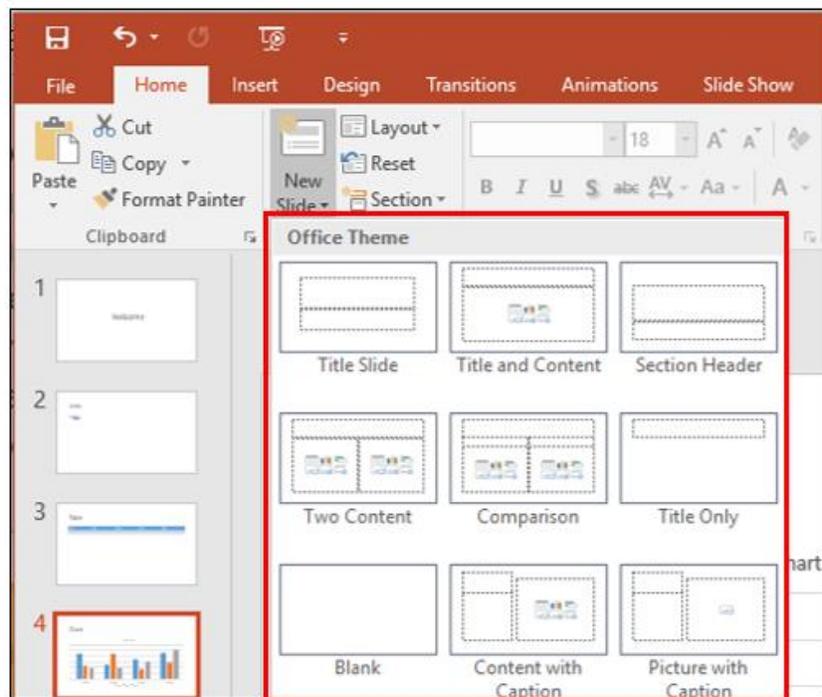


Making Your PowerPoint Presentations Accessible

Montclair State University is committed to making our digital content accessible to people with disabilities (required by Section 508). This document will discuss the best practices for making PowerPoint presentations accessible. Information is based off Microsoft PowerPoint versions 2013 and 2016.

Accessible Slide Design

PowerPoint has built-in slide layouts that contain placeholders for text and content. To ensure that your slides are accessible, use the built-in slide layouts when creating new slides. They are designed so that the reading order is the same for people who use assistive technology.



Things to Consider

Below are things to consider when creating your presentation:

Font size and amount of text on each slide

- Give every slide a unique title
- Have up to six lines of text with only about five or six words per line

- Use left justification
- Text must be large enough to be read by most low vision people in the front of the audience and by people with 'normal' vision at the back
- A recommended text size is no less than 32 point
- Use mixed upper and lower case letters rather than all capitals

Font type

- Use sans serif font types such as Helvetica, Arial and Verdana
- Avoid the use of italic font style
- Try not to use more than one font type per slide

Color and Brightness Contrast

- Background and foreground colors should offer a good color contrast for people with low vision
- There are two types of contrast—brightness and color
- The highest brightness contrast is between black and white. The highest color contrast is when the colors are complementary.
- A high color contrast without brightness contrast cannot be read by color blind people. In particular, they have difficulty with red-green perception.
- Use dark background colors and bright colors for the text to avoid glare
- A white font on a deep blue background is a very good combination

Animation

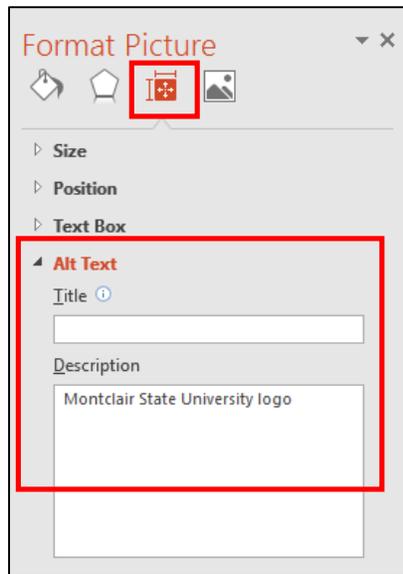
- Keep animation and effects to a minimum

Include Alternate Text to Visual Content

Content in PowerPoint includes pictures, clipart, SmartArt graphics, shapes, charts, videos, etc. In order for content to be accessible, alternate text must be added.

