

Microsoft Word Accessibility 101 Webinar Transcript

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>> MEGAN COWDELL Thank you Kathrine, and thank you everyone who's providing accommodations today. And all of you who joined us for your patients as we got setup. My name is Megan Cowdell I am CFILC ICT, Program Manager, that means Information Communication Technologies. And today we're here for our presentation on Microsoft Word Accessibility 101.

I wanna give you a brief overview of what CFILC is. So we are the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers and CFILC is a statewide disability organization that administers programs and serves as a memberships association, which connects California's Independent Living Network. So our members are Independent Living Centers in California. The mission of CFILC is to increase access and equal opportunity for people with disabilities. By building the capacity of Independent Living Centers. We do that in a variety of ways through our membership and also through programs that we have. And the program we're presenting today under is Ability Tools.

Ability Tools is the California State Assistive Technology program. And we have a variety of free services that we provide for Californians with disabilities of all ages. Services include our exchange, so we have a device lending library with a few thousand different assistive technology devices that folks can check out for free loans. You can get a demonstration of similar 80 devices to compare and contrast and find one that works for you. We have a financial loan program for our assistive technology. So if you're looking to finance 80, you can do that through our program. We provide information and referral across the state in regards to Assistive Technology. We have a reuse program that we do in partnership with other we use organizations and our goal in the reuse program is to get gently used durable medical equipment and Assistive Technology out of land fields, we refurbish it and get it back out into the community so folks can use those devices. And then we also do a variety of trainings and webinars we used to do in-person meetings right now we are not meeting in-person because of COVID-19, but we have a variety of webinars and technical assistance. This webinar is included under Ability Tools as our ICT webinars series. And on this slide, I have the Ability Tools logo.

I wanna give you a brief overview of what we're going to cover in today's presentation. So hopefully by the end of today, you'll first be able to understand the importance of document accessibility and what we mean when we're saying document accessibility. Be able to find and use an accessible template in Microsoft Word. We're going to hope that you'll be able to learn how to use the built-in accessibility checker, that's in Microsoft Word. We're going to learn how to use headings and styles to create document structure. We're going to use built in lists and basic tables and talk about what an accessible list or table looks like. We're going to talk about how to describe visuals, this includes alt text or alternative text. We're going to look at how to make sure hyperlinks we're including in our document are useful. We're going to briefly discuss font choices and color choices and color contrast, and how that can impact accessibility. And finally we're going to learn how to save a file to a PDF and ensure some of the accessibility carries over. And on this slide, I do have a photo of myself, my hair is pulled back in a ponytail with a block black T-shirt on, and you'll see, I have a parrot on my shoulder that's my pet Dewey. And if you do hear some birds chirping in the background, that is why I am working from home, like most of you probably are as well.

So today's webinar is being recorded. We will have an archive out available in about a week that we'll have closed captioning in it. You'll be able to come back to the webinar, I did send out documents that I'm using today, including this PowerPoint. And then I'm also going to be working in a word document, I sent that out to everybody before the webinar. So you are able to come back once the archive is out and follow along then, if you would like to. And just a note, if you did register for next week's webinar on PowerPoint accessibility, we will be sending that connection info out early next week, along with materials. So don't worry if you've not seen your registration, it will be coming soon. So the first thing we wanna talk about is what we mean when we say document accessibility. So one of the first things we look at with document accessibility is give me just a moment. Our ASL interpreters are switching.

Perfect, so we wanna make sure our documents are compatible for folks who use screen readers. And you may be wondering what a screen reader is? A screen reader is the generic term for a program that someone who is blind or low vision uses to access their computer. Simply put a screen reader will read or speak the content of a page to a user, or they can choose to have that content be transferred to a braille display. And just like the software we're looking at today, screen readers do have different software and there's different software versions for screen readers. So if somebody is using an older screen reader, it may not have some of the features that a newer screen reader will use. But we wanna make sure we're making our documents easy to use for folks who use a screen reader. We want to make sure that our documents are easy to navigate. And this could be for folks who are accessing their computer, maybe using a switch or a mouth stick, people who are accessing the computer rather with other means than just a traditional mouse and keyboard. We wanna make it easy for them to navigate through our document as they're reading it. And lastly, we wanna make sure that the meaning of our document is clearly conveyed. So we want to keep in mind a font and color to make sure it's easy to read. And we also here wanna keep in mind using plain language and choosing our words clearly to convey the meaning. So that's what we mean when we talk about document accessibility. And just a brief note today, I am using Office 365 for this demonstration. If you do have a different Office version, I'm sorry, a different version of Microsoft Office, you will still have most of these accessibility features, we're going to look at somewhere in your version. It will likely look different than what you're seeing today.

At a few points in the presentation, I will point out where you might find a similar feature on an older version of word, but just know in order to provide you the best one-on-one support. And also because of time today, I'm not going to be answering specific questions on where to find something in your version of Word. I am happy to help you with that after the presentation though. So if you need help finding any of these features, once you get back to your computer and try these tools out, please feel free to email me. My email is Megan that's M-E-G-A-N @ C-F-I-L-C.O-R-G. And we'll go ahead and share that out in the chat as well. So please feel free to email me if you have questions about where to find these things on your version of Word. So I'm going to pause my share and move over to my Word document that we're working from today. And I do did not describe the slide on my slide here, I just have a back lit image of a keyboard and on what looks like the space button, it says accessibility and it has a wheelchair symbol. So give me just a moment, my mouse is a little, it was frozen here we go. So let's move into my Word document and I hit resume share, can folks tell me in the Q&A, if you're now seeing my Word document and is the size okay, or should I zoom in? Oh, and there is a question here asking which version of 365 am I using? I am using the version that is installed on my computer, not the web version. Perfect and somebody said zoom in to 125, so I'll go ahead and do that. And it is zooming in just on my document. It will not zoom in on my ribbon. So hopefully you guys can see that better? Perfect thank you for the feedback.

