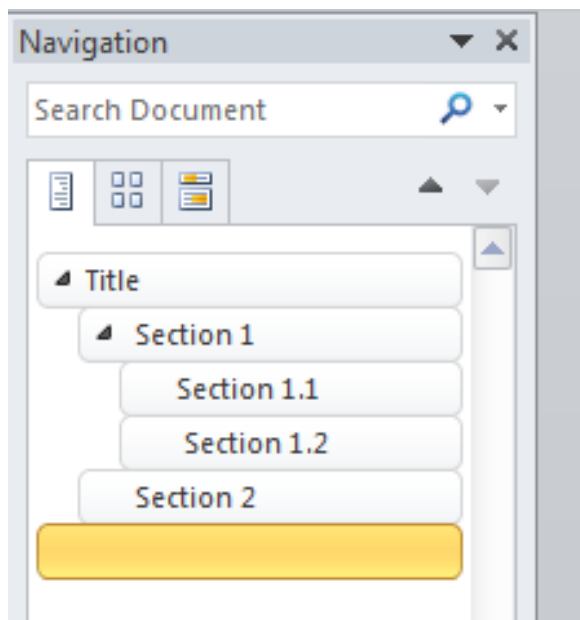
## Using headings to create a document structure

### How to check if your document is compliant

Headings provide your documents a structure. Try to open a Word document then click View > then put a tick on **Navigation Pane**.

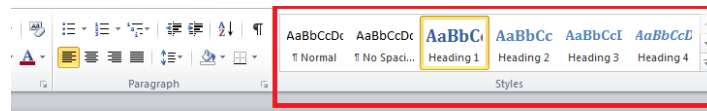


If you do not see text displayed on the navigation pane, then your document does not contain appropriate headings required to make your document accessible. The next section will show you how to structure your document using Styles.



## Applying Styles to text

1. Select the text you want to format.
2. Choose the appropriate Style for the selected text. For titles, select the text and click Heading 1. For section headings, use Heading 2 and for subsection headings, use Heading 3 and so on. Keep headings short, to a maximum of one line in length.
3. Do not skip heading levels just to change the appearance of the text.



Title

Section 1

Section 1.1

Section 1.2

Section 2

4. For paragraphs within each heading, set the text to Normal. The next section will cover customizing the styles.

## Customising the appearance of each Style

1. Suppose your style guide requires the following formatting:

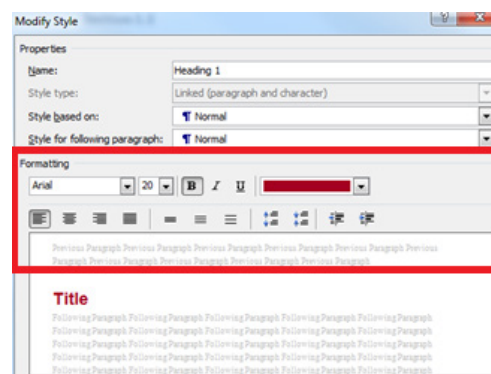
**Heading 1** Arial, bold, 20 pt., black font colour

**Heading 2** Arial, bold, 16 pt., black font colour

**Heading 3** Arial, bold, 12 pt. black font

Normal Text, Arial, 12 pt. black

To format each Style, right click the style you want to change then click on Modify. This will open the Modify Style Window



2. Change the formatting by using the formatting options shown in Figure 4.
3. Click OK when done.
4. For more information on customising styles, go to [Microsoft Website](#)

## Using properly formatted lists

If you need to create a list, use Word's formatting toolbar.



For items that don't follow an order, use a non-order list.

For example:

Services offered by the Learning Technologies Centre

- Website Development
- Packaging of elearning materials
- Consultation



For items that follow a sequence use the ordered-list.

For example:

Steps in creating a QR code

1. Copy your site URL
2. Go to a QR Code generator website
3. Paste the URL on the space provided
4. Download the QR code generated.



For a list with more complex structure, use multi-level list.

