# Accessible Word Best Practices: Script

Accessibility Note: This script contains accessibility errors in textboxes containing content that is meant to be used in the presentation’s demonstration document

The actions in the video are indicated by cue styles.

## Introduction– (00:00:00-00:04:00)

**Slide 1**

**Accessible Word Best Practices**

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Hello, welcome back to “What is ADA and How We Do it: A webinar for digital publications.” This installment is Accessible Word Best Practices. I am Diana Hagan, information management specialist with UF/IFAS communications.

In this webinar, I’ll be covering tools and best practices for creating documents in Microsoft Word. Also in this series I present “Creating Accessible PDFs from Word” and “Accessible PowerPoint Best Practices.” And my colleagues Tracy Bryant, Michele Wood, and Heather Griffith present a webinar on creating accessible documents in InDesign.

The purpose of these webinars is to help bridge the gap from being aware that your documents should be accessible to adding accessibility checking as part of how you regularly do your work.

Additional resources are provided at the end for you should you have need of them.

So, let’s get started.

**Slide 2**

### Software and Resources

#### Use Current Software

* Office 365 Professional
* Adobe Acrobat Pro DC

#### Handy References/training

* Office.com
* LinkedIn Learning
* WebAIM
* your Institution

### Software and Resources

Microsoft has developed robust tools for making documents accessible. They are always improving their accessibility features, so you will have best results if you use the latest, professional versions of Office. In this presentation I’ll be using Office 365 Professional.

They also have good documentation on using their accessibility tools, and once you get the concepts of accessibility down, you may find guidance for some of the best practices in general Microsoft Word tutorials and training on sites such as Office.com or LinkedIn Learning, even if the trainings are not specifically intended for accessibility.

WebAIM is a go-to resource for accessibility resources, and especially if you are in an educational or government agency, do not overlook specific resources and services provided by your own institution.

Slide **3**

Understanding Tags

**Structure** and **tags** are the core of document accessibility.

Label content

Help users navigate

Help define structure & reading order

Make it easier to change formats

### Understanding Tags

The key issues with documents are how the document is **structured** and the **tags** that are used. Tags…

* **label content**. For example, a level 1 heading or an alternative text for a figure.
* They **help users navigate**. Someone visually reading a document might scan just the headers or use them to locate a certain spot where they want to find specific information. Or they might skip to a list of resources at the end. People using screen readers similarly can navigate the structure provided by headings or might list all hyperlinks first when they open a page if they are trying to navigate through to a specific resource.
* Tags **help define the structure and reading order** to make that navigation possible.
* Consistent tagging using common tags also **makes it easier for computer algorithms and software applications** to use the data within your documents for purposes such as research, preservation, content management, or migration to a new format.
* Consistent tags are essential for creating an accessible PDF and they can be efficiently mapped to equivalent styles when importing to InDesign.

**Slide 4**

### What I’ll be covering

#### Tools

* Accessibility Checker
* Navigation Pane
* Styles panel
* Style Inspector
* Alt Text panel

#### Content Elements

* Title and Section Headers
* Table of Contents
* Bullet Lists
* Figures & Alt Text
* Tables
* Hyperlinks

### What I’ll be covering

In this session, we’ll be working with 4 different panels which once opened, typically are docked on the right side of your Word window.

I’ll also cover some key content elements and how to work with them in a way that makes your documents most accessible for all users.

At this point we’ll to switch to Microsoft Word to demonstrate.

**Open a New Word Document.**

## Setting Up Word (00:04:01- 00:06:19)

So here we are in a new Word document. The first thing we are going to do is to open the **Accessibility Checker** which can provide real time feedback as we work. In the latest versions of Word there is an **Accessibility section on the Review ribbon** (here we go) with shortcuts to accessibility tools.

If I click on this Check Accessibility icon, it will open up the panel here in the sidebar, and since this is an empty document, there are no issues found.

Under this Check Accessibility menu are quick links to other features: Alt Text Pane, the Navigation Pane, “Focus Mode” and Accessibility settings in Words Options menu.

