

Eight Things You Can Do Tomorrow to Make Your eLearning More Accessible

While the idea of making your course content more accessible may seem overwhelming, there are some easy steps you can take to make your materials more inclusive and avoid creating barriers for some of your students. Below you'll find eight things you can do tomorrow to start removing access barriers from your courses.

1. Use Good Colour Contrast

Consider the colour contrast of your text, especially when the text size is small. You can use an [online accessibility checker such as WebAim.org](https://www.webaim.org) to ensure your chosen colours will work for everyone. WebAim's checker provides you with a "contrast ratio" ranging from 1:1 (e.g. white on white) to 21:1 (e.g., black on a white), with the ideal minimum ratio being at least 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text.

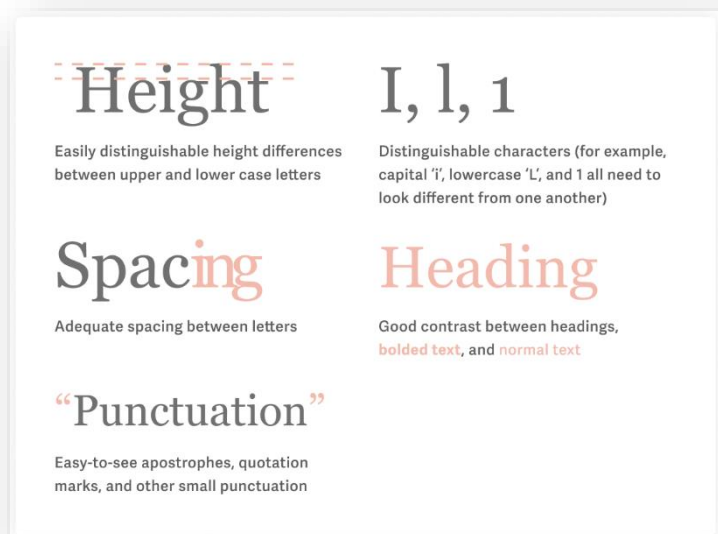


2. Use Readable Font

Accessible fonts are fonts designed to enhance visibility, readability, and comprehension for all individuals. While the primary focus of ensuring visual content accessibility centers on people with disabilities, the importance of accessible fonts extends to everyone. Beyond addressing specific conditions like low vision or dyslexia, certain fonts present challenges to readability for a broad audience.

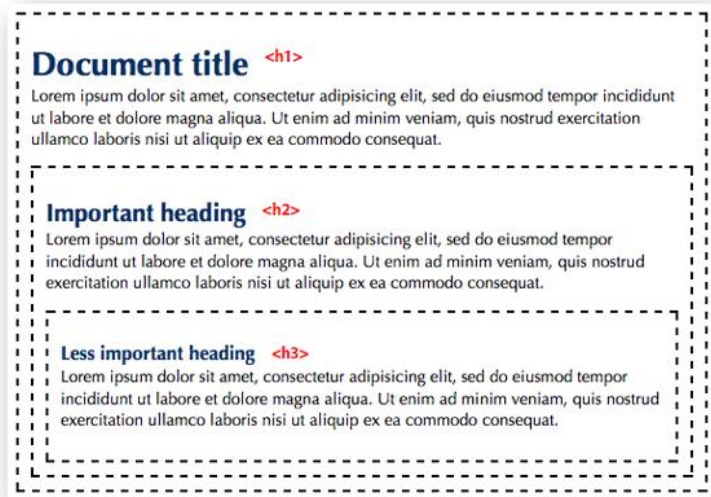
Sans serif fonts (e.g., Arial, Tahoma) are generally more accessible due to their clean, unadorned style.

