# Four Principles for Document Accessibility – Windows Version

By adhering to these four principles, Word documents and documents saved from Word to PDF will be accessible. Note: The instructions below apply to Microsoft Word 2010 / 2013 for Windows.

* [Provide heading structure](#_How_to:_Provide)
* [Provide alternative text for images](#_How_to:_Provide_1)
* [Provide self-describing links](#_How_to:_Provide_2)
* [Provide accessible lists](#_How_to:_Provide_3)

## Heading Structure

1. Highlight the text that you would like to make a heading.
2. Click the Home tab.
3. In the Styles pane, click the heading level you would like to apply to the text.



### Things to consider when creating heading structure:

* The heading structure should outline the document. For example, the document title would be Heading 1, individual sections would be Heading 2, subsections would be Heading 3, etc.
* You may change the appearance of the headings by right-clicking a particular heading style (example: Heading 1) and selecting “Modify Style.”

## Alternative Text for Images

1. Right-click on the image.
2. Select **Format Picture**.
3. In the dialog box that appears, select **Alt Text**.
4. Enter the alternative text for the image in both the Title and the Description fields. Describe the meaning or purpose of the image in its context rather than its appearance.
5. Click **OK** to save your changes.



### Things to consider when providing ALT Tags for images:

* You do not need to include “image of” or “picture of” in the description. For example: “University of Montana Clock tower” instead of “Picture of University of Montana Clock tower”.
* Any text within the image must be included in the Alt Tag.
* Clickable images must describe the function, not the image. Example: a picture of a house that takes the user to the Home Page when clicked should be tagged “Return to Home Page” and not “House.”
* Keep Alt Tags short (less than a paragraph). For a longer description, include it near the image as standard text.
* In Word, all images must be ALT tagged, even if they are purely decorative.

## Self-Describing Links

1. Highlight the text you would like to make the link.
2. Right-click the text or go to the **Insert** tab and click on **Hyperlink**.



1. Type or paste the URL in the **Address** field.
2. Press OK.

### Things to consider when providing self-describing links:

* The link text should describe where the user will be taken. For example: [University of Montana Homepage](http://www.umt.edu/events)
* If you wish to include the URL for users who may print the document, place the URL in parenthesis next to the self-describing link, right-click the URL, and select **Remove Hyperlink**. Example: [University of Montana Homepage](http://www.umt.edu/events) (http://www.umt.edu)

## Accessible Lists

1. Select the items you would like to make into a list.
2. Click the Home tab.
3. Press either the Ordered List (123/ABC) or Unordered List (bullets/dashes) button in the Paragraph pane.
4. Select the desired list type.



### Things to consider when providing accessible lists:

* Word usually can predict when you are building a list. If Word automatically places the next item indicator (numbers, bullets, dashes), then the list will be accessible.
* Use lists in lieu of tables whenever possible.

## The following are other important accessibility principles to keep in mind:

* Ensure that font size is sufficient, usually around 10 – 12 points or more.
* Provide sufficient contrast between text and background color. Use a [Color Contrast Checker](http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/) when in doubt.
* Do not use color alone to convey information.