Adding Alternative Text to Content

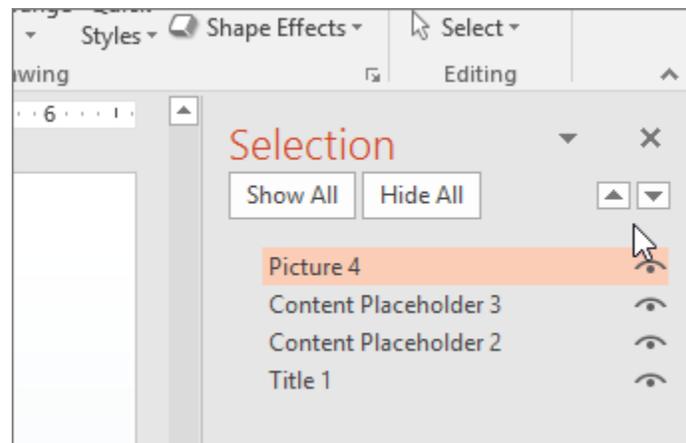
1. **Right-click** on the content and select **Format Picture** or **Format Shape** (depending on the type of content)
2. Under **Format Picture/Shape**, click on **Size & Properties**
3. Click on **Alt Text**
4. Enter the descriptive text about the content under **Description**. It is best to keep alt text under 150 characters.



Reading Order

When working with visual content on a slide, it is important to make sure the reading order makes sense. To change the reading order:

1. On the **Home** tab, in the **Drawing** group, click **Arrange**
2. Click on **Selection Pane**
3. In the Selection pane, do one of the following:
 - Drag and drop items to the new location
 - Select the item and then select the Up arrow button (Bring Forward) or Down arrow button (Send Backward)

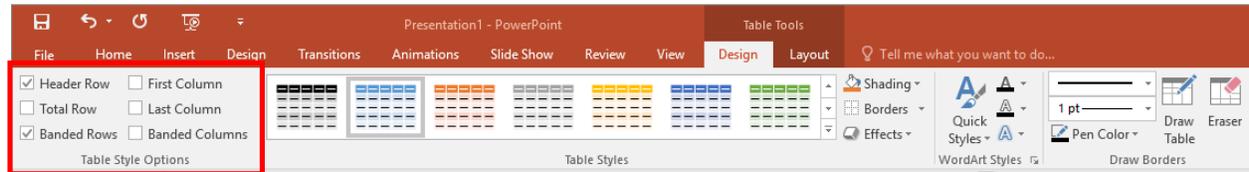


Tables

Use a simple table structure when creating tables in your presentations. Your table should not contain split cells, merged cells, nested tables or blank rows and columns. Also, specify column header information as screen readers use header information to identify rows and columns.

Specify Header Information

1. Click anywhere within the table
2. Click **Layout** under **Table Tools**
3. Select the **Header Row** checkbox



Making Videos/Audio Accessible

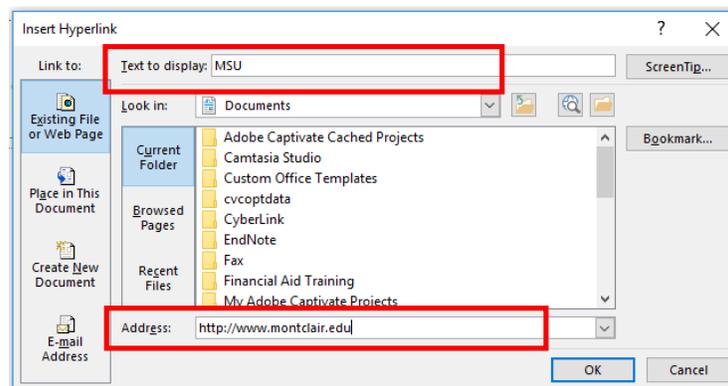
To ensure your PowerPoint presentations are accessible, ensure the following when adding videos to your presentation:

- Videos that include dialogue should also include closed captions or subtitles in a supported format for users that are deaf or hard of hearing. If captioning is not possible, a text transcript of the video should be provided.
- Videos include an audio track with video descriptions, if needed, for users that are blind or visually impaired.
- Embedded audio should have a transcript included.