Okay, so the first thing we wanna look at in here is how to find an accessible template? So you don't have to start from scratch, there are built in templates included in Microsoft that you can use that have a lot of the access features already included. So I'm gonna look for an accessible template. So I'm going to go, like I'm making a new Word document and I am going to try and describe what I'm doing in here, as best as I can. So folks who cannot see can also follow along. So I'm clicking file from my ribbon and I wanna look for a new template. So at the top of my file, it says new, and it says blank document, and beneath that, it says more templates. I'm going to click there. And it, then it brings up a search bar where I can search for templates. And this template we're looking for is one that Microsoft actually created. That way we know it does have the built in features. So I went ahead and searched for sampler it's called accessible template sampler. So if you search for accessible or sampler, it should pull this up and you'll see, it did pull up the accessible template sampler. I'm going to go ahead and click on that right now. And it will open up a new Word document and it says accessible template sample. A sample of the most popular Accessible Word Templates, fully optimized for use by people with visual disabilities. And in here, it has a variety of templates that they have pre-made, so it has templates for business. So maybe a PTA agenda or a seasonal event flyer, it has templates for birthdays, so a birthday invitation or birthday cards, labels, event postcards, there's quite a few templates in here. If you find one that you like go ahead and select download template, and then you can start customizing it. Just keep in mind, if you do make a lot of choices to change the customization, it may get rid of some of the accessibility. So just keep in mind that you don't wanna change too much in there because you may lose some of that accessibility. So let's see, I'm gonna go ahead and close out now of that accessible template sampler.

So the first thing we wanna look at and we're back in my Word document, and this is the document I sent to all of you that was labeled what is CFILC accessibility review needed? So the first thing we're going to look at is the accessibility checker. So Microsoft has an accessibility checker, and it's available in Outlook on the web board like we're using today, PowerPoint and Excel, and there's a few different ways you can access the checker, but it is an automatic checker. And it's going to go through your document and look for errors that would make it inaccessible for somebody with a disability to read. To access it if you're on 365, you're going to go to your home ribbon or go up to your ribbon and look for the review buttons. So at my ribbon says home, insert, design, I'm looking for review. I'm going to go ahead and select that. And then there are groups on this ribbon. So it says, proofing, speech, accessibility. I'm going to select check accessibility, and this will pop up the accessibility checker on the right side of my screen. It's updating the results right now, but while it does that, I'll tell you what the accessibility checker is looking for. So it's going to review your results, and then you'll see a list of errors, warnings, tips, and intelligence services, and then suggestions on how to fix each of those errors tips, warnings, or intelligent services. An error is going to be content that makes the document difficult or impossible to read and understand for people with disabilities. So you're going to wanna make sure you fix all of your errors in order for your document to be accessible. And you'll see here on my accessibility checker, I do have four errors. So three where I'm missing alternative text and one where I don't have a header row. The next thing it'll show you is warnings. A warning is content that in most, but not all cases, makes the document difficult to understand for people with disabilities. And you'll see here, I have three warnings, all about hard to read text contrast. And a tip I don't have any tips on my accessibility results here, but if you have a tip that will be about content that people with disabilities can understand, but that could be presented in a different way to improve the user's experience. So ideally you wanna at least go through all of your errors warnings and tips and review them. And then if you're on 365, you may also see intelligent services. An intelligent services is automatically generating altered text in your document using some predictive algorithms. So it'll also come up with intelligence services warnings. So that's what the accessibility checker is looking for. I'm gonna go ahead and close it right now, but we will come back to it. And hopefully by the end of the webinar, we will get all of these fixed to make our document accessible. So I'm closing the accessibility checker and do we have any questions right now? It doesn't seem like we have any open questions okay.

So the next thing we're looking at is making sure our document has structure. So a lot of you, I don't know when you use to learn a computer and type up Word documents, but for me, I learned it in school and maybe for book reports or assignments for school is what I was originally learning to use Word for. And when I learned to make a document, I learned to visually format my document. So I knew my title needed to be bigger. So I would come in here and manually change my title size, make it a larger font size, maybe make it bold. And then if my document was broken up with headings, I would go and change those. And you'll see here, my document does look like it has structure, it has a title. It has what looks like its headings, and then it has some subheadings and I'm just scrolling through my document, so you can see all of that. However, that's not actually any structure in my document. I just went through and visually changed things. If I were to print this document, it would be okay. But if a screen reader, user is trying to access it, it's not going to tell them that this is the title, just because I picked a larger font. I need to actually mark up my document, using structure to indicate that it's a title. And the other reason a document structure is important is it makes it easy to navigate. So we talked earlier about folks that are maybe using switches or a mouth stick to access their computer. We wanna make sure our document is easy to navigate and adding structure will also make it easy for folks to navigate our document. So you're probably wondering how do we add structure? And we're gonna go to our ribbon on the home tab of our ribbon. And you'll see the groups that say clipboard, font, paragraph and styles.