Now if we go back to the Home Ribbon we’ll see some of the other tools we’re going to be working with. We’re going to work with the Style section here in the middle. It provides quick access to document styles. It also opens up, using this little square icon with the arrow in the corner to the **Styles Pane** which can dock into the side of the window. And it lists all of the styles that are in use in the document.

Finally, the Style Inspector is a little button down here at the bottom of the style pane with a magnifying glass. It allows us to see what styles are applied to any given piece of selected text. The little icons here in the far right hand will allow us to switch between the various windows [i.e. panes].

So, let’s start writing.

## Setting Up the Document (00:06:20—00:09:11)

The first thing we are going to do is we are going to set up the title. Titles are important, they are the key piece of information that tells you what you are looking at in a document.

### Formatting the Title

So, the first thing you are going to do is type out your title. I’m going to drop the text in here.

**Copy and paste into demo document**

Living with Alligators: a Florida Reality

And we’re going to simply style it using our styles on the styles pane as H1 [i.e., Heading 1].

**Style as Heading 1**

### Document Properties Title

Now we also use the title of the document as a label outside the document itself, in a citation, or in a catalog, file list, or search results entry. Descriptive information, or metadata, about a Word document are called **document properties**. Adding the title to the document properties makes it easier for computer applications and people to identify and work with documents. You get to the document properties by clicking on File and then Info. In the right of the window under Properties some of the key metadata is listed, including the title, with a field to enter it right there.

**Paste title in Title field**

And you should enter exactly the same title as you have in the document.

### The Running [Title]

Now, the Word accessibility checker will not tell you if the title is missing from document properties. So one habit that can help you consistently remember it is to add the title field to the header or footer as a running title.

Just double click in the header or the footer to select that area and make it active – and notice how we switched to a new **Header & Footer** ribbon here. Select Document Info from the Insert section of the ribbon. And then **Document Title under there** -- it will add the field for the title which you had filled in from the File > Info page. And now you can view, or even add or edit the title from the document properties there in the document footer while you are working. And when you use the document it will always be there as a running title at the foot of the document.

Microsoft has great instructions for adding useful fields to documents the header or footer on their support site. I’ve included a link to it in the Resources list for this session.

## Adding Alt Text (00:09:12—00:13:52)

Now let’s talk about adding alt text. To save some time, I’ve pasted in the content that we are going to work with:

**Copy all content in text box and paste into demo document, using destination styles**

Living in Florida, we have to share our space with a very large reptile, the American alligator (Alligator mississipiensis). Because of Florida's booming population growth, people and alligators are constantly forced to cross paths, increasing the chances of conflict. Knowing where alligators live, how they behave and what you can do to avoid conflict with alligators is key to sharing space safely (Figure 1).



Figure 1.  An American Alligator Credit: UF/IFAS

**What is the Natural History of Alligators?**

The American alligator has survived the test of time. The family **Alligatoridae** first appeared about 35 million years ago. Today there are only two species of alligator in the world, the American alligator (*Alligator mississippiensis*) and the Chinese alligator (*Alligator sinensis*). The name "alligator" is widely believed to have come from the Spanish name "el lagarto". This eventually changed into "aligarto" and then "alligator" by English settlers.

In addition to the American alligator, the spectacled caiman (*Caiman crocodilus*) and the American crocodile (*Crocodylus acutus*) also occur in Florida. The family **Alligatoridae** includes five species of caimans, which are native to Central and South America. Spectacled caimans, which are smaller than the American alligator, have become established in some parts of south Florida, presumably from people releasing pets into the wild. American crocodiles belong to the family **Crocodilidae** and are native to Florida. Whereas alligators prefer freshwater, crocodiles occur almost exclusively in the marine and brackish coastal waters of extreme southern Florida. Crocodiles, which are an endangered species, are much less abundant and tend to be more secretive than alligators. Consequently, conflicts are much more likely to occur between humans and alligators. Historically, alligators ranged from southern Virginia to the Florida Keys, west to the Rio Grande and up to southern Oklahoma. Today, the American alligator can be found throughout the southeastern United States from the Carolinas to Texas and north to Arkansas. Large populations are found in Florida, southern Georgia, and Louisiana.

