

ADA Accessible Excel Workbook

Any electronic document that you post to the web and/or send out through email or other forms of communication must be ADA accessible. This QRD will cover best practices for ADA accessibility, how to use the Excel accessibility checker, and how to convert to PDF.

Best Practices

Alt Text

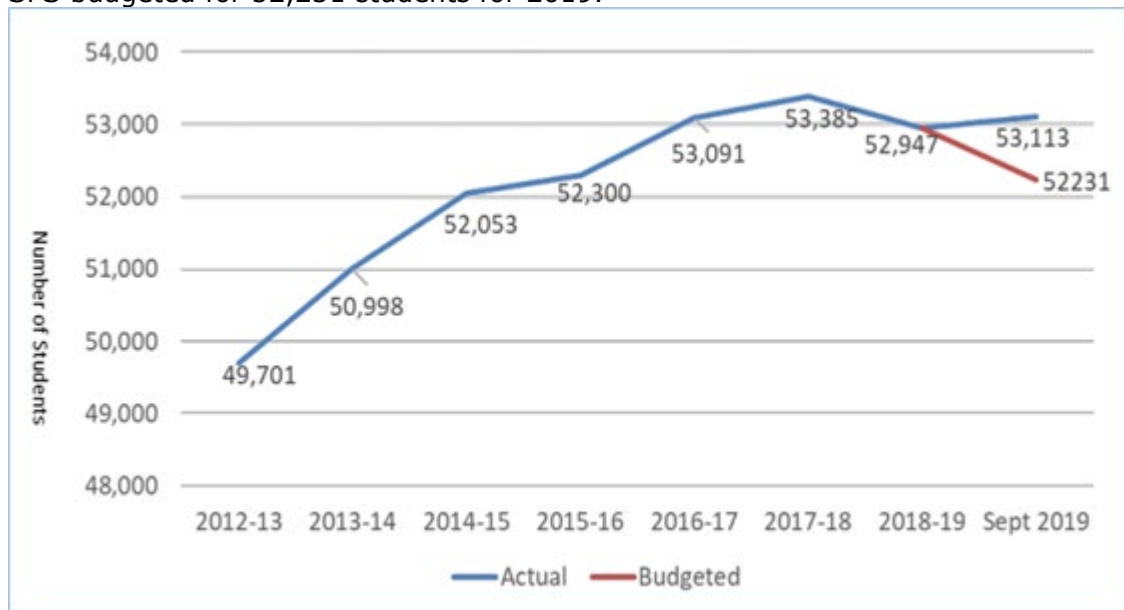
It is very important that any image, shape, chart, graphic, table, or other object in a workbook has alternate text. Provide accurate text descriptions that give a sight-impaired person enough information to understand the object and its purpose in the workbook.

To add alt text:

1. Right click on the object and then click **Edit Alt Text**. The Alt Text pane opens on the right. Enter a detailed description of the image in the text box.

Important: Images are only ADA accessible if there is alternate text that describes what is in the image. For complex graphs or charts, all the data points must be described. For example, the Alt Text for the graph below would be:

"A line graph showing the number of students enrolled at SPS as of October of each school year, starting with 2012 and ending with 2019. 49,701 students enrolled in October 2012. 50,998 students enrolled in October 2013. 52,053 students enrolled in October 2014. 52,300 students enrolled in October 2015. 53,091 students enrolled in October 2016. 53,385 students enrolled in October 2017. 52,947 students enrolled in October 2018. 53,113 students enrolled in September 2019. SPS budgeted for 52,231 students for 2019."



2. Once you have entered Alt Text, you can either close the Alt Text pane or click on another image/object to add alt text.