Styles is where we're gonna find everything to add structure. And my styles might look a little bit different than yours. I have modified some of them, but you will have a lot of pre-made styles that you can use in Microsoft Word. And the styles are, what's going to add that structure to our document. And just to show you what it looks like, there is a navigation pane that you can get to that'll show you any structure and headings that you have in your document, and that helps you see if you do have structure. So to get to the navigation pane, we're gonna go ahead and click the view button. And then on my groups, I have views, immersive, page movement and show. Navigation pane is under show, I'm gonna click the checkbox next to that. And on the left side of my screen you'll see it popped up a navigation pane. I don't have any headings in my document so nothing is showing here. Instead it says, create an interactive outline of your document. It's a great way to keep track of where you are or quickly move your content around. To get started, go to the home tab and apply heading styles to the headings in your document. So it's giving those instructions, I kind of just went over that we have to access the stylist to add headings. So there's also a pages tab and a results tab. The pages tab looks kind of like the slide viewer in PowerPoint, it's just showing me overview of what's on each of the pages in my document. I'm going to exit out of the navigation pane so we can add some styles and then we'll come back and see how this has changed. So I need to go back to my home ribbon and now we wanna start adding styles. So the first style we'd like to add is a title. Usually your title is going to be at the top of your document. And that's what I have here, I've highlighted my title. It says the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, CFILC and I wanna make sure that's my title. So I'm looking up in my style's ribbon and I see that it has normal highlighted. So right now, if somebody were accessing my document with a screen reader they wouldn't know this was a title. They would just think it's normal body text. So to make it a title, we actually just are going to select title in the ribbon. And now my title is structurally a title you'll see, though, it did visually change the formatting, it changed my font size to be what the preset title is in Microsoft. I preferred the font I had, so that's okay, I'm going to hit undo. And instead of just clicking title, I still have my text highlighted here. So I still have the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, CFILC highlighted, I'm now gonna go right click on my title menu. And I'm going to select here there's a couple options, it says, update title to match selection, or modify. I'm going to pick update title to match selection. And that is now telling this document that the font style that I had is what a title is going to be in this document. And now you'll see if I click back into this title, it is highlighting on my style's ribbon that we have a title. There is actually one other place in your document that you do want to put the title. And this is going to be really important if you're converting your Word document to a PDF. So let me show that one other place to add the title. So I just copied my title with copy paste, and I'm gonna go up to file on my ribbon, like I'm opening a new Word document, and then I'm going to select from my file menu, I'm going to select the info button, and I'm looking for the properties menu it's on the right side of my screen here. And it says size, pages, words, total editing time and title. I'm going to select where it says, add a title and I'm just pasting in my title here. And now this title is actually in the document listed as a title in the properties. And when you're transferring it to a PDF, it should remain there as the title. So that's a really simple way to make sure your document has a title with it. And if you're looking in your file explorer, it will also list the title there.

Okay, so now our document has a title, let's give it some headings and some structure. And so we have a couple of heading options here today, I'm just gonna be doing heading one and heading two. And a heading, that way the headings are structured is it's supposed to be like things together. So you can have many heading ones in your document and you can have many heading twos in your document. It's not set up to be the first heading is heading one, the second heading is heading two. That's not the way it's designed, it's meant to be kind of nested. So a heading one will be first and then a heading two would go under a heading one, a heading three would go under a heading two and so forth. So let's go ahead and start adding heading ones to my document. So this right here I have, what is CFILC? I'm going to highlight that I would like that to be a heading one. So I'm gonna go to my styles menu and select heading one. And you'll see it did visually change again, it changed to an Arial 16 blue font. I'm not a fan of that, I didn't want blue in my document for my font color. So I'm hitting the undo button again and it put it back to the normal category on my document. Let's see sorry I have teams up, I guess I should close that. Okay, so I have, what is CFILC highlighted. I still wanna make that a heading one, but I wanna maintain the font size that I created. So I'm gonna hover over heading one, right click it and hit update heading one to match selection. And now in my document, all heading ones will have this style. There'll be Arial 20 bold. So now we're gonna go through the rest of my document and mark everything as a heading one that should be a heading one. So CFILC's Programs, that's going to be a heading one. And here, these are heading twos, all of the programs under here are heading twos. I'm gonna scroll to the very bottom of my document, where it says CFILC membership, and I have one more heading one there. So I have three heading ones in my document now. And let's go ahead and add more structure by adding heading twos. So I'm scrolling back up. I'm on page two of my document, where I start talking about our programs and it says Ability Tools here. I'm gonna go ahead and highlight that and select heading two from the styles again, you'll see it visually changed my heading to be whatever Microsoft's preset was, which is an Arial 14 bold and blue font. I, again, don't like that, I'm going to hit undo, and I'm going to right click over the heading two and update the heading two to match selection. And now let's go through and make all of these headings two's. So I'm highlighting Digital Access Project, that's a heading two. I'm highlighting Disability Disaster Access and Resources, that's a heading two. Highlighting Disability Organizing Network, that's a heading two. Highlighting Freedom Tech, that's a heading two. Highlighting Youth Organizing Disabled and Proud, that's a heading two. And I think I have one more down here yes. So what is an Independent Living Center?

That's a heading two. So now I've given my document structure, I'm gonna scroll back up to the top, and I think we had a question. So the question says, if we prefer font and size, could we easily preset the ribbon structure, for example Arial 24, bold? Yes, you can come in here and you can change these styles to be permanent anytime you open up Word. I'm not going to cover that today, it's a little more detailed, but you can preset these styles and you can actually make a template in our organization we do have some pre-made templates that have all of those styles already indicated with the fonts. So that's a great question. Thank you for answering, I'm sorry, thank you for asking . You're welcome. I'm glad that answered your question. Okay, so I'm gonna go back to the navigation pane. So folks can see the structure we added. So let's go ahead and select view on our ribbon and I'm clicking that check box next to navigation pane. And this hopefully if we did it right, is going to look differently than it did last time.

Okay, so my navigation pane is open on the left side of my document and you'll see that we do have headings here now. So what is CFILC, CFILC programs and CFILC membership are all here as heading ones. And then you'll see nested under CFILC programs and CFILC membership. We have some heading twos. And the other thing that you can do now, so say I were to click on one of these heading twos. It's going to navigate to that section of my document. So we just made it much easier for folks to navigate our document. Maybe I am a person who I have a disability, and I know that I live in a high fire threat area where there's going to be public safety, power shutoffs, and I'd like to be prepared for that. So I'm looking for information on the Disability Disaster Access and Resources program. Now, if I'm a screen reader user, I will be able to easily find that because we put structure in my document. So folks can easily navigate to the part of the document that is applicable to them. And the navigation pane is also the basis of a table of contents. We're not gonna go over how to make a table of contents today, but the navigation pane with headings is the basis of the structure that Microsoft is using. Okay, so that's the basics of adding headings and titles to our document. And you just wanna make sure you're adding your headings in a logical order. So once again, it's not the first one is heading one and the second one is heading two you're grouping them by like categories. You can also, so once we have all of our headings in here, like we do, I'm gonna close my navigation pane, and I'm gonna go on my ribbon to the design tab.