Alligators may occur anywhere there is water—lakes, ponds, rivers, marshes, swamps, and even man-made canals. Although almost exclusively a fresh-water species, they have been found in brackish water and marine salt waters. Alligators play important ecological roles both as top-level predators and because they often dig or wallow to create "gator holes" that hold water during dry periods. Sometimes gator holes are important features in the Everglades because they are often the only places water is found during the dry season and provide critical habitat for fish and other wildlife. They also ensure the alligator will have a continued supply of food. Gator holes are so important that ecologists consider the alligator a "keystone species" because its actions provide habitat for many other species. In addition to gator holes, alligators sometimes dig dens in stream banks. Alligators may occupy dens year-round, but they are particularly important in winter and protect the alligator from the cold.

**How do Alligators Reproduce?**

Mating season for alligators occurs from mid-April through May. To attract females, males display by head-slapping the water and producing a deep rumbling bellow. Once a male-female pair is formed, they will swim together, touch each other's snouts, and blow bubbles. Mating takes place in the water and when completed, the male disperses and the female is left to search for a place to build her nest.

Female alligators construct nests by mounding up vegetation, sticks, leaves, and mud in a sheltered spot in or near water (Figure 3). Females use their whole bodies during nest construction—body and tail to clear an area, jaws to gather and drag vegetation, and hind legs to dig the hole in the mound for the eggs. After completing the nest, the female will deposit all of her eggs (ranging between 20 and 50) at once and cover them up with more vegetation for incubation. She may move vegetation around to keep the eggs at a fairly constant temperature. Females stay near the nest during incubation and actively defend it from predators like raccoons. Females may also be aggressive toward humans, often hissing and charging at intruders, so alligator nests should never be approached.



Figure 2.  An American alligator nest (the mound of dried grass). See the mother alligator guarding the nest? (She's at the upper right side of the nest.) Credit: UF/IFAS

Alligator eggs incubate for about 65 days. During this time, the alligator embryos develop and the sex is determined by the temperature at which the eggs were incubated (temperature-dependent sex determination). A temperature of 30°C (86°F) or below produces females and a temperature of 33°C (91.4°F) or higher produces males. In between those temperatures, at 32°C (89.6°F), there is about a 50–50% chance of getting males or females.

Once incubation is complete and the hatchlings are ready (Figure 4) to emerge from their eggs, they emit a "yerping" sound. A few hatchlings yerping stimulates the other hatchlings in the clutch to yerp. This signals the female that the eggs are about to hatch, and she carefully opens the nest. The hatchlings tear through their leathery egg with an egg tooth on the tip of their snout, which falls off after a few days. The mother alligator can also help the hatchlings emerge by rolling eggs between her tongue and palate. This helps to assure that all the eggs hatch at the same time.



Figure 3.  American alligator hatchlings (babies). The yellow striping is temporary camouflage for blending in with marsh grasses and rays of sunlight slanting through the grasses. Hatchlings emerge from their eggs in August and September in Florida and often stay near the nest site for a couple of years. Hatchlings are usually 6-8 inches long. Credit: UF/IFAS

**What Are Some Common Misconceptions about Alligators?**

**MYTH #1. You should run zigzag if you come across an alligator.**

This is a common misconception. First, it is rare for an alligator to pursue a human because humans are too large to be suitable prey. However, if an alligator does make an aggressive charge, run fast and straight (away from the alligator, of course). They usually do not run very far. But remember they are most likely to charge at you if you are near their nest.

**MYTH #2. Alligators have poor eyesight.**

Alligators actually have very good eyesight, which is an important adaptation for hunting. They are especially adapted to see and sense movement of potential prey animals. The position of their eyes on their head (almost on the side) gives them a wide sight range. The only place they cannot see is right behind them.

**MYTH #3. Alligators are not good climbers.**

Alligators have sharp claws and powerful tails to help them push their bodies up. Young alligators are agile climbers and adults have been known to climb fences to get to water or escape captivity. Low fences, therefore, may not be sufficient protection for pets in areas where alligators are present. Fences should be **more than** 4.5 feet tall if you are attempting to keep alligators out of your yard.