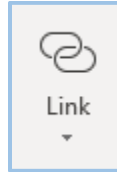
Links

Keep in mind two things:

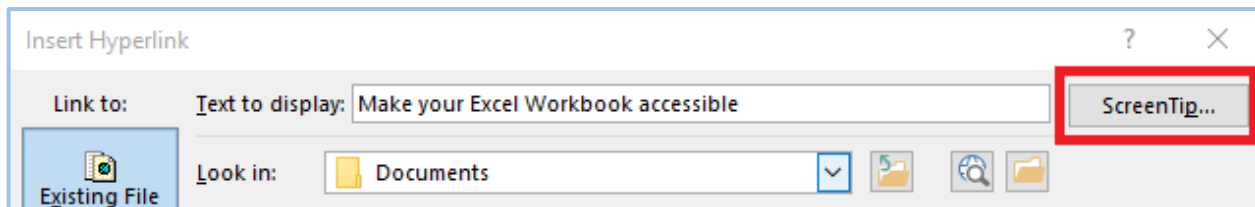
- First, [write meaningful link text](#) that gives an indication of the purpose of the link. Avoid phrases that do not make sense out of context, such as "click here", "here", or "read more".
- Second, include the full URL in the workbook as well. This allows users to copy and paste if necessary. In addition, if the workbook is printed people can still type the URL. (<http://www.washington.edu/accessibility/web/links/>)

To insert a link:

1. In the ribbon bar, click the **Insert** tab and then click **Link**.



2. In the **Text to display** field enter meaningful text that explains what kind of information a person will find when they click this link.
3. Click the **ScreenTip** button.



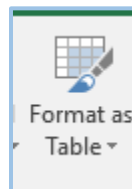
4. Enter a **ScreenTip text** that tells a person what website the link is pointing to (i.e. "Microsoft Support website").
5. Click **OK**.
6. Paste the URL into the **Address** field.
7. Click **OK**.
8. Paste the full URL into the workbook for the users who print it out.

Tables

If you are using Excel to create a table you need to make sure it is formatted as a table.

To format as a table:

1. Select all the cells you want to be a part of the table and then click **Format as Table**.



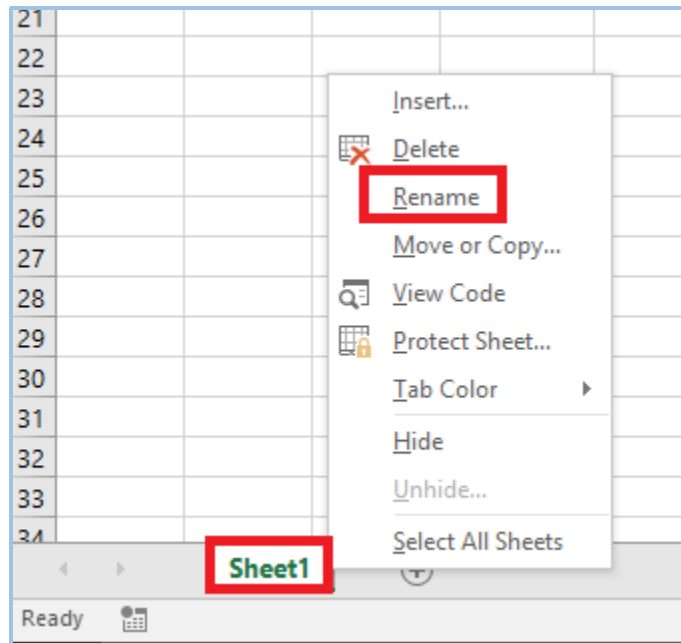
2. A box opens asking if the correct data is selected. If it is correct, click **OK**.

Sheets

Make sure to rename your sheets so that it gives people an idea of what kind of information they will find. It is also important for ADA Accessibility to not have any empty sheets.

To name your sheet:

1. Right-click on the tab and then click **Rename**.



2. Type a brief, unique name for each sheet.

To delete an empty sheet:

1. Right-click on the tab and then click **Delete**. If you accidentally try to delete a sheet that has content, a warning will appear.

Color Contrast

Avoid using light colored text on white or light backgrounds and avoid dark colored text on darker backgrounds. If the contrast is not high enough, a person with low vision will not be able to distinguish between the text and the background. If you are not sure if your contrast is high enough you can check with this [Color Contrast Checker](http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/). It needs to pass both **WCAG AA** standards. It does not need to pass the WCAG AAA standards.