Now we have our headings in here, we marked up our document and we can go through the design tab and start looking through different options and see if there's any we like, and it's going to maintain our heading structure and it's going to maintain the title. And if we were to add to the document, it would follow that same structure. So you can pick through and see if there's an option you like that'll make your document more pretty for you. I'm gonna undo that though, I don't need any of those designs on my document right now, I'm comfortable with how it looks. Okay, so now our document has some structures. Let's go ahead and we're going to look at lists for just a moment. So I'm gonna scroll up here on my document. I'm on the second page where I talk about our programs and you'll see that I have a table here where I list our programs out. I'm gonna go ahead and create a list right under that table. We wanna use the built in lists in Microsoft. So I'm up on my ribbon and I'm gonna hover over some of the list options. So you folks can see what they look like. So we have a bulleted list and it gives you a variety of different bullets to pick. We have a numbered list and it gives you a variety of different numbered or lettered lists to pick from. And then we have a multilevel list and it gives you a variety of multilevel lists to pick from but for this document, I'm just going to list out some of our programs. There's no rhyme or reason to how they're associated with each other. So I'm just gonna select bullets. Actually they're associated with each other by they're in the order they're in alphabetical order is the order they're in. So I went ahead and selected a bullet and you'll see it added one to my page. I'm gonna start typing out our programs, I typed out Ability Tools when I hit enter, it's gonna automatically add another bullet to my list. So this is something that is really nice about using the built in lists is it's going to keep the formatting consistent. So you don't have to worry about adjusting the formatting of your document when you use the built in lists. Let me go ahead and get one more on here so I have somewhat of a list. Our programs are a bit long .

Okay, so I have a list here with three program names, it says Ability Tools, Digital Access Project, and Disability Disaster Access and Resources. The other thing about using a list is it will group them together. So you can visibly see when you're looking at this document, those items go together, they're in a list and most screen readers when they get to this point in the document where there is a list, it'll let them know list with three items and then start reading the items off of that list. So that's another reason we wanna make sure we're using the built in list features in Microsoft, not just manually doing it ourselves. I'm gonna go ahead and delete all of that, that was just an example for you. I'm sorry we have a question again. So that was a bit fast can you do that again? Brooke go ahead and let me know what part you're looking for. I know I am going a bit fast, I'll try and slow down, but we don't have a ton of time. The accessible list yeah, so all of the lists that Microsoft has built in should be accessible. You just wanna make sure you're using one of their built in lists and on your styles ribbon you'll select which list option you'd like to use. It's under the paragraph section on the home ribbon. Did that answer your question? Perfect, I'm glad, thank you.

So that's lists, we then wanna make sure that we're using simple tables when possible. So here, you'll see I do have just a simple table, it has two columns and a couple rows with our program names in it. And let me show you how I created that table. So I'm gonna go up to my ribbon again and we're gonna select insert. And then on there's the groups here, it says pages, tables, illustrations. I'm gonna go and click on the one that says table. And it says, add a table, a table is a great way to organize information within your document. And it brings up what looks like graph paper. So I'm gonna make a table about our coalitions. We have two coalitions, I'd like to list along with a header. So I'm gonna do two columns and three rows. And remember the columns are the ones that go up and down and the rows are the ones that go left to right. Okay, so I went ahead and selected the two by three table. Perfect, if you'd like to make a table, that's bigger than what the graph paper has, you can do that we'll come back to the table button in the insert ribbon and then click insert table from the dropdown menu. It says insert table or draw table beneath that graft up beneath that graph paper. And it pulls up a table menu here, and you can manually type in the number of rows and columns that you would like to be in your table. So make sure you're using the built in table features in Microsoft whenever possible. That way folks who are accessing the computer with a screen reader, it'll read it to them more clearly, if you're using built in tables and when ever possible you wanna have a simple table. If you have a table that has lots of merged cells, that can be really difficult for a screen reader to read properly and clearly convey that meaning. So whenever possible with tables, simple is better. So you'll see my table here and you always wanna have your tables have a header, and that's actually an error I know I have in my documents. So we're gonna bring back the accessibility checker, and I actually, I meant to show you another way to get there.

So I'm gonna show you another way to find the accessibility checker, and this should be consistent in most versions of Microsoft. So if you're in 360, not in 365 this might work for you. So we're going to file and then I'm going to select info again, like we did earlier, and we're looking for inspect document. So here it says, check for issues, inspect document. I'm going to click where it says check for issues, and it has a few options here, it says, inspect document, check accessibility or check compatibility. I'm going to click check accessibility, and then it came back to my Word document with the accessibility checker up on the side, and it's actually loading right now. So we'll give it a moment to load the results. But I remember I had an error on this with my tables okay, so it reloaded I'm looking at my accessibility checker here under errors. And I do have one where it says no header row, so I'm going to click on that and it's going to drop down it says table. So it's telling me where my error is so I'll click there, and on the accessibility checker, it says, why fix this? A table header row contains column headings that provide context and aid navigation of the table. People who can't see the table can have column headings, read aloud. And then it gives me steps to fix it on how to add a heading to my table. And if you look here on my table, it visually looks like I had a heading. My heading is bolder, it's a bolded font, whereas the rest of the font in my table is standard. But I just, once again, I manually did that. I didn't have it structurally marked up in Word. So to fix it, it says, select the table, then select the design tab in table tools and click check header row, so let's do that, so I have my table selected here. And when you select your table, it will pull up two more options on your ribbon, it'll say table design and layout. They're both in a blue font since it's kind of just a temporary option on the ribbon, it only opens when you're in the table. I'm going to select table design, and then on my left side of the ribbon here, it says table style options with a few options here with check boxes next to them. The first option is header row, and you'll see that that is not checked. So I'm gonna go ahead and check the box next to header row. And that is now indicating that the first row in my table is a header row. And the accessibility checker is updating, but when it loads, we should see that that error is no longer there. Okay, so it did update and you'll see that that error about my table is no longer here. So now our table that we created should be accessible for somebody to read, who's using a screen reader. When they get to the table, it'll say header program name, header program website, and then it'll go through and start to read the table to them. So they'll understand the contents and structure of that table a little better. We have some questions here.