**MYTH #4. Alligators make good pets.**

This is entirely untrue. Alligators make terrible pets. Although baby alligators may seem like a cool pet, it is illegal to possess or take an alligator without the proper licenses and permits from the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Alligators are purely instinctual hunters and do not show affection. Unlike cats and dogs, alligators will never love the hand that feeds them.

**Additional Information**

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) <http://myfwc.com/>

FWC: Living with Alligators <http://myfwc.com/conservation/you-conserve/wildlife/gators/>

FWC: Alligator Management <http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/alligator/>

And let’s see what the **Accessibility Checker** says about this new content. It looks like we need to check the alt text. These actually did not have alt text before I pasted them, but Word’s intelligent services helpfully suggested some. Since these AI generate suggestions are almost universally not correct or sufficient, I’m going to show you how to turn this feature off under Options > Accessibility. So we are going to go to our Options Menu > Accessibility and turn that off.

Now. Select the image we want to add the alt text to, Right click on it and we can open the Alt Text Pane. Remember we can also get to this and to the Options: Accessibility menu through the Check Accessibility menu here.

Notice that the AI identified this incorrectly as a crocodile eating grass. Let’s clear that out. But what should we put in its place?

Here are some basic tips for alt text:

* **First Pay attention to what’s needed for the context**. Keep the description basic if the image doesn’t need it, but go in depth about the details of the image that are relevant to understanding what’s being conveyed. So it’s often going to depend on the context, not strictly the image itself. In this case, there is text surrounding the image referring to it and a caption, so a lot of detail isn’t needed, but the picture is a little playful, so some text to capture that might be appropriate.
* Alt Text should be short, **fewer than 160 characters**. If you have a complex image that requires more detailed description, you can refer to any written description in the nearby text or the caption, or you can include a link near the image to separate file with a lengthy description.
* On the other hand, **if it isn’t meaningful tell assistive technology to ignore it** by checking the “Mark as decorative” box. If the document will be migrated to Adobe Acrobat or InDesign, this will translate to “artifacting” in Adobe Acrobat or InDesign

If you want to learn more, I’ve added some resources for writing alt text in the Resources section.

For this image, let’s say “Close up photo from the side of the head and front leg of an adult American Alligator facing the edge of the water. It’s eying the camera with its leg around a clump of grass.”

Close up photo from the side of the head and front leg of an adult American Alligator facing the edge of the water. It’s eying the camera with its leg around a clump of grass.

See caption.

Now that it’s open, go to the Accessibility Checker pane to go to the next figure. Picture 3 — for **Figure 2 alt text**, the surrounding description and the caption describe the picture pretty well, and an additional alt text would probably be redundant. You can put just “See caption”

We’ll do the same for Figure 3.

There we go, and we’re back to “no accessibility issues found”.

## Working with Styles (00:13:53—00:25:15)

Next, we are going to work with the styles, so I am going to go back to our Home ribbon here to our Styles pane.

### Avoid Manually Formatting Text (13:53)

Remember we want consistent tagging to make the content more adjustable to different devices. We get that by using styles. So for the headings in our document, we’re going to use the styles for Heading 2, Heading 3, et cetera.

Let’s look at the document structure using the Navigation pane. The easiest way to get there is through the Check Accessibility menu and open the navigation pane

It opens on the left & will show the structure of the document. But only the title is showing up here, which tells me that my headers are not styled properly. This happens because the person who wrote it used character and paragraph formatting instead of a heading style. So it looks right to our eyes, but it doesn’t work right for tagging the document. And by character and font and paragraph styles, I mean instead of using one of the styles for heading 2, they may have used bold, or coloring, or centered, or other things – formatting for each of the headings instead of using a defined style.