Links

When links exist in your presentation, ensure the link text is meaningful. Use the PowerPoint link tool instead of copying and pasting the URL.

1. Click on the **Insert** tab and click **Hyperlink**
2. Type a descriptive title for the link under **Text to display**
3. **Paste** the URL under **Address**:

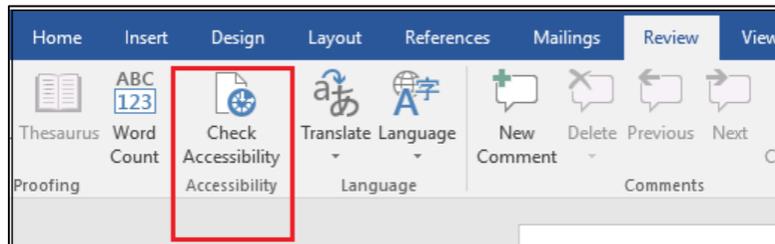


Accessibility Checker

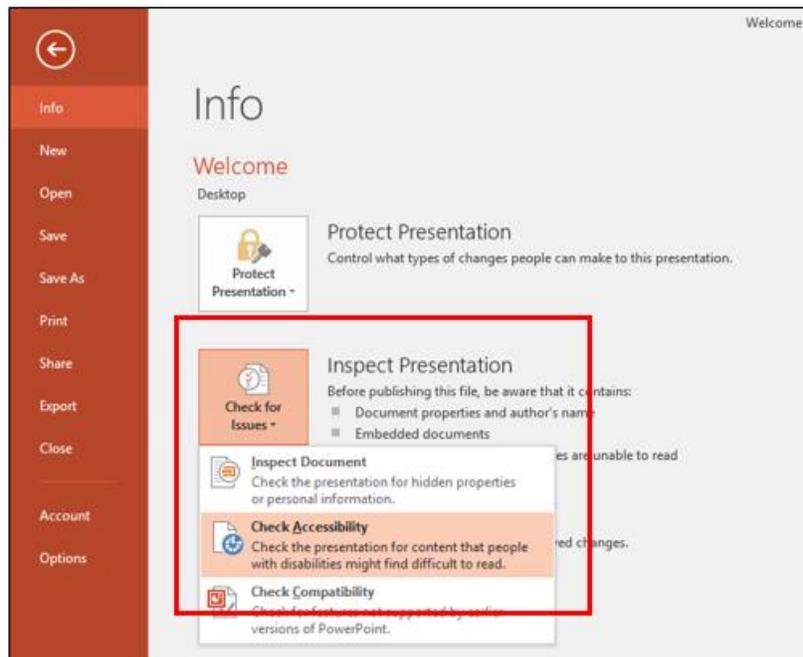
The Accessibility Checker tool in PowerPoint finds accessibility issues in your document. The tool generates a report of issues that could make your content difficult for people with disabilities to understand. **Accessibility Checker** also explains why you should fix these issues and how to fix them.

Start Accessibility Checker

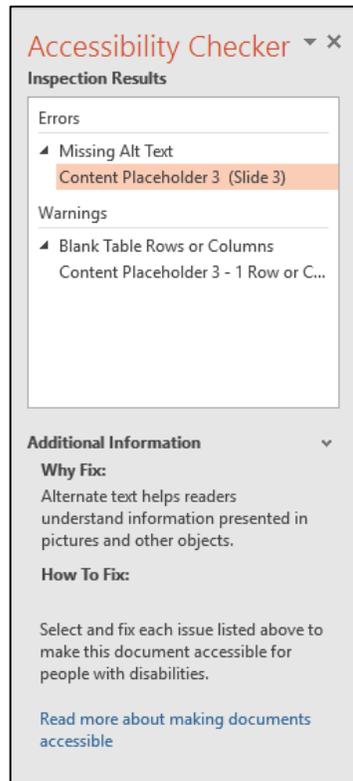
The **Check Accessibility** tool may be found on the **Review** tab depending on the version of PowerPoint you are using.



If your version does not have the option, click on the **File** menu, on the **Info** screen click **Check for Issues** and select **Check Accessibility**.



