Digital Accessibility Best Practices

Any time you create digital content, follow these general best practices in accessibility.

Write Clearly
- Use plain language, when possible.
- Include images in addition to text.
- Check spelling and readability.
- Be careful not to confuse the reader with abbreviations and jargon.

Use Proper Structure
- Organize content using your program’s built-in headings.
- Avoid skipping heading levels, such as jumping from a Heading 1 to a Heading 3.
- Craft a Heading 1 that captures the main idea of the content.

Add Meaningful Alternative Text
- Add alternative text (or alt text) to images by writing a concise description that conveys the content and purpose of the image.
- If the image is purely decorative and provides no extra meaning to your content, mark the image as decorative or leave the alt text empty.
- Do not include the words “image of” in your alt text, as this is redundant.

Use Color Wisely
- Do not use color by itself to convey information. Use color in conjunction with symbols or text.
- Use sufficient color contrast between the text and background. Verify with WebAIM’s Contrast Checker online.

Design Accessible Tables
- Provide headers for data tables and include text in each header.
- Use tables to present data in a simple structure, not for visual layout.
- Add a caption or description to summarize the table’s purpose.

Include Descriptive Links
- Avoid generic link text such as “Learn more” or “Here”. Make the purpose of the link clear in the link text itself.
- Include alt text for linked images that describes the purpose or function of the link.

Include Captions and Transcripts
- Include captions and a transcript for all videos and live audio.
- If using auto-captioning services, edit the captions to ensure accuracy.

Learn more at USC’s Digital Accessibility Website, sc.edu/accessibility.