Notice that the Accessibility Checker did not catch this problem. So to avoid doing this, with a few exceptions, make it a rule to not use the **Font** and **Paragraph** sections of the **Home** ribbon at all. Just try not to use them. So to fix this, we are going to go through and just select our headers and use the style to just change them to a heading. So … (clicking on headers and assigning styles, reading aloud: “How do they Reproduce?”) … notice, as I do this they show up in our outline in the navigation panel. ..mumbled: “Common Misconceptions” ... and these are going to be nested underneath it as level three headings, then we are going to go back up to level two with our “Additional Information”

Now it’s a requirement that the headings follow a logical order, so you cannot jump from a heading 2 to a heading 4, though you can go from a 4 back up to a 2. So that you are not just jumping around based on how it looks, but it’s following a logical structure.

So now this navigation pane shows us the structure of the document and we can move about the document by selecting which header we are interested in.

### Fixing Character Styling (17:13)

Now, we have some character coding that uses bold and italic instead of Strong and Emphasis. I can tell this by selecting some text like this “Alligator sinensis” here and looking at it here in the Style Inspector. So it shows a “Default Paragraph Font” for the text level formatting, and then it has additional formatting from the font formatting, of Italic. So I could go through and change each of these, using the styles menu to Emphasis instead, like I did with the headings, but because things like bold and emphasis are scattered throughout the document it can be more efficient to use Find & Replace to do this. So I’m going to Open up the Replace menuusing Ctrl +H, you can also find it here on the Editing section of the ribbon.

And instead of putting a string here in the find area, I’m going go here down in the “More” under the Search Options and I’m going to look for the Format… the Font format of Italic, then click OK.

And then in the replace field, I’m also not going to replace it with a string, I’m going to go down here under format and I’m going to select a Style and that style is going to be Emphasis (if I can find it – there we go, Emphasis style). You can look for the next one if you want to make sure you are getting it, then I’ll go ahead and **Replace All**. There’s five in the document. And then you can do the same thing here with bold, changing bold to Strong. So here I’ve got the cursor in the Find field, change the Font from Italic to Bold, and the Style from Emphasis to Strong, and Replace All; there were eleven of those. There we go. So now if I put my cursor on this Crocodilia, I see that it’s strong instead of bold, and I can open it up in the style inspector here and see it doesn’t have any extraneous formatting.

**Replace bold with strong**

### Disable Linked Styles (20:04)

Now, Heading styles and strong and emphasis are two different categories of style.

* A paragraph style will apply the style to the whole paragraph where your cursor is, so if I put my cursor here that whole paragraph would get the Normal paragraph formatting.
* A character style will apply to the selected characters.

And you can tell which is which for each style here to the right of each of the styles in the Style Panel.

Some of the styles have both a character and a paragraph symbol. these are defined as “linked styles” and Word allows them to be applied either way. But, it's generally a good idea to disable the linked styles, which you can do by unchecking this box down here at the bottom, since linked styles allow you to apply the styles in ways that can be confusing to people using assistive devices. And his will force all these linked styles to act like paragraph styles. So going forward once you’ve disabled these linked styles all of these paragraph and character styles would then act – you can just think of them as paragraph styles.

### Modifying Styles (21:22)

Now, one of the powerful things about styles is that you can modify them and change everything at once consistently. Let’s say I want to change the look of my Strong-styled content, I’m going to make it orange as well as bold. I can **Right click on the Strong style here** to reveal the drop-down menu for the style and select modify and this will be applied every time I’ve used bold [i.e., Strong] in the document. Or in the future it will make this change. And now we’re going to change the color here from automatic to an orange color.

Now we see we’ve changed all of our bullets – Oh, it looks like our headings here also bold. That’s not right! Look I have got this categorized as strong also, which I shouldn’t have. So I am going to select all of my Heading 2s and I’m going to make sure that they are not Strong. There we go – I fixed them. That might be the case for my Heading 3s, let’s see if they are, too. So I am going to select all of my Heading 3s, select all 4 instances, and I’m going to clear out that strong. There we go! So now it’s just my bold that’s got the orange color.

This can be really helpful as you are trying to work with a document, and you want to keep track of things. You can make it a bright color then you can change it at the end to make it more aesthetically pleasing.

