

# Making Accessible Documents: Microsoft Word

## Accessible Documents

Making documents accessible means that everyone can read, work with, and enjoy your content regardless of a visual or neurological limitations. Adding accessibility checking into your content editing flow is crucial to providing an inclusive and equitable experience across your organization.

Accessible documents are created in a way that supports multiple ways of interacting with information:

- Without vision or with limited vision
- Without perception of color
- Without hearing or with limited hearing
- With difficulty focusing or reading

### Checklist for writing inclusive content:

- Use short paragraphs and sentences.
  - Stick to one idea per paragraph.
- Use clear, concise, short headings.
- Avoid jargon.
- Be direct and get to the point.
- Most important information should be at the top of the page.
- List resources in order of importance.
- Use I, you, we, and us.
- Use plain language and active verbs.
- Avoid repetition.
- Use descriptive hyperlinks (not "click here".)

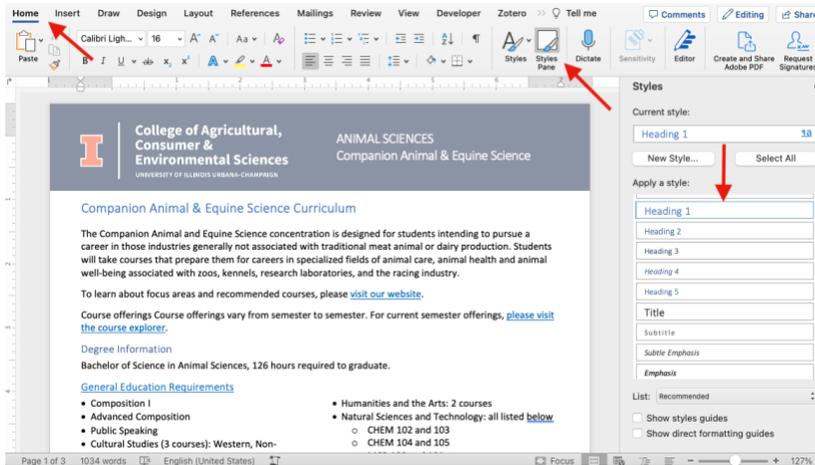
### Checklist for inclusive design:

- Split your text into chunks and use headings, lists, tables, and hard breaks.
  - Headings help people navigate a document quickly.
  - Bulleted lists are used for lists with no important order.
  - Numbered lists used are for specifically ordered lists.
  - Tables are used for tabular data.
  - Hard breaks signify a new section of content.
- Make good use of "white space." This is the empty space that surrounds paragraphs, images, and other elements.
- Use images and graphics to break up text.
  - Assign contextual alternative text.
  - an easy-to-read chart or graph can also do a better job of explaining a complex topic than text alone.
- Use high contrast color combinations.
- Use 12-point font minimum for body copy.

# Setting Up an Accessible Document in Word

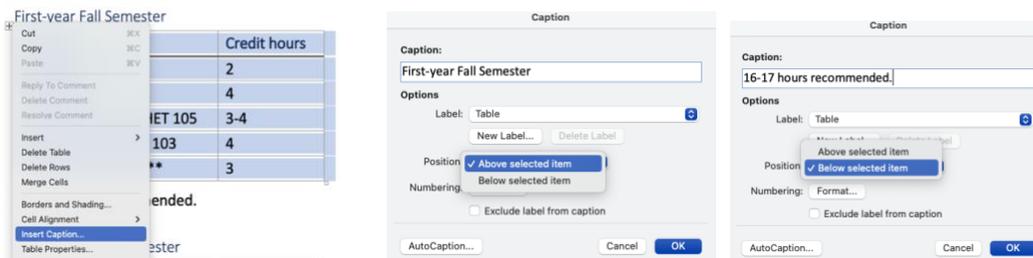
## Styles Panel

- Use normal, heading, list, hyperlink, and table pre-defined styles:
  - On Home ribbon, select "Styles Pane."