So Liz that wants to know, does the accessibility of the Word document get changed when you convert the document to a PDF, for example, can you lose access? Yes so that is something that can happen. We're not gonna really cover too much on PDF accessibility today when you're creating a PDF, what you want to, what the accessible feature in PDF is called tags. So some of the accessibility features we're adding right now in Word will carry over to the PDF as tags, but it's not guaranteed. So you do actually need to check your PDFs to make sure that they are accessible. And Alex asked, I'm sorry, can you show me where the accessibility checker is? I'm happy to do that one more time really quickly for folks. So there's a few ways to get there. If you are on 365 on your ribbon, it'll be under review. There's an option to open the accessibility checker under the review tab. If you aren't on 365, you can go file like you're opening a new document, info, so we're selecting from the file menu, we're selecting the info option. And then we're looking for where it says, inspect document, check for issues. I'm going to click here and click the one that says check accessibility and that opened up the accessibility checker. So that's the basics of tables, you wanna make sure your tables have headers and that they're simple to use. I'm gonna close out my accessibility checker again, and we will open it up in just actually we can leave it open because what we're looking at next is alt text.

And you'll see the majority of the errors in my accessibility checker have to do with alt text. So I have three errors that say missing alternative text. And then I have three places where intelligent services is suggesting alternative text. So you wanna make sure that your document, all of your visuals in your document are described in some way. And so most frequently, you'll hear folks talk about alt text as the way to describe visuals. And that's a really great place to start. We wanna make sure we're using the alt text in Word, but there are times where the visual we're describing really needs a longer description than what's appropriate to put in alt text. And if that's the case, you're going to need to think of different places in your document where you can describe visuals. And that could maybe be the caption or maybe in the body of your text, as text in the body of your document. But let's first look at how to add alt text, so I'm gonna close my accessibility checker for a moment, actually, let's go ahead and click on the first one. So I'm clicking on the first error here that says missing alternative text, and it says picture one. And it's highlighted on my document now that it's this logo at the very top of my page that says California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, CFILC and Microsoft is telling me why I wanna fix it. So it says alternative text for images and other objects is very important for people who can't see the screen. Screen readers read alternative text aloud, so it's the only information many have about the image. Good alternative text helps them understand the image. And then it tells me how to fix it. So on 365 to fix it, we're going to right click on our image.

And it's going to, sorry, let me scroll a bit, so I'm right clicking on my image, it's popping up this menu and I'm gonna go to the very bottom where it says, edit alt text. And it now brings up the alt text editor on the side of my page. And it says, how would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind one to two sentences recommended. So for this document this, the purpose of this image in this document is it's just a logo. I want folks to be able to associate the logo with our organization. So it would be appropriate for the alt text in this document to say the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers logo, and that's sufficient alt text. You generally don't need to describe a logo, but maybe this document wasn't, that's not the purpose of this document. Maybe we were trying to select a new logo for our organization. If we're trying to select a new logo and this document had a couple different logo options in here. If I had the alt text for each of those options as the California Foundation for Independent Living Centers, I'm not really giving much context or conveying what makes that logo different from the other logos we're selecting. So in that scenario, that's not going to be alt text. So you always wanna think about what the purpose of the visual in your document is? What meaning is it conveying? And that's what we need the alt text to be. So if this document, if I want, we're trying to pick out a new logo for CFILC maybe a better option for alt text would be yellow cut out of California. Black text up the side or black text running on the side, says CFILC in space of Nevada texts says California Foundation for Independent Living Centers. So in this scenario we're picking from different logos, that is giving more context, so folks will know what makes this logo different from other ones that we're looking at. So we have a question here, how did you get the alt text option from right clicking on the picture? Let me show you that again, I'm going to close the alt text popup. So when you right click on your picture, at least in 365, it'll pull up this menu here and it's at the very bottom of my menu, it says edit alt text. And then it pops up the alt text editor. If you are using an older version of Word frequently, the alt text editor is found under format picture. So if you right click on your image and go to the very bottom, it says format picture for me. I know in my version of Word that this is not where I'm gonna find alt texts, so I can click through these tabs under format picture, but alt text isn't here. But in older versions of Word, it is under format picture sometimes. So that's where you can also look out for alt text.