**Do not use table to layout a list.**

Types of fruit

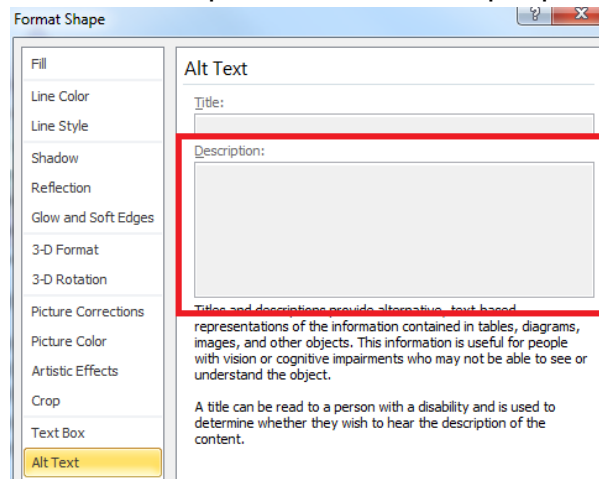
Apple	Grapes	Banana
Orange	Kiwi	Pomegranate
Watermelon	Melon	Mango

**Do not use dashes, asterisk, hyphens or other symbols to create the appearance of a list.** Screenreaders might not be able to read the list in the right order.

## Adding alternative text to images and charts

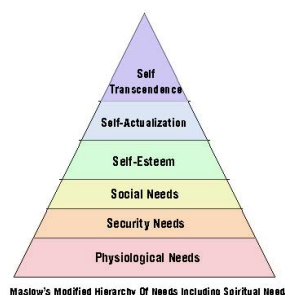
Alt text must provide screen reader users equivalent information that sighted users have.

1. To add an alt text to an image, right click on the image and click **Format picture**. For charts and other SmartArts, right click on the object and click **Format object**.
2. Click on the Alt text Pane.
3. In **Description** box, enter an explanation of the shape, picture, chart.



4. Images that are iconic/decorative should be marked with null alt tags. To do that, input a keyboard space in the description.
5. Leave the **Title** box blank if your description is a short one. If the image is complex, then put in an appropriate title.

For example, the diagram below shows Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs



An acceptable description text is: “A diagram showing Maslow’s Heirarchy of Needs”

A more appropriate alt text is:

**Title:** “A diagram showing Maslow’s Heirarchy of Needs.

**Description:** The pyramid represents the most fundamental levels of needs at the bottom and the need for self-actualization at the top. At the bottom of the pyramid is physiological needs, followed by security needs, social needs, self-esteem, self-actualization then self-transcendence at the top.

## Creating accessible tables

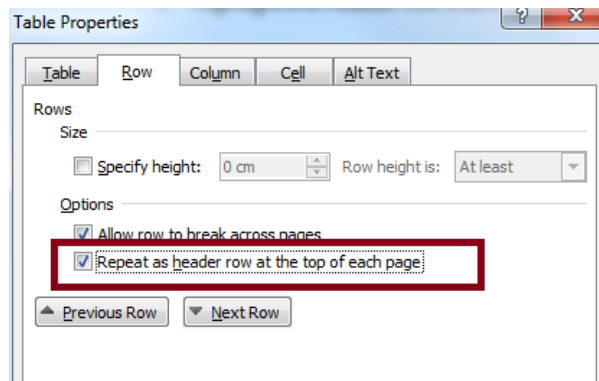
Word has limited support for creating accessible tables. It can work with simple tables with one row of column headers but for more complex tables other tools will be needed to make it accessible.

To create an accessible table, header rows have to be identified.

