

Create Accessible PowerPoint Presentations

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This documentation was created using Microsoft PowerPoint 365 for macOS.

Microsoft PowerPoint includes options for adding accessibility information to slides to support access by individuals with disabilities. This information also ensures that Microsoft PowerPoint files maintain a level of accessibility when converted into other formats (e.g., tagged PDF). Creating accessible PowerPoint presentations can be accomplished by incorporating the following practices into your authoring process.

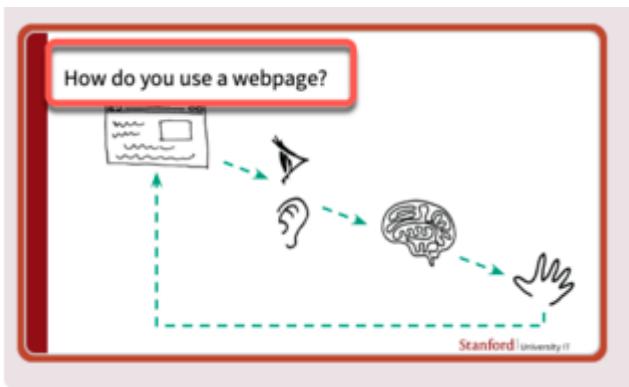
Structure

The structure of the content can provide an organizational and navigational framework for individuals to understand the informational hierarchy and relationship between different sections of content. These structural elements can help determine the organization and logical reading order of the presentation for an individual using assistive technologies.

Slide Title

The Slide Title is used to provide a heading for the slide's content. Slide titles should be unique and descriptive to help users navigate to specific content on the slides. To view and edit slide titles quickly:

1. Select **View**.
2. Select **Outline View**.
3. Edit the titles accordingly.



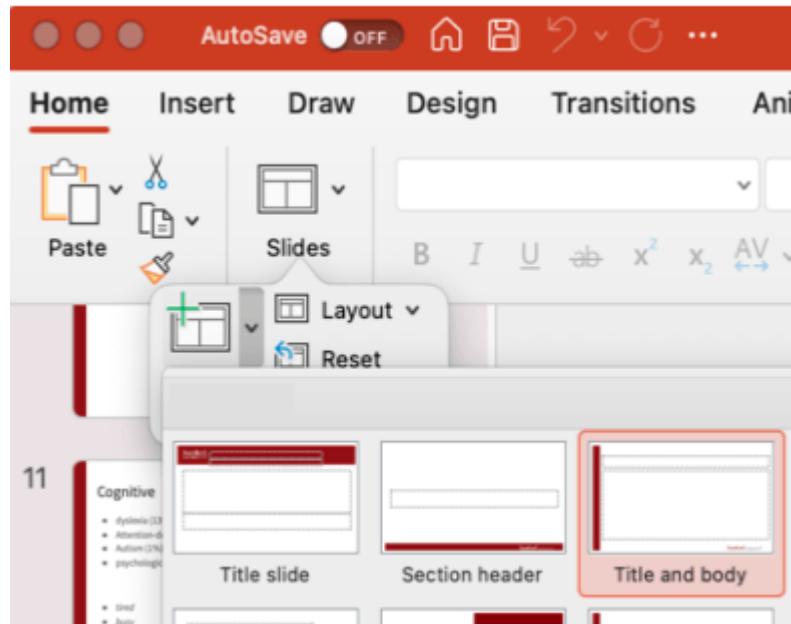
Slide titles should be unique. If slide titles are the same, provide a numerical reference to differentiate the first slide from subsequent slides. For example, if there are two consecutive slides that cover the same topic, "How do you use a webpage?", consider

adding a number or unique identifier to the end of the title. For example, two titles with the same name could be identified as: "How do you use a webpage? Part 1" and "How do you use a webpage? Part 2".

Slide Layout

Using preset slide layouts will automatically control the reading order and structure of content placed on the slide. To choose a slide layout:

1. To locate Slide Layout, select **Home** > select **New Slide**.
2. Choose the slide layout that meets your needs.



For more information, read [Microsoft's support page, Apply a slide layout](#).

Managing Reading Order

If text boxes are separately created from the preset slide layouts, this information may not be in the correct reading order. If content is manually placed onto a blank slide, you will need to assess and manage the reading order using the **Arrange** button. To review and fix reading order:

1. Select Home > **Arrange** > **Selection Pane**
2. The reading order begins at the bottom of the list of regions. The first item to be read is at the bottom and the last item to be read is at the top.
3. To modify the reading order in the Selection Pane, drag the appropriate item to the proper location in the sequence.