Okay, so we talked about making sure the image that we're conveying the meaning of the image in the context we're using it in. So maybe I decide though that this isn't quite enough info to give somebody about what makes this logo different from other logos. You'll see though, I'm at two sentences. We really generally don't wanna go beyond two sentences for alt text, 'cause then that's just giving the person who's using the screen reader, a whole lot of extra information that we're not giving other folks, and we're kind of bogging them down. So if it's getting above two sentences, we do wanna find a different place in our document to describe our image. One of the options would be to add a caption. So if you right click on my image here, I'm going to select insert caption and okay. And then I can start editing the caption here. And maybe I want to be really in depth in my description of this image. So I'm gonna give the hex colors for the state. I don't know them so I'm just typing hex colors for state and hex colors for the font. So maybe I wanna be super specific, I'm gonna include that in my caption. And I'm still okay with my alt text giving this description. So when a screen reader user gets to this image, they'll get the alt text that says yellow cutout of California, black texts running on the side, say CFILC in space of Nevada, text says California Foundation for Independent Living Centers. And then it'll read the caption which has extra information for them. If you get to the point where you're describing an image, that's really complex. So maybe we're talking about a science textbook that has a really complex image in it or a pictograph. Then you're going to wanna describe that in the body of your document. So if I were to describe the image and the body of my text, I still wanna mark here for the person using a screen reader. So I will say image to oops I'm on my caption still, pardon I need to go to my alt text box. So if you're describing your image in the body of your document, you still wanna put something in the alt text, so the screen reader user knows they're not missing anything and that it's being described in the body. So maybe I would just put here, described in body. So that way they'll know there's an image, and then they know they're going to see or hear about what the image is later on. The last thing in alt texts before we move on is you will see that there is an option here at the bottom that says mark as decorative. This is not going to be in all versions of office, I think it might just be a 365. If I were to click this box that says mark as decorative, when a screen reader user gets to this image, it'll just say, decorative image and move on it won't tell them anything else. So you wanna think about what the image you're marking as decorative is before you mark it that way, if it's conveying any meaning, you wanna put that meaning in the alt text. But maybe we just have some stylistic borders on our documents or separators somewhere in our document that are just a visual element that really aren't conveying meaning. Then it would be okay to hit mark as decorate or mark as decorative. But you just wanna think about it before you do it. And I actually have one more thing, I wanna show you about alt text before we close it out.

So you'll see mine on 365, I have a button here that says generate a description for me. This is using the intelligence services to predict what my alt text is. And I'm actually going to go ahead and go back to the accessibility checker, so you can see that there. So I'm in my ribbon hitting review and then check accessibility and it's reloading my results, I'll give it just a second to load. Okay, so now it has under my intelligence services, it says, suggested alternative text. So it's saying we guessed what the alternative text for this images, but you might wanna go ahead and check it to confirm that it's accurate. So I'm gonna select picture two here from my option, it's taking me to my Ability Tools logo, and I'm going to select, edit alt text to see what it has there. And you'll see, it says a picture containing drawing description automatically generated. That's not entirely accurate, if I were to not have gone through and checked this, a screen reader user, that's what it would read to them. And that's not what this is, it's the Ability Tools logo. So if you have the predictive alt text on that's okay, but you do wanna make sure you're going through and double checking that the alt text it's predicting is accurate. And I'll show you one more example of the predictive text. I'm on the Digital Access Project logo now, and it says a screenshot of a cell phone. And for folks that are looking at this, there's no cell phone on here. There's a little like cell reception logo, which I think is why it's guessing it's a cell phone, but that's deceptive. That's not what this is, it's our Digital Access Project logo. So I'm gonna change that alt texts.

And you'll probably notice the alt text is not really accurately predicting my logos. So if you want to, you can turn off the intelligent services, which generate the alt text, and let me show you how to do that. So you're gonna come to file, like you're opening a new Word document again, and then go to the very bottom of your file menu and select options. And it brings up the Word options menu. And in Microsoft, anything to do with accessibility is going to be nested under ease of access. So that's what we're looking for is ease of access. I clicked that at the top that says, make Word more accessible. And we're looking for the automatic alt text. So it's near the bottom here, it says automatic alt text. Automatic alt text generates descriptions for pictures to make them accessible for people with vision impairments, access alt text at any time by clicking edit alt text. And then there's a checkbox that says automatically generate alt text for me, and that checkbox is checked. If you wanna turn off that feature, you'll go ahead and uncheck that checkbox and hit okay. And now it's not going to generate the alt text for you. So that's how you turn that off if you do not like that feature. So let's go ahead and move on now to hyperlinks. And I saw, we did have a question about hyperlinks, so, now is the time to cover that. So we wanna make sure that we are putting hyperlinks in our document with context and making sure that they're useful. So my document here, I do, I'm gonna close my accessibility menu again, just so we have my document more full screen.

So let's scroll down, we do have a couple hyperlinks I included in my document. The first one is here under the Disability Disaster Access and Resources program. And it looks like it's a YouTube hyperlink, but I'm not giving any context. So if you're using a screen reader, you frequently can pull up a list of all of the hyperlinks in the document and then choose to navigate to those hyperlinks from that list. And because of that, we wanna make sure our hyperlinks always have context. So a lot of times when you're reading, maybe an article online, there'll be a button that says, read more, click here, or find out more click here. And people hyperlink that text that says, click here. Well, if we have a document where we have a lot of links that we're including, and we just hyperlink click here, when a screen reader user is looking at all the links, they're not going to know what each of those click here are taking them to. They're just gonna see click here link, click here link, click here link. So that's not very accessible. So we wanna make sure our links have context if you're, and you also wanna think about what the ultimate purpose of your document is? So if you're going to be printing a document, you likely do wanna have the whole link there. So that way folks who have that printed document, when they get on their browser, they can type in that URL. If you are printing the document and including links, we really suggest using a shortened link. You can make a free Bitly. That's the B-I-T-L-Y account. And we can share that in the chat that shortens the links for you and makes it much easier for folks to remember and type in. But if we're not going to have our document printed, it would be appropriate to insert the links as clickable hyperlinks. So this document, I'm not intending to click it, I'm sorry, I'm not intending to print it. So I'm gonna go ahead and make this link more useful. Right now, I just have a blank YouTube or a generic YouTube link at the bottom of this. I'm gonna cut that out and then I think a more helpful link would be YouTube video of DDAR Program Launch Webinar. Because that's what this video is. We just reached the recently launched our disaster program. So if you click this link, it's going to take you to that webinar archive on YouTube. And so I typed out YouTube video of DDAR Program Launch Webinar. Now let's go ahead and make that our clickable link. So I highlighted that text, I'm going to right click it and then scroll to the bottom, and it says link and clicking the drop down next to it. And because I just recently cut this link, it has it in my recent items, so I'm going to select that. And you'll see now that I have a more contextual useful link, it says YouTube video of the DDAR Program Launch Webinar. And let's go down here at the very bottom of my document, I have one more link. So this link is to help people find their Independent Living Center if you're in California. I'm gonna go ahead and cut that as well, and let's change this and make it a more useful link. So to find your local Independent Living Center click here. And remember, I don't wanna just hyperlink click here because that's not giving context, I'm gonna hyperlink this whole sentence. So that way, when folks get to that list of links, they will see that this link is about Independent Living Centers and how to find your local Independent Living Center. So I am on my, I highlighted the text. I right clicked, I'm going to link and picking recent items. And so now you'll see that those are both more useful links. I hope that answered your question, whoever did ask about the links earlier. So just again with links you wanna make sure that if somebody is reading your document and they're just pulling out the links, they're not reading everything, they'll still understand what that link goes to. It's also a really great courtesy, if you do have a link that's opening to a website where a video is going to play or a documents they're going to download. It's really kind to let folks know what happens when they click that link, so that they're not surprised when they open it.

