Why Digital Inclusion for All Matters

One in six people—about **1.3 billion** individuals globally—live with some form of disability. Nearly everyone will experience a temporary or permanent disability in their lifetime. **Digital inclusion** is about ensuring that everyone can access, understand and contribute to digital content, because technology should empower, not exclude.

Microsoft 365 Digital Accessibility Content Tips

Test with Accessibility Checker

Always run **Microsoft's Accessibility Checker** before sharing your file. It automatically detects issues—like missing alt text or poor contrast—and provides fixes to ensure your content is accessible to everyone.

Add Meaningful Alt Text

Add **alt text** to all images, shapes, charts, and tables so screen readers can describe them. Leave alt text **blank for decorative images**. This helps people who are blind or have low vision understand the content clearly.

Use Closed Captions for Meetings

Use the Teams **built-in captioning feature** or upload caption files. Captions must be accurate, synchronized, and include all dialogue and important sounds. In Teams meetings, turn on **live captions**.

Create Descriptive Hyperlinks

Avoid vague **hyperlink** descriptions like "Click here" or "Learn more." Use clear, **descriptive phrases** that tell users where the link leads, such as "Read the Accessibility Guide."

Keep Excel Tables Simple

Use **Excel's built-in table tools**, with designated header cells. Avoid merged or split cells, and overly complex layouts. Ensure the table can be navigated with the Tab key and includes clear, concise alt text .

Format Lists Properly

Always use **auto-formatting for bulleted or numbered lists**—don't type bullets or numbers manually. This lets assistive technologies identify list structure and item order correctly.

Name and Tag Files Clearly

Use **descriptive filenames** and complete **document properties** (title, author) to make files easier to find and meet accessibility standards.

Use Color Responsibly

Use **high color contrast** and don't rely on color alone—add **text, underlines, or patterns** for clarity. Test in **grayscale** to confirm readability for users with low vision or who are colorblind.

Control Spacing and Alignment

Avoid using **Enter** or **Tab** for spacing. Use built-in **spacing, indent,** and **margin** tools so assistive technologies, mobile devices and **responsive displays** interpret the layout correctly.
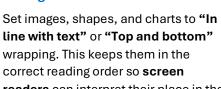
Manage Text Boxes and Charts

Set images, shapes, and charts to **"In line with text"** or **"Top and bottom"** wrapping. This keeps them in the correct reading order so **screen readers** can interpret their place in the content accurately.

Use Proper Headings

Use built-in **Heading Styles (H1, H2, H3)** in order, without skipping levels. This creates consistent navigation for everyone—including screen-reader users—while improving readability, visual hierarchy, and overall design.

Set Language for Files

Use clear, plain language and **set the document language** (File ➜ Options ➜ Language ➜ Set Proofing Language**)** so screen readers can apply the correct pronunciation and voice.

Avoid Watermarks and Low Contrast

Choose clean backgrounds. Skip watermarks that obscure text, reduce readability and create low contrast issues, especially for low-vision users.

Include Auto-Generated TOC

Use the **built-in Table of Contents** and **Bookmarks** to make long documents easier to navigate for all users, including those using screen readers.

Save as Accessible PDF

When saving to PDF, select **"Document structure tags for accessibility"** to preserve headings, lists, and reading order so screen readers can navigate the file correctly.

Resources:

Reference Materials

- UN Disability Inclusion Strategy
- Digital Accessibility on Knowledge Gateway

Guides

- Disability-Inclusive Communications Guidelines
- Web Accessibility Guidelines
- IAAP Registration Sign-Up Job Aid

- M365 Accessibility Features and Support
- Accessible Procurement Guidelines
- Create Slides with an Accessible Reading Order
- Creating Content for Everyone - Outlook, Teams and PowerPoint
- Creating Accessible PDFs - Video Playlist

- Gender-Inclusive Language Guideines

Trainings

- 2025 Mandatory Learning Programme on Disability Inclusion (OHR)
- IAAP Education Portal
- Web Accessibility Essentials

To learn more about digital inclusion and accessibility, and view resources to help make your digital content accessible for everyone, please visit: Digital Inclusion iSeek page.

United Nations
Office of Information and Communications Technology

Digital for All
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