The **Accessibility Checker** pane will appear on the right. To see details of an **Error** or **Warning**, click on an issue under **Inspection Results**. Under **Additional Information**, you can get an explanation of why this issue should be fixed as well as how to fix it.

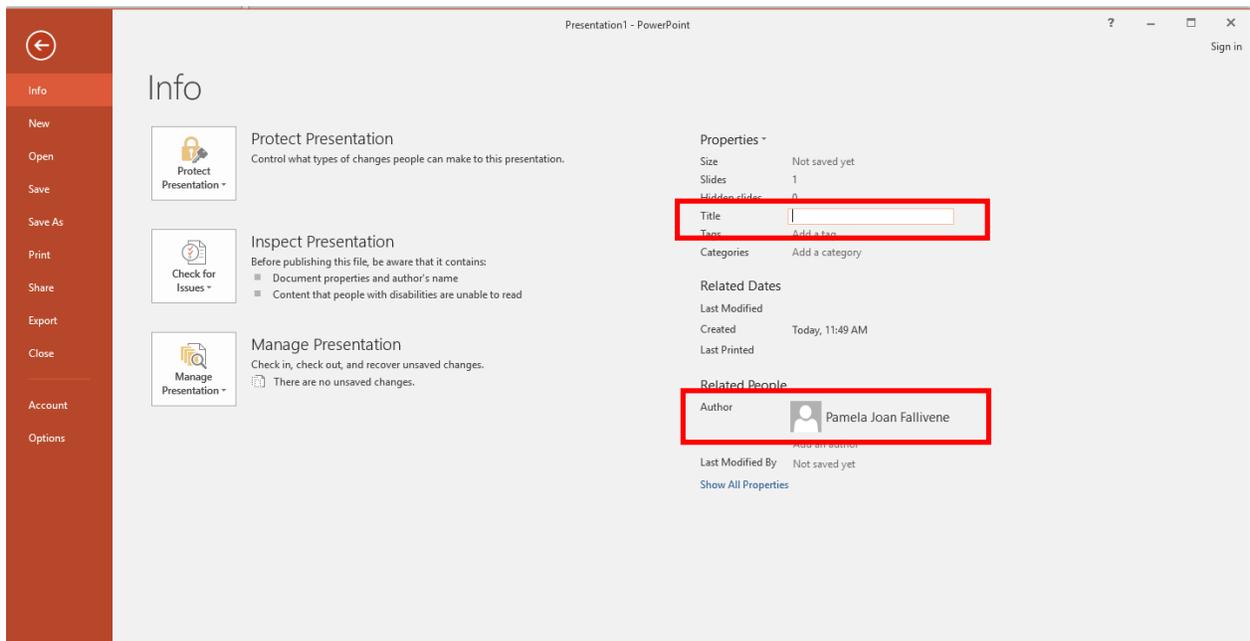


Document Meta Data

Adjusting the document's meta data can assist in making your presentation more accessible for those using assistive technology.

Giving the presentation a title:

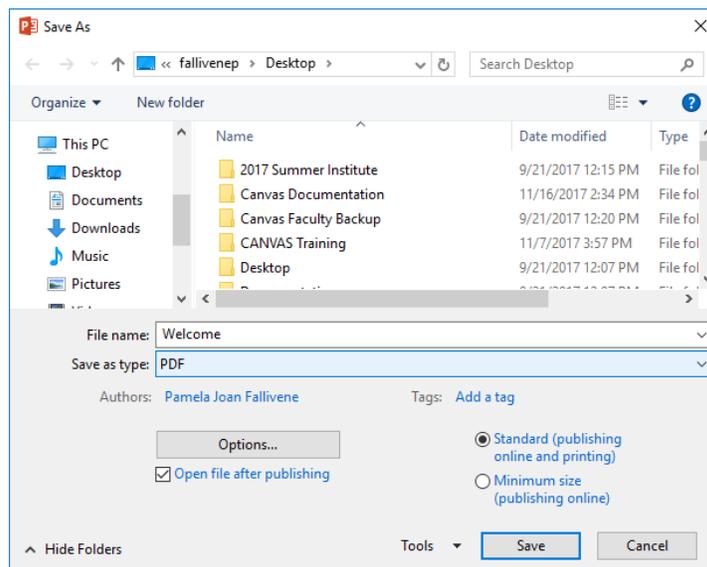
1. Click on **File**
2. Click **Info** and click in the **Title** field and enter a title
3. To edit the existing **Author**, right-click on the author's name



Saving as a PDF

If saving your PowerPoint as a PDF, making your file accessible in PowerPoint will reduce the amount of time it will take to make the PDF file accessible.