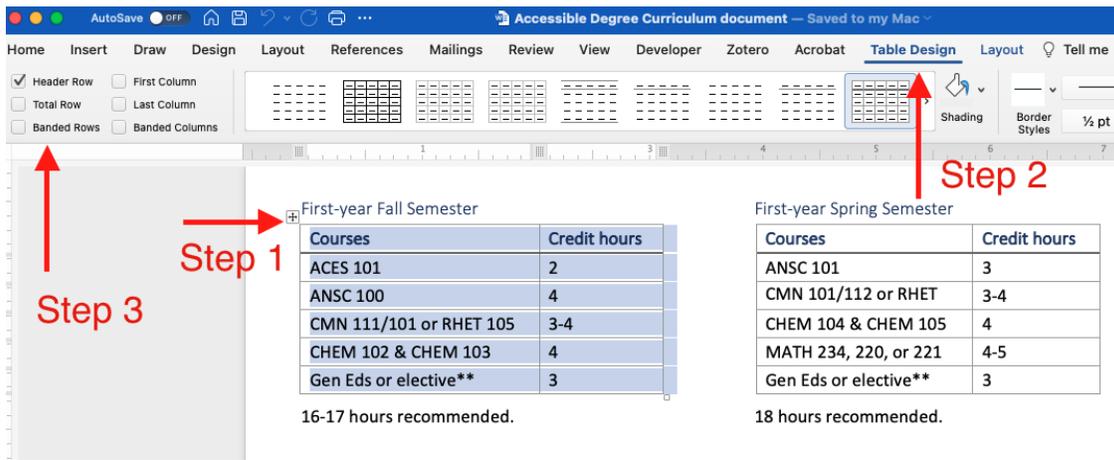


- Follow semantic order with Headings:
  - Use headings in sequential order from Heading 1 to Heading 6.
  - Use nested headings in sequential order.
- Use "Normal" for regular paragraph text.
- Use lists:
  - Bulleted lists are used when order is not important.
  - Numbered lists are used to indicate a sequence.
- Use tables for tabular data
  - Use one table at a time, do not group tables.
  - Include table titles and captions
    - Right click your table > select "Insert Caption"
    - For a table title, select "Above selected item"
    - For table caption, select "Below selected item"

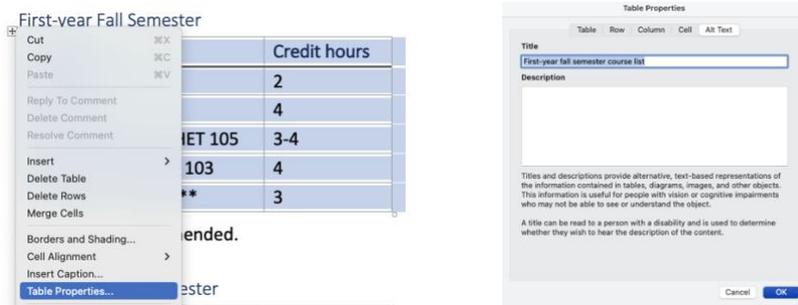
### Sample 8-Semester Plan



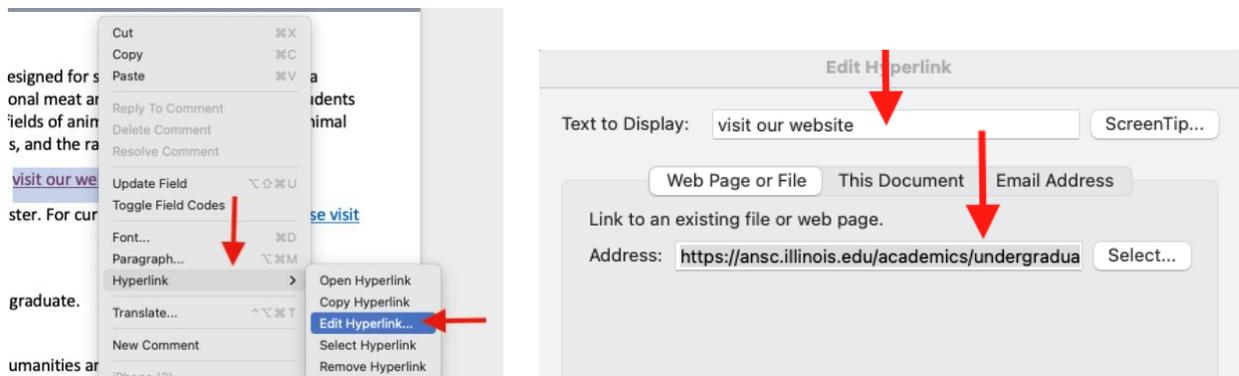
- Make sure you are using table headings for each column:
  - Highlight your table > select "Table Designs" > check "Header Row" box > uncheck all other boxes



- Add table alt text using Table properties:
  - Right click on your table > select "Table Properties" flyout menu> select and enter Alt text