So let's go ahead and move on to talking briefly about fonts, and sizes and color. So the first thing we wanna look at when we're picking a font is we wanna pick a font that's easy to read. Where do you find the link again? Let me show you that. So to add a hyperlink, you can add a link to any text in your document. You'll highlight the text you'd like to link. So here I just highlighted Independent Living Centers, right click and it brings up the menu here. And for me, link is near the bottom. So if I do the arrow next to it, it's gonna pull up recent items that I can link. Or if I click link, it'll pull up the insert hyperlink menu. And the address field is where you'll type in, what you're linking to. So this is where you'll include the URL on the address field. I'm gonna hit cancel though, I don't need that to be a link. And get some water for just a second here. Thank you .

Okay, so I think we covered a link sufficiently. So let's talk for a moment about font choice. So we wanna make sure we're picking a font that is easy for folks to read. And ideally for accessibility, we wanna have a Sans serif font. Can folks tell me in the Q & A what a serif is, if you're familiar, what a serif is? Does anyone know? Let's see if any answers come in. So what's a serif? Yes, Alison says the little tails on the letters. So as serif is the little flourishes or tails on the letters, I'm going to go ahead and type out something here and I'm gonna move it to, or change it to a font that has a serif so that folks can see. So I typed out what is CFILC, I'm going to my home ribbon and I'm going to select a new font. So a really popular font that has serif is Times New Roman. And let me increase this font size, so folks can see. So we're gonna compare this font here with the one above. So this font I have highlighted is Times New Roman. You'll see it has those little flourishes or tails on the end of the letter. The font up here that I have highlighted is Arial. It doesn't have any of those flourishes or tails. So an Arial font is what's called Sans serif, Sans being without, so it doesn't have serifs. And a Times New Roman is a serif font. So when we're designing for accessibility, our doc, we're designing our documents for accessibility. We generally wanna pick a Sans serif font, those little flourishes, make it harder to read. Some of the letters can run together, especially for folks who have dyslexia. So a Sans serif font is going to be preferred. Some of the really popular Sans serif fonts you can pick from are Arial, which is what I'm using in the document today. Calibri is a good option and Helvetica is also all of those are good Sans serif options. So we talked about what kind of font we want now, what size font do we want? So in a word document, you generally want all of your texts to be size 14. Perfect, so we want all of our texts to at least be a size 14. So you'll see here in my document that that is not the case. So this body text here, I highlighted it and you can see it's a size 10.5. I would like it to be an Arial 14. So I'm gonna go ahead and change that in my font, in the styles menu, come on, where's Arial there we go. And then I'm gonna increase it to size 14. And what I'm gonna do is actually change the color too. So you'll see. It's kind of I'm not sure if you can tell, but it's not black, it's gray. So I'm gonna go ahead and pick black so standard body text in your document, you wanna be a size 14 font, preferably black. It's just easier to read. And then you wanna make sure that that's listed as normal so we can set the normal or body font using the styles. So I'm up on my style bar again, and I'm gonna hover over normal. I have my paragraph highlighted, I hover over normal right click and I hit update normal to match selection. And now anywhere in my document where I highlight that it'll be the normal text will be size 14 okay. And then we wanna also make sure, I'm sorry, so if folks do ask for a large print document, a large print generally starts at size 18 for a font, but you might wanna just check with that person who requested that accommodation and see what font size they prefer. Oh I think I answered your question right, as it came through perfectly. So some large print is gonna start at size 18 for font, but go ahead and check with that individual to see what their preference is.