(<http://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/>)

Excel Accessibility Checker

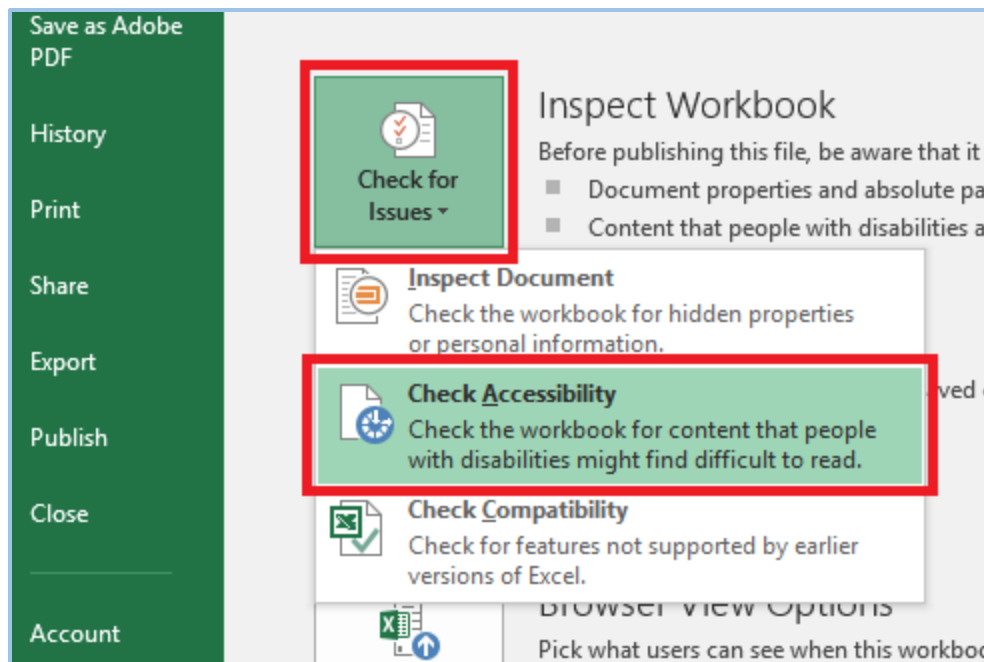
Once you are done building your workbook, it is time to use the Excel accessibility checker.

To open the Excel Accessibility Checker:

1. Make sure you have saved by clicking the floppy disk icon.



2. Click **File > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility**. The Accessibility Checker pane will appear to the right.



3. The Accessibility Checker will tell you what the issue is, where you can find it, and how to fix it. If you click on an issue in the list it will highlight the object or section on the workbook where the issue exists.
4. Under the list of issues is a section titled **Additional Information**. This section tells you why you should fix the issue and how to fix the issue. Remember to **Save** often.

Microsoft Office Support is also a great resource for Excel Accessibility:

<https://support.office.com/en-us/article/make-your-excel-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6cc05fc5-1314-48b5-8eb3-683e49b3e593#PickTab=Windows>

Convert to PDF

Once you have fixed all of the accessibility issues and saved it is time to convert to PDF. If you have a pro version of Adobe Acrobat installed on your machine there is an ACROBAT tab on your ribbon bar in Excel. If you do not have a pro version of Adobe Acrobat you need to get it before moving on to the next step because the free version of Acrobat does not have an accessibility checker.

To convert to PDF:

1. Click the **Acrobat** tab.
2. Click **Create PDF and Run Action**. Click it a second time and a drop-down menu appears.
3. Click **Make Accessible**.
4. You will be prompted to save a PDF version of this workbook. Once you have saved, Adobe Acrobat will open.

Important! Remember, anytime you want to make a change to this workbook you should always make the changes in the original Excel workbook, rerun the Excel accessibility checker, convert to PDF, and then rerun the Acrobat accessibility checker.