### Create a New Style (23:20)

You can also create a new style. So one reason you might want to create a new style is to add a page break before a heading without hard-coding a page break into the document. So let’s go back to our Style tab and open it up. There we go. And I’m going to select Heading 2. And I’m going to **click on the A+ button** here, that’s to add a style. Since I had Heading 2 selected, it’s based on Heading 2, and I’m going to rename it -- best practice to name it starting the same way as the base style and we’ll add **“– new page”**. And everything else is the same except I need to go down into this format menu, and the new page is going to be a paragraph, **Lines and Page Breaks here and just add a page break before**. And the one that I had selected there (this should be a H3) Let’s say I want a new page at “How do Alligators Reproduce?” We are going to make that “Heading 2 – new page”. So page 1. Page 2. It’s still logically a Heading 2, but it gives me stylistically a new page.

## Checking Color Contrast (00:25:15—00:27:42)

Let’s check how we are doing in our **Accessibility Checker**. Uh oh, I’ve caused a problem. It says, “Hard to read text contrast”, it looks like the color that I chose for bold is not a sufficient contrast to pass the accessibility checker, and it’s harder to understand because of that.

Poor color contrast makes elements of the document challenging to read for people with poor vision and makes the content more difficult to understand for everyone. The Word Accessibility tool now can check the documents as you work for text color against many types of backgrounds. If you don’t use this tool, or for situations the tool can’t detect, like contrast within an image, you will need to check manually to make sure there is sufficient contrast. I’ve provided links to contrast checking tools in the resource section.

The default setting for Word is a white document with black text, and the default style setting has color choices that are already accessible. You can also search for Office templates using the search term “Accessible” to find templates designed for accessibility, which should have color palettes that have sufficient contrast.

When using color in your document, **remember you never want to have color as the only means of conveying information**. Some people cannot see certain shades of color, and your message will be lost to them.

So to fix this issue, first we’ll look and see what the recommended action is. So it will tell us we can change the page color, or we can modify the style. So we’re gonna modify the style. We’re going to go here and we’re going to look for… let’s do some “More colors…”—I’ve already picked a color here that’s going to work, that’s #D32731 in the hex code. It’s a different orange, a reddish orange, I guess, that’s going to pass the test.

**Open context menu in Accessibility checker, and select Modify style, select color, more colors, enter #D32731, return, errors are gone.**

**Go to Additional Information Section**

## Accessible Lists (00:27:43—00:29:24)

Now let’s talk about accessible lists. Lists are a visual way of structuring a document. They provide a hierarchical structure allowing readers to understand and navigate the content quickly.

In order for people using assistive devices to use lists this way, they must be styled (or tagged) as lists. This means you cannot just make lines that look like a list using a hyphen or asterisk. If you let it, Word will usually autocorrect these to make a proper list whether you intended to or not, but sometimes when pasting a correctly formatted list from one place to another the formatting does get lost so you should always check them.

In most other situations the best practice is to use that Styles panel that I’ve been telling you to use to format your list, but especially since nested and numbered lists can be complex, it’s okay to use the list tools in the Paragraph section for your bulleted lists and numbered lists, here in the Home ribbon.

So we are going to go to our “Additional Information” section here at the bottom, and we are going to style this as a list. A numbered list or a bullet list, whichever you prefer.

**Style the items as numbered list, then bullet list.**

## Hyperlinks (00:29:28—00:31:28)

Okay, let’s take some time to talk about hyperlinks in the document.

We know the structure of the document that the headings create is for people using assistive devices to navigate the document. Hyperlinks are also very important. Many people using screen readers make use of hyperlinks on first opening a document or starting a new section to quickly assess not only the content in the document, but also where they may want to navigate next.

Since links are taken out of context when used for this purpose, text like “Click Here” can be useless and frustrating, and is not allowed by the standards. It’s also tedious and uninformative to listen to long lists of URLs spelled out. So it is preferred to use a descriptive label instead of a plain link.

If these were references, we’d leave the links as is to follow correct citation style. But for this informal list, we should edit it to embed the links in the descriptive label. Use Control-K to edit the links. (So we can just cut that and then control-K, drop that link there.)

