Improving Visual Accessibility in Digital Media

Here are a few quick and easy ways to immediately improve the accessibility of your documents.

Text Size – There is no set text size that one must follow. This is for a variety of reasons, chief amongst them that choice of font family will have an impact on text size.

1. This is size 12 Calibri text.
2. This is size 12 Arabic Typesetting.
3. This is size 12 Perpetua Titling.

As you can see, there is *quite* a bit of difference in the size and thereby readability of these examples. Generally, do not go lower than a size 12 font.

[Contrast](https://webaim.org/articles/contrast/) – Make sure the foreground and background colors of the content of your documents have sufficient contrast to be readable.

Consider the following text examples:

This is some green text on a white background. – 🗴This example does not meet accessibility standards because the contrast is too low, and the text is fairly unreadable.

This is some black text on a white background. - 🗸This example meets accessibility standards because the contrast is very high, making the text easily readable.

**This is some green text on a red background.** - 🗸If you really want to use the green text from the first example, you can if you use an appropriate color background, font size, and font weight (bold).

 - 🗴This example does not meet accessibility standards because the contrast is too low, even though we used black text.

This is black text on a grey background.

[Multiple Meaning Cues](https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG20-TECHS/G14.html) – Don’t use color or images alone to convey meaning; provide multiple meaning cues. In the Contrast section above, multiple cues were used to convey meaning.

1. I used the visual elements of a red “x” to indicate the negativity of bad accessibility examples. Both the icon and its color provide clues, as each are generally used to convey negative attributes. Conversely, the use of the green checkmark indicates the positivity of the good accessibility examples.
2. Not wanting to rely on either the color or the icons, I also used text to convey whether the examples were of good or bad accessibility design.

Using multiple cues is especially important when designing documents with content that needs to be categorized in some way. For example, if you have a table of items, don’t simply color a row to indicate the importance, severity, order, etc., of that item. Provide additional cues, such as a category name, priority number, etc.