

Microsoft Word

Summary

Microsoft Word files (extension .docx) are the most common word processing files. Over time, Microsoft has added several easy ways for you to make an accessible MS Word document as long as you keep in mind some basic principles, explained in the sections below.

Accessibility Problems

- first consider if your content is to be presented as a Word document, or could it be delivered as a more flexible HTML file, particularly using Desire2Learn's native content creator and HTML editor.
- text boxes can be confusing for screen readers.
- informal headings and titles that don't use the built-in heading styles can be confusing for screen readers.
- manually built lists can be difficult to read.
- images without corresponding text descriptions will not be interpreted by screen readers.
- Office for Mac does not support the Accessibility Checker.

Accessibility Features

- Take advantage of built-in formatting styles for headings and lists.
- Beginning with Office 2010, you can use the built-in Accessibility Checker to check for common accessibility issues. Note that some warnings it gives are subjective; use discernment. Info on the Accessibility Checker is located on the resources column of the ADA Resources page.
- Students have free access to Office 365, meaning all users should have access to the same interface.