1. Click on **File** and select **Save As...**
2. Pick a file location
3. Select **PDF** as the **Save As Type...**

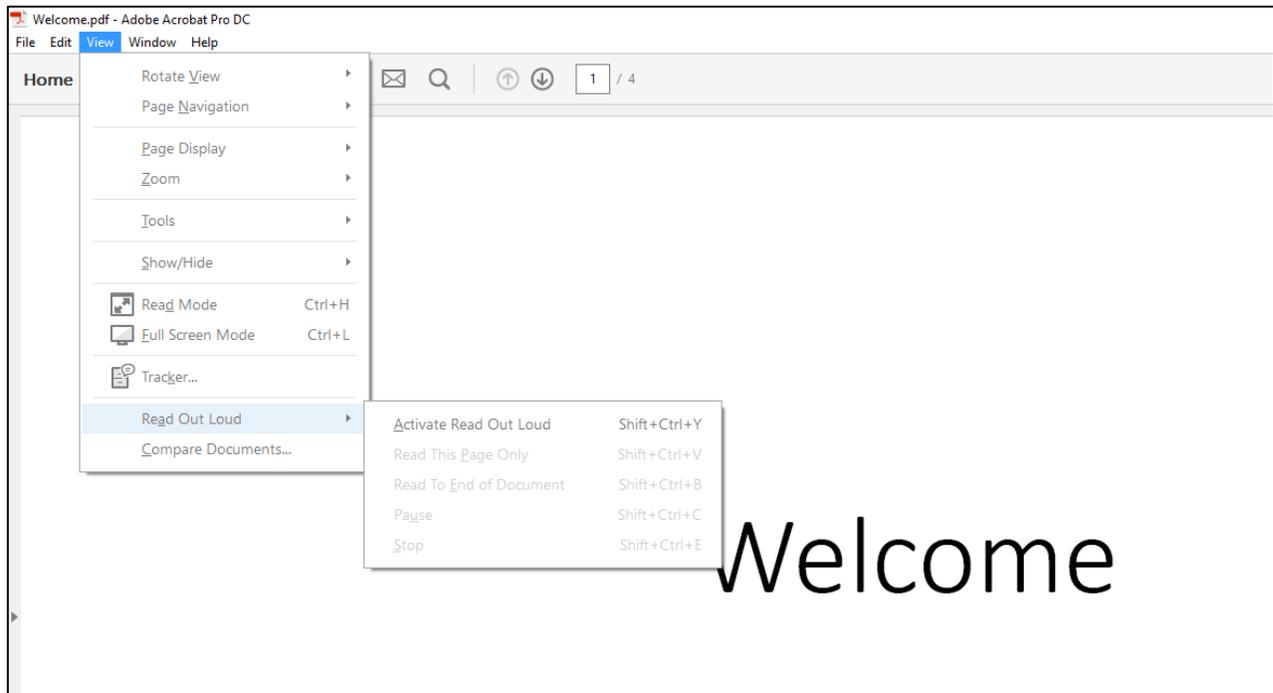


Note: It is important to save your document via the steps above. Creating a PDF via File / Print does not tag the file in Adobe and therefore it will not be accessible.

Testing Your Presentation

You can listen to your presentation to test if it is readable in the **Read Out Loud** feature in Adobe Acrobat Pro. **Read Out Loud** is a Text-to-Speech tool.

1. Save the file as a PDF and open in Adobe Acrobat Pro
2. Click on **View** and select **Read Out Loud / Activate Read Out Loud**
3. Click on **View** again and select **Read Out Loud** and click on either **Read this Page Only** or **Read to End of Document**



References:

[“How To Make Visual Presentations Accessible To Audience Members With Print Impairments.”](#) World Blind Union, 2012. Accessed March 24, 2015.

[“Make your PowerPoint presentation accessible.”](https://support.office.com) <https://support.office.com>