

Accessibility Help Guide: Making PowerPoint Presentations Accessible



What it does:

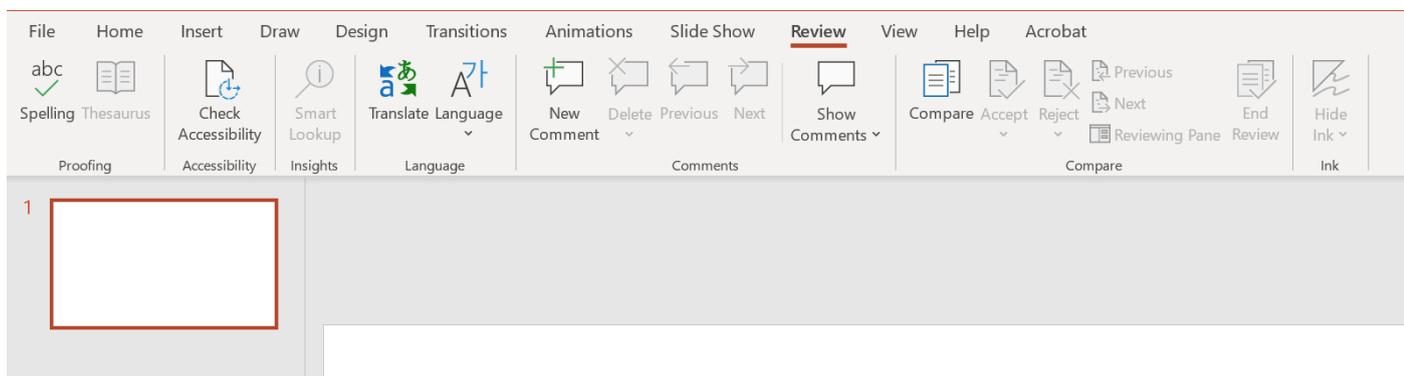
PowerPoint has a number of different features which can help to make your presentations more accessible for people with disabilities. There is also an Accessibility Checker tool available within the program.

What it helps with:

PowerPoint can help with lots of different accessibility issues. PowerPoint presentations tend to be highly visual, so creating them with accessibility in mind can help people with visibility problems to understand them more easily.

How to enable the Accessibility Checker

The Accessibility Checker is available in the Review tab in most Office programs. You will see a list of errors, warnings and tips on how to amend your document to make it accessible. You can apply a one-click fix by selecting an action, or you can select the arrow button for more information and options.



Include alternative text with all visuals

Alternative text helps people who can't see the screen to understand why the image is important. It provides a description of the image or any other visuals.

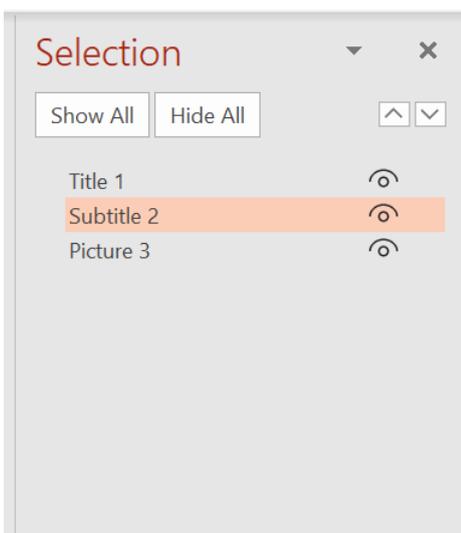
Avoid using text within an image as the only way to present information. If text is present within an image, provide alternative text which repeats the information, or repeat the information as text within the PowerPoint slide.

To add alternative text to an image, right click and select 'Edit Alt Text'. You can also select an image, and then select 'Alt Text' in the **Picture Format** tab at the top of the screen. Type one or two sentences to briefly describe the image.

Make sure slide contents can be read in the order that you intend:

When someone who can see reads a slide they usually read things in the order that they appear on the slide. However, a screen reader reads things in the order they were added to a slide, which may be very different to how they appear on screen. It is vital that you set the reading order of the slide contents.

Select **Arrange** in the **Drawing** section of the Home tab and then select **Selection Pane**. You can then either drag and drop items into the correct order or use the arrow keys to rearrange each element.



Use built-in slide designs when creating a new slide:

PowerPoint contains built-in slide designs that you can apply to any slide. These layouts automatically ensure that the reading order will work for everyone.

You can explore the range of different themes by clicking on **Themes** in the **Design** tab.

Add meaningful hyperlink text:

People who use screen readers sometimes scan a list of links. The links should present clear and accurate information about the destination.

Instead of saying 'click here' when adding a link, describe the web page or include the full title of it.

Ensure that colour is not the only means of conveying information:

People who are blind, have limited vision or are colour blind may miss out on the meaning conveyed by certain colours. If a colour is used to differentiate status, add a shape. If a link is colour-coded, add an underline to highlight that it is a hyperlink.

Ensure that the slide design you have chosen is accessible for all audiences. You can search for accessible slide designs by selecting **File, New** and then typing into the search bar 'accessible templates'.

Use sufficient contrast for text and background colours:

If your document has a high level of contrast between the text and the background, it will be accessible to a wider range of people.

Use the accessible and pre-designed slide designs to ensure that the contrast is sufficient. You can also use the accessibility checker to analyse the document and highlight where changes to text colour need to be applied.

Give every slide a unique title:

Slide titles are vital for people with low vision or people who are using a screen reader. Adding slide titles helps the reader to skim through the slides to find the information they need.

If you don't want to add a title onto the slide to be displayed, you can add the title but place it above the slide box so that it will still be read by a screen reader, but will not be visible on screen. To do this, reduce the zoom on your screen to around 50% and then drag the title box to the outside of the slide boundary.

Use a larger font size, a sans serif font and ensure sufficient white space:

People who have dyslexia often struggle with reading a lot of text and find that it 'swims around' on the page. They often see text merge or distort.

To help with this, use a sans serif font such as Ariel or Calibri and avoid using all capital letters or excessive underlining. It is also important to consider how much white space is on your slides, especially in between paragraphs, as large blocks of text can be overwhelming for some people.

A larger font size of 18pt or larger can increase accessibility within your presentations.

Again, you can use the accessibility checker to ensure that your text is appropriate for viewing by a range of different people.

Make videos accessible to visually or hearing-impaired users:

Ensure that your video content is more accessible by adding subtitles for hearing-impaired users. Subtitles typically contain a transcription or translation of what is being discussed in the video.

Closed captions can also be used to describe audio cues such as sound effects that occur off screen.

Audio description would be highly useful for visually impaired users. It describes the key visual elements of the video.

You can add these features into your videos using ReView.

More information:

[Information on how to use the Microsoft PowerPoint accessibility tools mentioned above on a range of different devices and operating systems.](#)

This document has been checked for accessibility on 12th August 2020.