

# Accessible Doc Creation

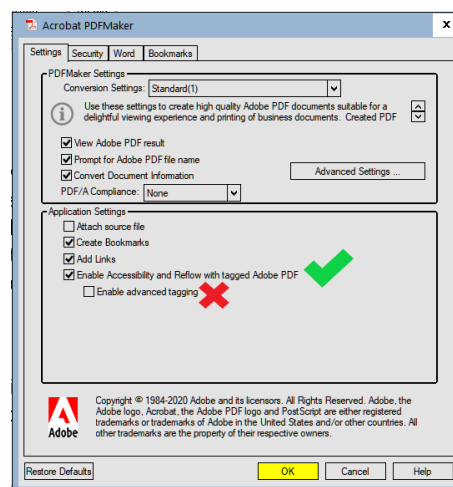
## Guide Overview

This is the first part of a multi-part guide that will guide you through the steps to create an accessible PDF from Microsoft Word. This part covers how to create the accessible Word document and then export it to PDF. All the guide parts and deliverables, listed below, can be downloaded from [nyc.gov/accessibilityguides](http://nyc.gov/accessibilityguides).

- Word to PDF-1 Accessible Doc Creation.pdf
- Word to PDF-2 Demo Doc (Deliverable).docx
- Word to PDF-3 Demo Doc--as Exported (Deliverable).pdf
- Word to PDF-4 Demo Doc PDF Clean Up Steps.pdf
- Word to PDF-5 Demo Doc--Cleaned Up (Deliverable).pdf

## Introduction

Microsoft Word has many features built into it to create accessible documents. If Acrobat Pro is installed, a plugin is added to Word to further help the Word-to-PDF conversion process. The newer the version of MS Word, the greater the number of accessibility features. To maximize the effectiveness of this conversion process, click on the Acrobat tab in the Word ribbon, and choose the Preferences. Within that dialog box, be sure that the checkbox "Enable Accessibility and Reflow with tagged Adobe PDF" at the bottom of the 'Application Settings' section is checked. Leave the Advanced Tagging box unchecked.



## Styles

The first place to begin is with styles. First, define the Normal style to reflect how you want the basic paragraph text to look. Keep in mind that accessibility mandates the following:

- Minimum font size of 12 pt (18 pt for large print)
- Line spacing of 1.15 (1.25 for large print)
- Sans-serif font (Ariel, Helvetica, Tahoma, Verdana, etc.)

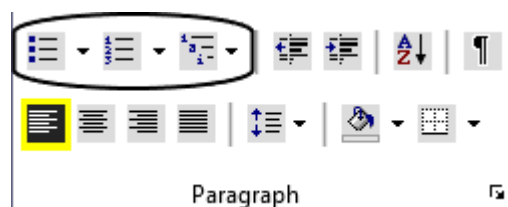
In addition to the above, you should also assign paragraph spacing to create the desired spacing between paragraphs and other elements. This can be done from the 'Modify Style' dialog by clicking on 'Format' at the bottom left and choosing 'Paragraphs'. Paragraph spacing *should not* be done with extra blank lines, as these will need to be dealt with in the PDF.

Once the Normal style has been defined, move on to the headings. Create the look you want for at least Headings 1 through 3. Additional headings can be defined as needed. As you define these heading styles, be sure each heading has a distinct, explicit visual look. When using color, there are two things to keep in mind. First, be sure there is at least a 4.5:1 color contrast between the text and background colors. Also, be sure that color *is not* the only thing that distinguishes a heading from Normal text.

For shorter documents, you would use the Heading 1 style for the title and Normal style for a subtitle (you can always adjust the look of the subtitle). If you are creating a long document with multiple sections, chapters, etc., you should use the Title and Subtitle styles on the title page, instead of the Heading 1.

## Lists

When creating lists, it is important to use Word's native list creation functionality. This will create lists in PDF with nearly correct tagging. Word does not use the proper tagging if you create the list by assigning a list style from the style pane.



## Hyperlinks

It is important that linked text be both descriptive and unique. Do not use link text like 'click here' or 'more info' because they are not descriptive and possibly not unique. If the document has actual email addresses or URLs, these should also be made into links.

## Headers and Footers

If headers and footers are used, be aware that they will be hidden from assistive technology upon conversion to PDF. Headers and footers should really only be used for items that repeat on each page. A header and footer was included in the example document so that their remediation could be demonstrated. Strictly speaking, they are not needed in this document since it is only one page.

# Graphics

All meaningful graphics should have short descriptive alternative text. This can be done through the Picture Format pane. The alt text should be placed in the Description field. In Office 365, Alternate Text is available by right-clicking on the image. All background or decorative images should have blank alt text.

# Document Properties

Finally, remember to set a document title. This can be done from the Info Tab of the File menu.