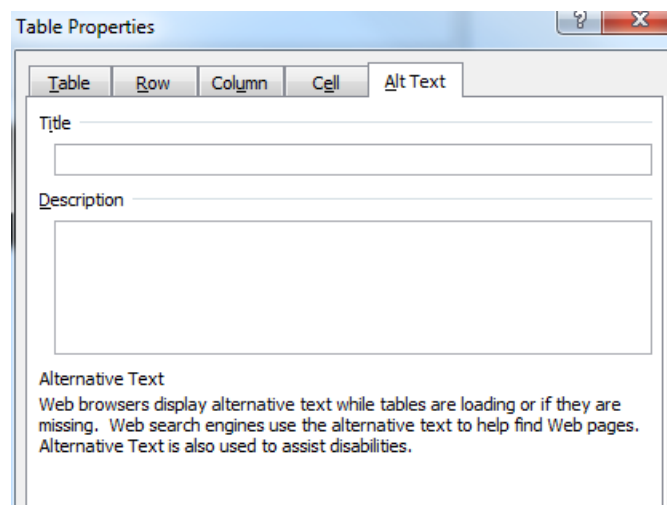
Animal	Fruit	Vegetable
Dog	Mango	String beans
Cat	Banana	Carrots
Turtle	Orange	Potato

Header Row

1. Highlight the header row then right click and choose **Table Properties**.
2. Put a tick mark beside the text Repeat as header row at the top of each page.



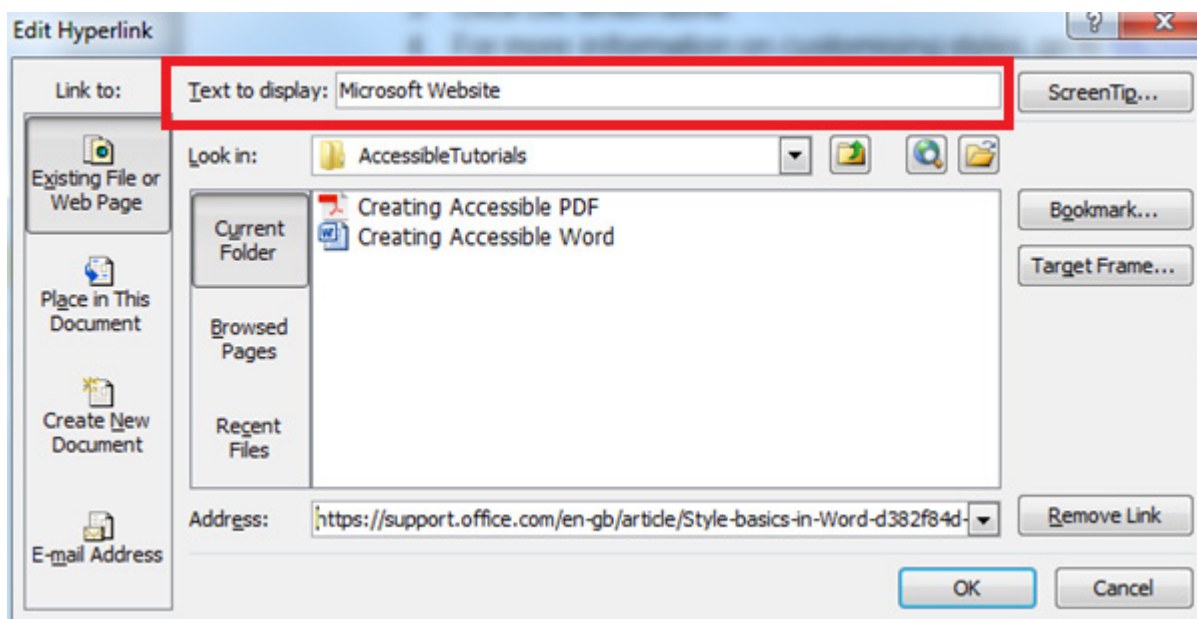
3. Adding alt texts to tables also make the table more accessible. Insert text that orient non-sighted users to the table's design and content. For example, in the Description box, you can add the text. Table on *Topic X* divided into 3 columns and 3 rows of data in each column.



## Extra steps for better accessibility

### Hyperlinks

When inserting hyperlinks, use text that is meaningful in the area **Text to display**. For example, if the link directs the user to the Microsoft Website, then use the text “Microsoft Website” rather than the URL <https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/>. If the document may be printed and read electronically, the use “Microsoft Website (<https://www.microsoft.com/en-gb/>)” as the display text.