**Cut links, select site name, Ctrl +K paste link.**

(Whoops, there we go)

## Placing and Styling Images (00:31:29—00:35:44)

Now, we’ve talked some about images, and how to add alt text to make sure everyone can perceive what the image is intended to communicate.

In addition to images, text boxes, tables, graphs, shapes and other graphic elements are often included in documents and can be problematic if they are not placed in a way that shows where they belong in the document’s structure. That can be resolved by how the images is placed.

### Placing an image inline

Images should be placed inline with the text. You do this so it can be presented to users of assistive technology in the correct reading order. So if we **go back to our saucy Alligator**, here, we can check by **Right clicking** on the image, and opening up the context menu, and **select “Wrap text”** here, and then make sure that “**In Line with Text” is selected**. If you see a little anchor beside an image, you know you have to fix it because it is anchored on the page rather than being in a position in the text. If I do this, see how the anchor appears. You want it to be inline.

This can mess up the layout, but you don’t want to do things like add extra returns or other formatting that’s going to cause problems. Instead, what we are going to is apply a style to give the images a look that we want to have visually.

### Use an image style

So, an inline object, like an image inserted this way behaves like a text character, so one thing you can do is create an image style that gives you the appearance you want.

So we are going to add a style by going here and using the Add a Style button (A+). I’m basing this on Normal, and I’m going to give it the name, “**Normal Image**” since this is based on the Normal style, and it’s a good practice to keep the name from the beginning. Now I’m going to center it (not that, I’m going to center it) and I’m going to give it 12 points before and after, and while I’m working on it, let’s go ahead and put a **green border around it** so I know it’s there, let’s see, right here in the “Border.., then put a box around it, make that green, and make it really wide, and apply that to the paragraph. There we go! And the nice is that we can change the way this looks later. So there I’ve got this image, it’s centered, and I’ve got that little bit of a 12-point buffer.

Now all I need to do for my image styling is click on the next image and style it as a Normal Image.

**Apply to other two images**

By applying this image paragraph style for all the images in the document, they will all behave exactly the same way, and I won’t have to spend a lot of time fiddling with the layout for each image in the document. I can change the style once here and it will be applied to all of them.

## Accessible Tables (00:35:45—00:38:55)

Table 1. Public Safety Guidelines for a Crocodile Facility. (Source QLD 1997).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Safety Mechanism** | **Definition** | **Instructions to Public** |
| **Signs** | Signs should warn about risks associated with crocodiles and should be displayed at the entrance to the facility | Inform public they are about to enter a crocodile areaChildren must be accompanied and supervised by an adult at all timesChildren must not sit/climb on fences, or place fingers/limbs through fencesObjects such as rocks, sticks and especially food should not be thrown into enclosuresMembers of the public should not enter the enclosures |
| **Verbal Information** | The public should always be informed about ways to ensure safety before entering areas containing crocodiles | Remind the public about dangers associated with crocodiles and safety precautions in place at the facilityStaff need to be vigilant in ensuring the public does not act in an unsafe mannerEncourage questions regarding safety, within the facility and in the wild |
|  |
| **Appropriate Staffing** | Staff should be adequately trained, and the number on duty should be able to undertake the tasks required to be performed at any given time |   |

**Insert Table 1 at end of document**

Let’s talk about tables.

Tables are another area where an extra effort needs to be made make it possible for users to navigate and understand tabular content that is presented in a matrix. Do make sure you are limiting your use of tables to only data that requires a table format. The use of bullet lists and the lack of content in the bottom right cell suggests that this information could be better delivered without using a table.

To make it possible to navigate a table, it is required to define column headers. row headers can also be defined but are optional. This table has both column headers and row headers. To make sure they are defined, we go to **the Table Design ribbon. And you can make sure this is showing by clicking anywhere in the table, and go to this Table Style Options section in the far left, and click on Header Row and/or First Column there. We’ve got to do both because we have both the row and column headers.**

You should avoid merged cells, but they are permissible in headers. So if we look at our Accessibility Checker it warns that we have a merged cell here, and it doesn’t like it. We can either split up the cells or we can delete it. This cell has three columns, there we go that fixes it, but that’s not really what we want to just get rid of it, and that also fixes it.