And one last thing that's under a kind of font that we wanna think about is how our text is aligned in our document. So I'm gonna highlight this text here again, let's see my mouse has given me troubles. Okay, so I highlighted the body text here. I'm up on my home ribbon under the paragraph section. And this is where the text alignment options are, so right now you'll see my document is, or this section of my document is align left, left alignment is great, I'm gonna stick with that, that's pretty standard for body text. The one thing we wanna avoid whenever possible is justifying our text. And I'm going to click that now, so you can see what that looks like. So you'll see, after we click justify justify is evenly distributing the texts between the left and the right margins of your document. And it does look really nice and commonly legal documents are frequently done in justified fonts. But the trouble with justifying your fonts is it doesn't have even spacing between the characters. So if I'm reading this, it's really difficult the words and letters can run together because the spacing is not consistent and even. So whenever possible, we want to avoid justifying our font to make it easier for folks to read. So I'm gonna go back and click the left align rather than justify. I know we're getting short on time, so we're briefly gonna talk about color and color contrast. And the most important thing with color is we never want color to be the only thing to convey meaning in a document. So, especially if you're thinking of like charts and pie graphs, where we have things broken out by color, and this section of the pie graph is blue, and this section's yellow. We never want just the colors to be the things conveying the meaning. We wanna use alternate things to convey meaning like symbols or text in addition to color it's okay if color conveys meaning, but it can't just be the color conveying meaning. And in my document here, you'll see, I have a place where I am using just color to convey meaning. So on my table here, where it says CFILC programs on the header it says program name and then in parentheses in red font, it says hubs in red. And then I have two programs that are in here in a red font Ability Tools and Disability Organizing Network, because those are hub programs. But because I only used color to convey meaning that's not going to be accessible for folks who maybe have color vision deficiency, more commonly known as colorblindness and for whom colors may appear really differently. So I wanna change this and make sure I'm not just using color. A really simple solution for me is I'm just gonna put the word hub in parentheses next to these. So now you'll see, I'm not just using color to convey the meaning. I also used words here. So I just indicated with words that it is a hub. The other thing we wanna keep in mind with color is color contrast. So we wanna make sure that color in the background and then the text or whatever is overlaying the front, have a high enough contrast. So folks who do have a color vision deficiency or colorblindness can read it easily. And I'm gonna bring back my accessibility checker here, because I remember I had a warning that had to do with color and let's see, it's gonna load again. While it's updating the results let's see. Okay, so under my warnings, it says hard to read text contrast, and it's telling me the places that my document that are hard to read, and it's all of this text here that I have just in red. So because of the font size that I'm using size 14 and this shade of red, it's saying there's not enough contrast between the background and the text to be easily readable. So you'll want to edit that, pick a different color combination that is more easy to understand. In this document, I actually don't need the color to convey meaning. So I'm gonna go ahead and change it. I'm gonna get rid of where it says hubs in red, and I'm gonna change my hub font here to just be automatic black, lets see and it should now on my accessibility checker, that error should be gone. Let's see if it loads. Okay, so now it was under warnings and now that is gone. So that is no longer here, which means our document is not having color issues at least, and the automatic checker. It's not always going to catch things with color. So you do wanna really manually go through your document and see if there is a good color contrast.

And there are a few tools you can use. So if we can share in the chat, Kathrine, the links, there's one, that's called the posse yellow group's color contrast analyzer, and it's a free download you can use, and you can has a little dropper where you can compare the color on one section of your document with the color on another section and see if those are accessible. And then there's another contrast checker from webim. So we'll share both of those with you, but there are good tools to see if the contrast in your document is good. And just a tip, there are some color combos you're going to want to avoid whenever possible. So for example, you never wanna have like a green text on a red background. Or green text on a black background, those things are gonna be universally hard to read. And a really quick, easy way to see if you think there might be color issues with your document is actually to print it in gray scale and anything that comes across that's hard to read when you print in gray scale, there's probably a color contrast issue going on. So we have a question here. What colors would be preferable for someone who is colorblind? I, myself am not colorblind, my spouse is though. So I have a bit of awareness, ideally, document text, you wanna stick with black whenever possible. That's just a standard option to pick the automatic black option. But just keep in mind when picking colors to not put things together, that would be difficult for someone with colorblindness to see. And there's lots of other good color tools online, you can pull up like color maps to give you an idea of colors that go well together. So that's it for colors. The last thing we're gonna look at now is converting our document to a PDF. So if you have Adobe Acrobat on your computer, there is an option to have an add into word. That'll be up on your ribbon here, and it'll say convert to PDF that's ideal. So if you have that option on your ribbon, go ahead and use that when making a PDF. But if not, that's okay, you can go, so I'm gonna go file and remember, this is after our documents completely accessible because we had a little bit of tech issues, I didn't get it completely fixed all of these errors, but we're not gonna convert to PDF until all of our errors are fixed in general. So just keep that in mind, you wanna make sure your document is good on the accessibility checker and also that you visually looked through for things that the accessibility checker doesn't catch. When the accessibility checker has all of the error solved, it'll say good to go. This document should be easy to read for people with disabilities or something like that.

So if you see good to go on the accessibility checker, that's a good start in thinking that your document is accessible. So we're gonna save to PDF. I'm gonna come here and hit file and save as from my options. And then I'm going to rather than have Word document, I'm going to select from my dropdown PDF and go ahead and hit save. And it is suggesting right here, so you'll see on 365, it says we have recommendations that will make the PDF easier for people with disabilities to read, investigate accessibility. So it wants me to fix all of those accessibility errors before I make a PDF. I don't have time today, so I'm not going to for this demonstration, I'm just going to hit save. I already have a file with that name, yes, I'll replace it okay. So here is my PDF document, and if you just have the free Adobe reader, there are a few simple ways you can tell if some of your accessibility features carried over to your PDF.

So on my PDF here, I'm gonna hover over one of my images and see if it comes up with all text. So I hovered over my Ability Tools logo, and it does say Ability Tools logo. Let's pick another one. Let's see, I hovered over Digital Access Project, it does say Digital Access Project logo. So that did carry over the alt text. And then another thing you can do to see if it is readable is you can actually have a Adobe read the document to you. And that way you'll be able to see if the document is reading out loud, what you would like it to. So you're gonna go on the view option on Adobe and hit read out loud and then select activate read out loud. And it'll start reading out the document to you, kind of how a screen reader would, and you can follow along and see if it did catch everything that you intended it to. So that's the basics, I think we covered everything we intended to. I did have one thing that I forgot to mention about alt text. So I'm gonna close out my PDF here and come back to my Word document. So I showed you how to find alt text in older versions of Word, remember it's under format picture. But in older version of Words, you might have two text fields, when you're adding alt text, there might be one that says title and then a second one that says description always enter your alt text in the description field, if you have two titles. And that, I'm sorry if there's two fields always pick the description field, and that is more likely to carry over as a tag to your PDF. So that is it. Do we have any last minute questions? Perfect, well thank you all for joining us today. Thank you to our ASL interpreters, our captioner, and our Spanish interpreters for providing access. And I hope you all stay safe and have a great rest of your day.