CNIB

Guiding Principles: Making Accessible Word Documents

Accessibility Tip

Shortcut keys can easily create headings in your word documents (for Windows use ctrl+alt+1 buttons = heading one. In IOS use the command + option + 1 buttons = heading one).

Dos

- ✓ Use **Headings** with a **logical order** to structure your document. Heading one is your title, heading two is your subtitles or chapters (the same as a book).

- ✓ Use a clear and easy to read font - **Arial (14 point)** or **Verdana (12 point)**. Fonts must be sans serif, minimum 12-point with black text and white background.

- ✓ Provide **alternative texts** for **images or graphics**. Right click your picture and find "Edit Alt-text…" and enter your description (mouse-users).

- ✓ **Graphs, Tables and Images** must be used and created **carefully** and formatted "in line with text." Provide a description of a complex table.

- ✓ Check tables have **Column and Header Rows.** Setting found in the Table Properties options.

- ✓ Create **lists and numbering** using Word's built-within Automatic Features.

✓ Run the **accessibility checker** as part of your final review process.

Don'ts

☒ Use manual spaces, multiple returns or tabs to create blank spaces in your document.

☒ Use ALL CAPITALS or <u>underline</u> for emphasis.

☒ Use tables to organize or control the layout of information in your document such as forms or signature fields.

☒ Use hollowed-out bullets such as round circles or squares. These cannot be read for screen readers.

☒ Use Text boxes or Word Art.

☒ Use Password protection or Watermarks on your document.

Saving your files

1) Save your file as an extension "docx" with a concise and descriptive filename.

2) Before you do a final export of your word document as a PDF, go into the "Options" Setting and select "Document structure tags for accessibility." This will help you create a tagged pdf file.

Disclaimer: This is an internal document meant for use by CNIB, CNIB Foundation, Vision Loss Rehabilitation and CNIB Deafblind Community Service employees and volunteers only. It was created with the understanding the user of this tip sheet has a basic knowledge of Microsoft Word.