Now, tables, by the standards, must have title and alt text, but the Word Accessibility Checker will not tell you if these are missing. So to add them, to check them, you need **to Right click on table go to Table Properties… then look on this Alt Text tab**. If it’s not showing just go ahead and click on it, and we’re going to need to add, add some text: “This is a grid providing definitions and instructions to the public for crocodile facility safety mechanisms.”

Table 1. Public Safety Guidelines for a Crocodile Facility

This is a grid providing definitions and instructions to the public for crocodile facility safety mechanisms.

So if this is a complicated, lengthy table this will provide someone with information at a glance about its contents.

## Conclusion (38:55)

This concludes the session on Accessibility Best Practices for Word. I go into more detail on visual elements such as tables and charts in the PowerPoint presentation, and please see the Accessible PDF presentation for using Adobe’s Accessibility tools when converting your Word documents to PDF format. I hope you have found this tutorial to be useful. Please see the recommended resources list if you want to learn more.

Thank you very much!

## Credits

Sample text and images from [Living with Alligators: A Florida Reality](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/UW230), ©UF/IFAS

Sample table from [Housing Crocodilians in Captivity: Considerations for Central America and Caribbean](https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/publication/UW255), ©UF/IFAS

## Recommended Resources

### Word Accessibility

* [Microsoft: Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d)
Microsoft Word’s basic overall accessibility reference.
* [Microsoft Accessibility Video Training / Create accessible Word documents](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/9d660cba-1fcd-45ad-a9d1-c4f4b5eb5b7d)
Series of short videos
* [University of Washington: Creating Accessible Documents in Microsoft Word](https://www.washington.edu/accessibility/documents/word/)
Really basic instructions for exporting to PDF. See our session on Accessible PDFs for more.
* [Microsoft Word - Creating Accessible Documents - WebAIM](https://webaim.org/techniques/word/)
* [Microsoft Word Accessibility Reference | HHS.gov](https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/os-a11y-word-reference.pdf)
3p, horizontal layout quick reference (PDF) Office 2016

### General Document Accessibility

* [Document Design - Centre for Excellence in Universal Design](https://universaldesign.ie/Products-Services/Customer-Communications-Toolkit-for-the-Public-Service-A-Universal-Design-Approach/Written-Communication/Document-Design/)
Universal design for documents includes best practices for visual layout of printed documents
* [Google: Make your document or presentation more accessible](https://support.google.com/docs/answer/6199477?hl=en)Accessibility using Google Docs.

### Using Styles

* [Word 2016: Formatting and Styles in Depth](https://www.linkedin.com/learning/word-2016-formatting-and-styles-in-depth/welcome?u=41282748)
LinkedIn Learning Course (1 ½ hours, subscription required)
* [Using Word Styles – Best Practices in Accessible Online Design](https://pressbooks.ulib.csuohio.edu/accessibility/chapter/chapter-2-5-using-word-styles/)
Book chapter, written for Word 2016

### Color Contrast Checking Tools

* [TPGi Color Contrast Checker](https://www.tpgi.com/color-contrast-checker/)Free downloadable application for checking color contrast, with dropper for selecting color
* [Contrast Checker – WebAIM](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/)
Web-based tool comparing hexadecimal color codes

### Alternative Text

* [Microsoft: Add alternative text to a shape, picture, chart, SmartArt graphic, or other object in Word](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/add-alternative-text-to-a-shape-picture-chart-smartart-graphic-or-other-object-44989b2a-903c-4d9a-b742-6a75b451c669)Instructions for adding alt text in Word.
* Microsoft: Everything you need to know to write effective alt text
Guidance for making the alt text effective

### Adding Document Properties to the Header or Footer

* [Microsoft: Add the file name, date, author or other document properties to a header or footer](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/add-the-file-name-date-author-or-other-document-properties-to-a-header-or-footer-dc62245f-b6af-45b2-a521-17753fc3539e)

### W3C Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) WCAG

* [WCAG 2 Overview | Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) - W3C](https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/)