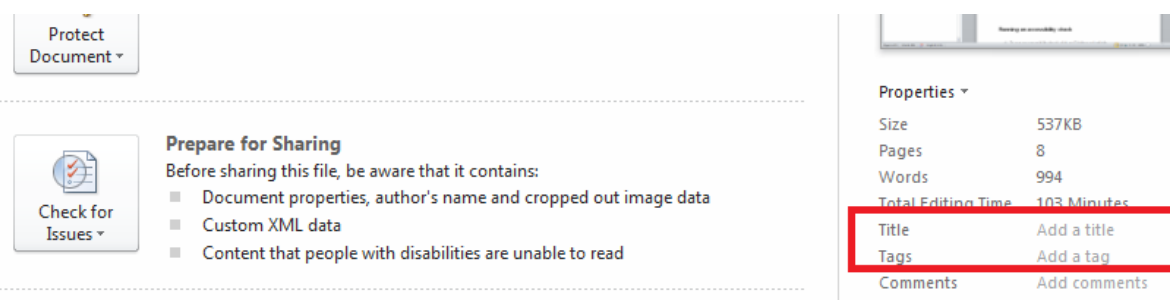


### Readable body text

- Use left aligned text. Don't use justified text.
- Choose a sans serif font with a minimum of 12pt.
- Use good colour contrast.

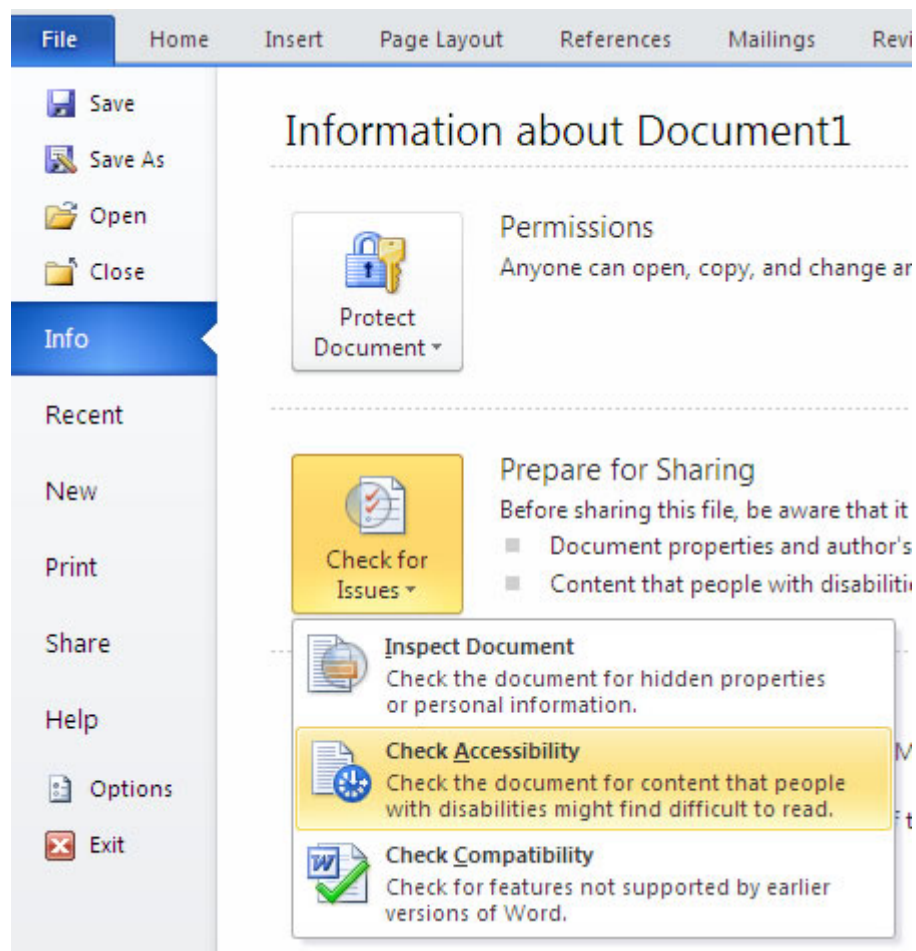
### Document Properties

Add meta-information to your document. Click on File > Info then key in the document properties. At the very least, provide the Title and this should match the title indicated in the document.