The screenshot shows a Microsoft Word document titled "Accessibility File". The ribbon is visible with tabs like Transitions, Animations, Slide Show, Review, View, Acrobat, Tell me, Share, and Comments. The Selection Pane is open on the right, showing three items: "Shape;194;p32" (number 3), "Shape;193;p32" (number 2, highlighted in red), and "Shape;192;p32" (number 1). The main content area contains a flowchart with three main nodes: "Vision 1" (number 1), "How do they use computers?" (number 2), and "How can you help?" (number 3). The "How do they use computers?" node contains a bulleted list: "screen reader/braille display", "zoom", and "high contrast". The "How can you help?" node contains a bulleted list: "text alternatives", "resizeable/reflowable design", "good colour contrast", "use more than colour-only", and "provide page structure & landmarks".

List

Use the built-in list styles to provide users additional guidance. Do the grouped items convey a process or have a logical sequence? If so, then use the number list style. Is this grouped list of items in no particular order? If so, then use the bullet list style.

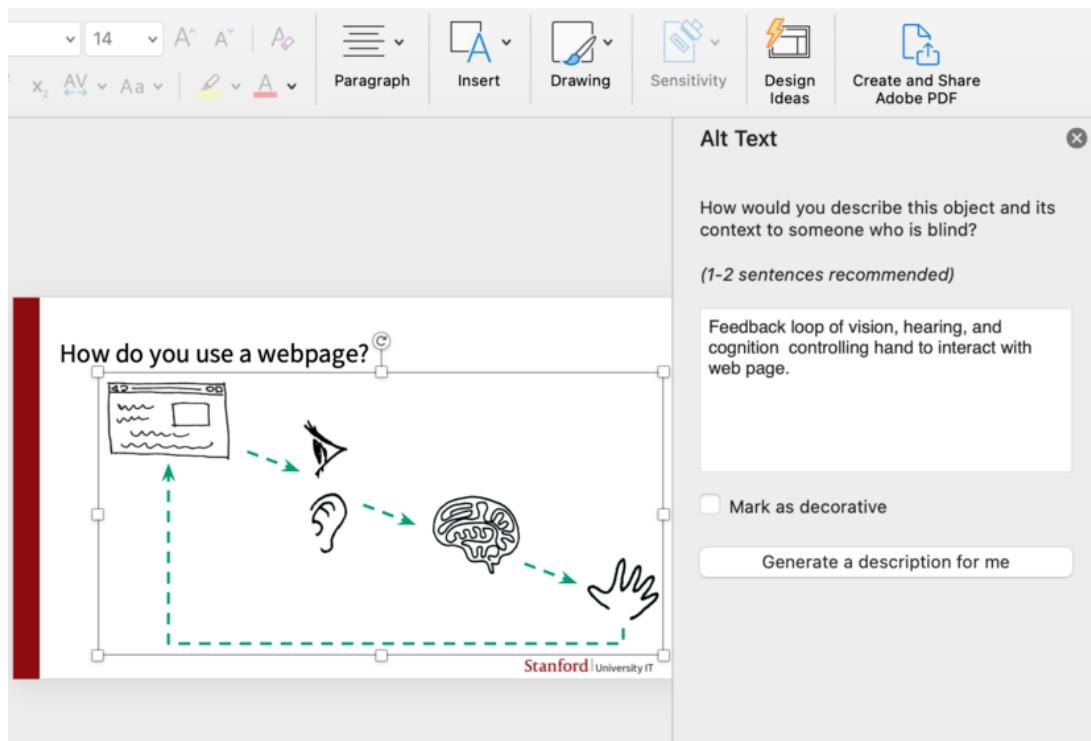
1. Select **Home**.
2. Select either the bullet or number list style.

Images

Images that support the content require a text description, or alt text. For more information on choosing a good alt text, see [Create Accessible Images with Alt Text](#).

To add the alternate text:

1. Right-click the image.
2. Select **Edit Alt Text...**
3. In the **Alt Text** window, write a descriptive text.



Hyperlinks

Documents containing hyperlinks to websites or other online resources can be improved by including hyperlink text that is understood by the reader. For instance, using the full hyperlink URL may not make sense to the reader without some context. For more information about link text, see [Creating Accessible Links](#).