However, some serif fonts (e.g., Times New Roman), while adorned, remain popular for their familiarity and readability enhancement for specific users. Other factors to consider in your font choice include:

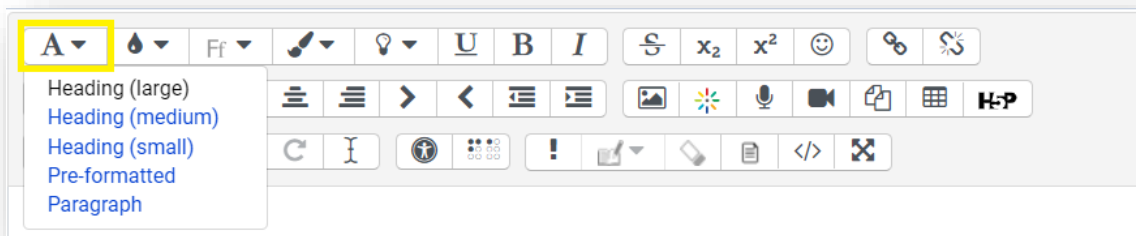


3. Use Heading Hierarchy

Someone who does not have full use of their vision can't see larger or bold font that we sometimes use to indicate titles, headings, or subheadings. When a document or online course has been formatted using appropriate heading hierarchy, those who use a screen reader or other assistive technology can easily navigate through it. At the same time, however, using heading hierarchy is critical to ensure everyone — not only those with disabilities — can easily understand the information you are trying to convey.



You can [add headings to Word documents and PowerPoint presentations](#) using built-in styles. In your online courses, you can use the Moodle Text Editor to add headings wherever you can add and format text, such as in assignments, tests, and discussions. See below:



4. Avoid Using Colour to Convey Meaning

Avoid using font variations such as **bold**, *italics*, underlining, ALL CAPITAL LETTERS, **highlighting** and **coloured text** to convey meaning since many users, including users who are colourblind or assistive technology users, will not get equivalent information from the font appearance.

If you want students to pay special attention to a particular sentence in a paragraph, use spacing to make that sentence a separate paragraph and set it apart with a word like “important,” even adding an exclamation point at the end for additional emphasis. The red will still provide a strong visual cue, but all students, including those students who are colourblind or assistive technology users, will receive equivalent information. See example:

Important: Class will meet online on March 4 only!

5. Use Alt Text for Images

Images usually communicate important visual information. If someone can't see an image for any reason, alt text (or alternative text) gives them a way to access that information. Alt text is a description of an image that allows those who cannot see the image to access the same visual information as those who can. This includes readers who have disabilities like low vision or blindness, though anyone might be in a situation where they can't see images. If someone's internet connection is slow or their computer settings disable images from loading, alt text can help them access image information if it's written correctly.

6. Use Closed Captions

Add closed captions (CC) or subtitles to all videos. Include transcripts, if possible, as they give access to your multimedia content in an alternative format that might work better than video for some of your users. Kaltura Capture has the built-in capability [for adding closed captions to your videos in My Media](#).

7. Use Descriptive Link Text

Use unique, descriptive titles to name hyperlinks. These titles should make sense in and out of context. When naming hyperlinks:

- Avoid generic calls to action like 'Click here'
- Avoid using the URL as the link text: the screen readers will read this out loud letter by letter and make it unintelligible. Instead, describe where the link points to.

Accessible: "Read a fascinating [article about the resident microbes in the human body](#)."

Inaccessible: "To read a fascinating article about the resident microbes in the human body, [click here](#)."

To further assist screen readers and assistive technology users with hyperlinks to files, identify the file type in the hyperlink. For example:

Accessible: [Fall 2023 Newsletter \(PDF\)](#)

Inaccessible: [Fall 2023 Newsletter](#)

Finally, reserve underlined text for hyperlinks. Using underlined text for non-link purposes may cause confusion.

8. Organise and Space Content

Organize textual content in manageable "chunks." Add an extra space between paragraphs for optimal on-screen reading. This will be particularly helpful for students accessing the course through mobile devices.

When appropriate, use lists, either ordered (e.g. numbered list) or unordered (e.g. bulleted list), to clearly structure the presentation of your textual content. Use the two list tools in Moodle's text editor to properly format your lists. Manually created lists lack the coding assistive technologies use and take more time to create.