Accessibility Best Practices

for PowerPoint Documents

## PART 1. DOCUMENT CONTENT

| **SUBJECT** | **DO** | **DON’T** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Bilingual Documents | * Use proper language markup; and
* Write one page in English and one page in French.
 | * Do not place English and French **side-by-side** on the same page; and
* Do not **mix** one paragraph in English with one paragraph in French.
 |
| Plain Language[Readability Scores Flesch-Kincaid Grade](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/test-your-document-s-readability-85b4969e-e80a-4777-8dd3-f7fc3c8b3fd2) | * Use plain language ([TermiumPlus - Plain Language](http://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tcdnstyl-chap?lang=fra&lettr=chap_catlog&info0=13));
* Know your audience ([A way with words](https://www.canada.ca/en/employment-social-development/programs/disability/arc/words-images.html));
* Choose straightforward vocabulary and simple structures; and
* Divide your text into main points and secondary points.
 | * Do not confuse with oversimplified or condescending style;
* Avoid passive voice; and
* Do not write sentences of more than 20 words.
 |
| Acronyms | * Spell out acronyms the first time you use them; and
* Write them in uppercase.
 | Do not add a period or an apostrophe to acronyms. |
| Organize Content[[1]](#footnote-1) | * Ensure that each slide has no more than six bullet points; and
* Confirm that each bullet point is no more than six words long.
 | * Avoid using PowerPoint as a playbook, user guide, or when there is a large volume of text; and
* Avoid using complete sentences.
 |

## PART 2. DOCUMENT FORMAT[[2]](#footnote-2)

[Run the Accessibility Checker (Microsoft website)](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/rules-for-the-accessibility-checker-651e08f2-0fc3-4e10-aaca-74b4a67101c1)

| **SUBJECT** | **DO** | **DON’T** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Transitions | Use simple and brief transitions. | Avoid more than one transition per slide. |
| Heading Styles | * Format your text using built-in heading styles;
* Use proper heading levels in order (1-2-3); and
* Modify the style appearance to better fit your needs.
 | * Avoid italic text;
* Avoid bold and underlined text as it simulates a hyperlink;
* Avoid more than one level 1 heading per page; and
* Avoid identical headings.
 |
| Background | * Keep the white background; and
* Add “DRAFT” to the title page.
 | * Avoid using shading or images for backgrounds; and
* Avoid watermarked images.
 |
| Text Structure([Contrast Checker](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/)) | * At minimum use font size of 30 points for text;
* Use sufficient contrast between text and background (ratio 4.5:1);
* Choose sans-serif fonts, such as Arial, Helvetica, Verdana, or Century Gothic;
* Modify paragraph style to add space; and
* Use styles to structure text (Titles, Headings, bulleted lists and paragraphs).
 | * Avoid using fully justified text;
* Avoid hyphenated text;
* Avoid runs of blank spaces, tabs, or carriage returns for formatting;
* Avoid using tables for formatting;
* Avoid large amounts of text in bold, italics, underlined, or all caps; and
* Avoid animated text.
 |
| Tables | * Use a simple layout structure;
* Define a header row for tables;
* Identify tables with a number for referral; and
* Add alternative text to the table.
 | * Avoid merging and splitting cells;
* Avoid repeating text contained in the table in the alternate-text fields;
* Avoid blank formatting with cells, rows, or columns; and
* Avoid nested tables.
 |
| Colour (Colour Contrast Analyzer) | * Use sufficient contrast between text and background. Choose a contrast ratio of at least 3:1 for large text (18 pt. font); and
* Use a colour pattern in charts.
 | Do not convey information by using colour alone. |
| Images | * Ensure that alternative (Alt) text defines content and function;
* Label images with a figure number and refer to them by their number;
* Position all objects “in line with text”;
* Record descriptions of Infographics in a separate document (or an annex); and
* Add a data table for complex images such as charts.
 | * Avoid repeating information from the document in an image’s alternate text;
* Avoid alternate text longer than 2 sentences;
* Do not rely solely on charts to convey information;
* Avoid referring to images by their appearance;
* Avoid using irrelevant expressions such as “image of” or “graphic of” in alternate text; and
* Avoid using images of text.
 |
| Audio and Video Objects | * Add closed captioning;
* Add [AMI - Video Description](https://www.ami.ca/captioning-and-transcription); and
* Include a transcription.
 | Avoid adding lengthy videos to prevent pause/stop due to buffering. |
| Hyperlink | * Add descriptive text to hyperlinks (to show where they lead); and
* Ensure that hyperlink text is clear when “out of context”.
 | Avoid hyperlink text such as “click here” and “link to”. |
| Reading Order | Check that the elements on each slide are presented in logical order (from top to bottom) |  |

Please use the [Intake Form](http://iservice.prv/eng/imit/A11Y/intake.shtml) on iService or email us at edsc.ti-it.a11y.esdc@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca to request an Accessible Information and Communications Technology service.

1. [Using PowerPoint - University of Leicester](https://www2.le.ac.uk/offices/ld/resources/presentations/using-ppt) [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. [Accessible Digital Office Document (ADOD) Project](https://adod.idrc.ocadu.ca/powerpoint2010.html) [↑](#footnote-ref-2)