1. Highlight the short descriptive phrase or words that will become the descriptive hyperlink.
2. Select the **Link** button in the menu.
3. In the **Address** field, add the desired URL.
4. Select **OK**.

If the PowerPoint presentation is intended to also serve as a handout with resource hyperlinks, content authors may want to create a reference slide at the end that lists the full URL of the hyperlink.

Tables

When possible, use a simple table structure for tabular data. Using tables with split cells, merged cells, or nested tables can lead to issues with assistive technologies recognizing the appropriate column and row header information in a data table.

Avoid using a table to manage layout. Instead, use a Slide Layout that orients content into the appropriate visual layout you desire.

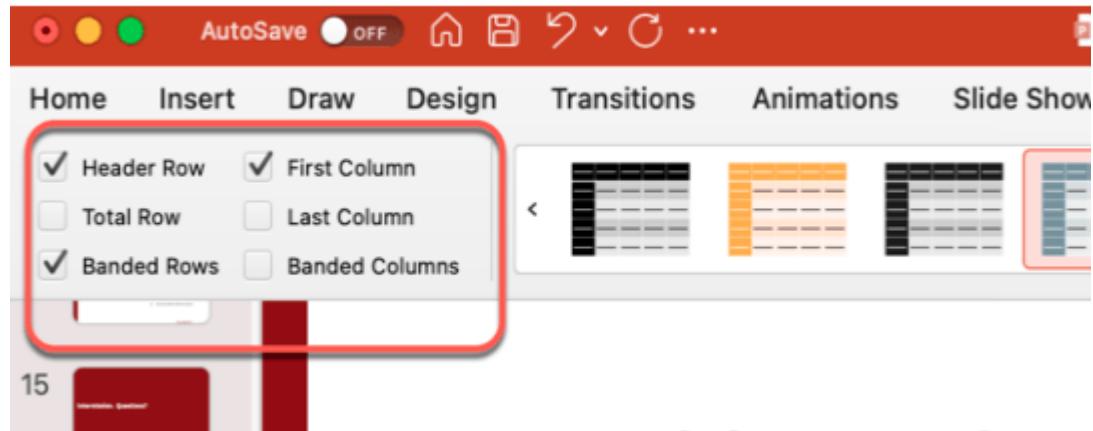
Tables should include the following:

- At least one header (the row and/or column).
- Alt Text description summarizing the table.

Specify the header

To mark a header row for a data table:

1. Select the table to reveal **Table Design**. (Note: this tab will only appear if the table is selected.)
2. In the far left-hand section, determine the required header type:
 - Header row: check the box Header Row.
 - Column header: check the box First Column.



Color

Color can be an effective way to communicate ideas and draw attention to information. Insufficient color and contrast can limit the ability of others to perceive and understand the presentation.

PowerPoint offers a variety of slide themes, but not all of these will provide sufficient contrast. To edit Slide Theme colors:

1. Select **Design** > Expand the **Color Palette Menu** to reveal available color combinations.
2. Select **Colors** to review the pre-built color palettes or select **Customize Colors** to create slides that have appropriate color contrast.

Select one with accessible contrast, or select **Customize Colors** to manually select the colors. Alternatively, you can use other methods in Microsoft PowerPoint to remove or change the current theme in your presentation.

For more about color and accessibility, see [Color Use and Accessibility](#).

Exporting to other formats

Do not use the "Print" to PDF option. This will create a PDF document that lacks PDF tags with no heading information, no alternative text, and no logical document structure. These types of PDF documents will create barriers when accessing the document with assistive technologies.

Creating a PDF

Using “Save As” on a Mac

Users of PowerPoint 365 for Mac can export an accessible, tagged PDF. Older versions of PowerPoint may not support this feature.

1. Select File > **Save As**.
2. Select **PDF**
3. Choose **Best for electronic distribution and accessibility**
4. Select **Save**

Using “Save As” on a Windows PC

1. Select File > **Save As**.
2. Select **PDF > More options**.
3. In the Save As dialog, select **Options**.
4. Verify in the Options dialog that **Document structure tags for accessibility** is selected. Select **OK**.

Creating a PDF with Acrobat

1. Use the Acrobat plug-in in the ribbon. Select the **Acrobat** tab.
2. Select **Create PDF**.