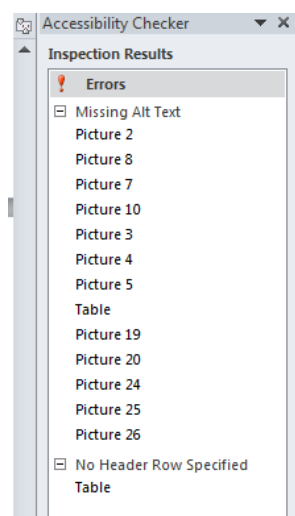


## Running an accessibility check

1. To run an accessibility check, click on File then select Info.
2. Click check for issues then select Check Accessibility.

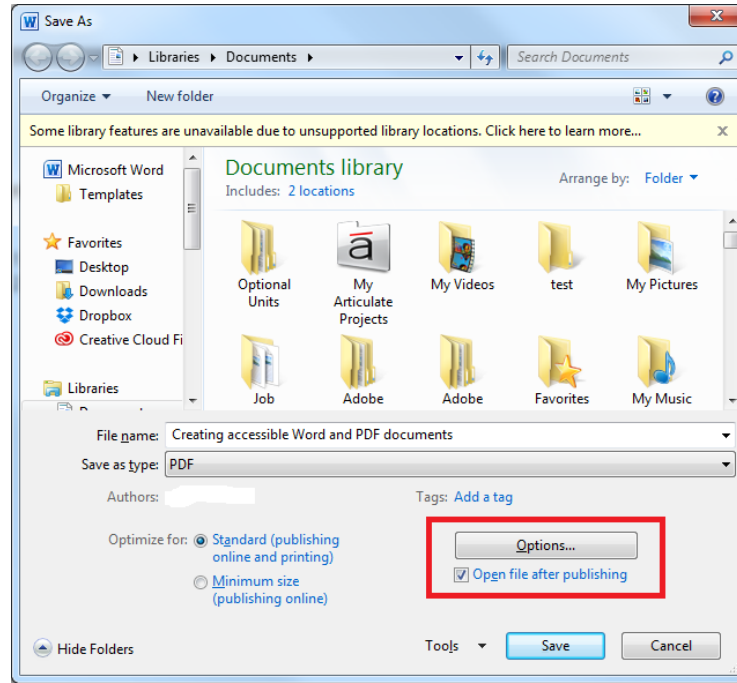


A dialogue box will appear on the right that shows the accessibility errors.

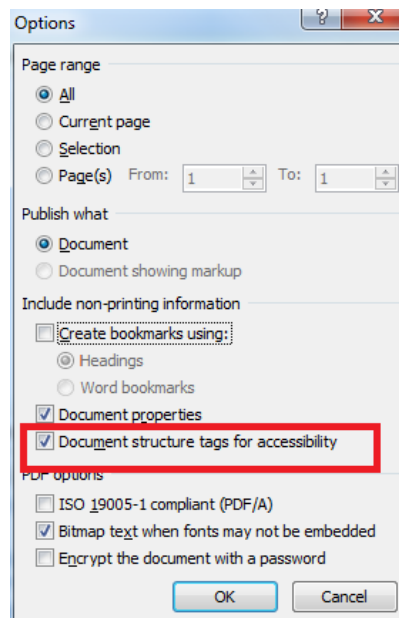


# Generating accessible PDF

1. Click File > Save As
2. Choose where you want the file to be saved.
3. In the Save As type list, select PDF.



4. Click on Options and make sure that **Document structure tags for accessibility** is selected.



5. Click **Save**.

To check for accessibility of the generated PDF, refer to the separate guide for creating accessible PDF documents.