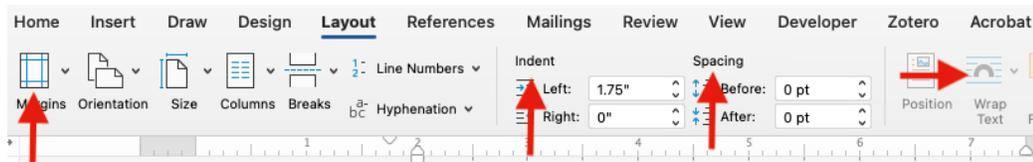
- Use hyperlinks:
  - Use meaningful link text (not 'click here'):
    - Example: [Visit our website](#) for more information.
  - Right click on the text you want to link and select "Edit or Add Hyperlink."
    - In "Text to Display", type a meaningful action that indicates where clicking on the hyperlink will take the user.
    - In "Address" enter the full url or filename you are linking to.



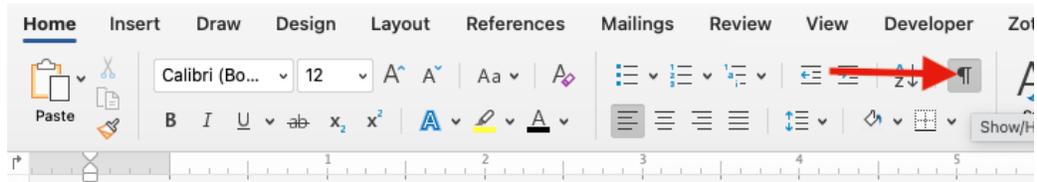
### Remove Extra Line Breaks

Every paragraph should have a single hard return after it. Remove extraneous hard breaks throughout your document:

- Use the options in the Layout ribbon to add white space instead of extra returns.
  - Spacing, Indent, Margin, Text Wrap



- Select the “Show/Hide” icon from the Home ribbon to reveal hidden characters.



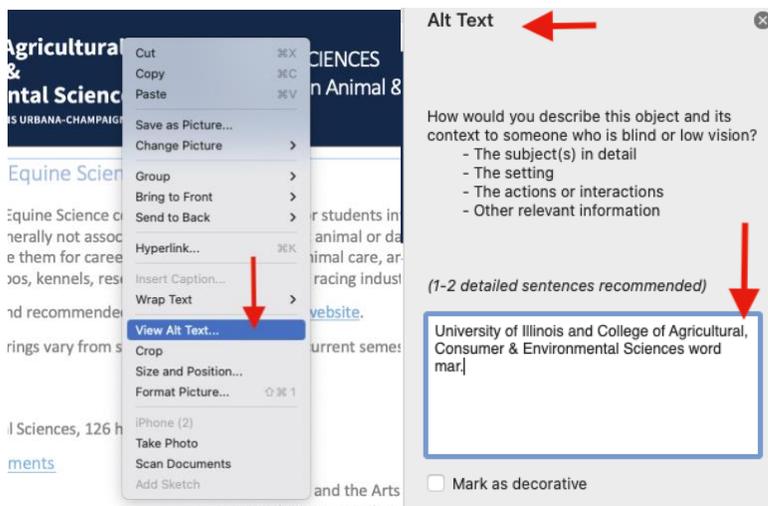
- Delete extra returns

The Companion Animal and Equine Science concentration is designed for students intending to pursue a career in those industries generally not associated with traditional meat animal or dairy production. Students will take courses that prepare them for careers in specialized fields of animal care, animal health and animal well-being associated with zoos, kennels, research laboratories, and the racing industry.



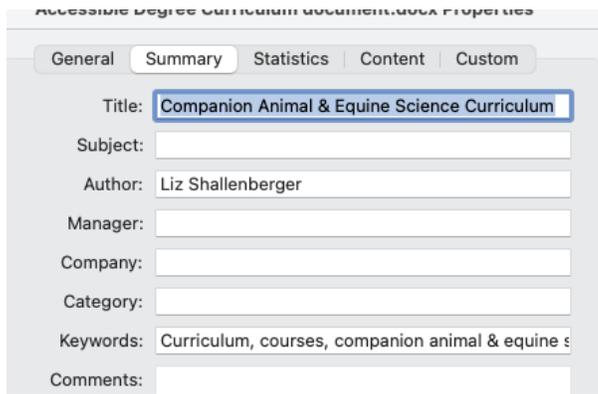
### Add Alternate Text to Images and Graphics

- Right click on an image and select "View alt text" from the flyout.
  - Add alternative text or mark the image as decorative in the Alt Text panel.
  - Decorative images convey no contextual meaning.



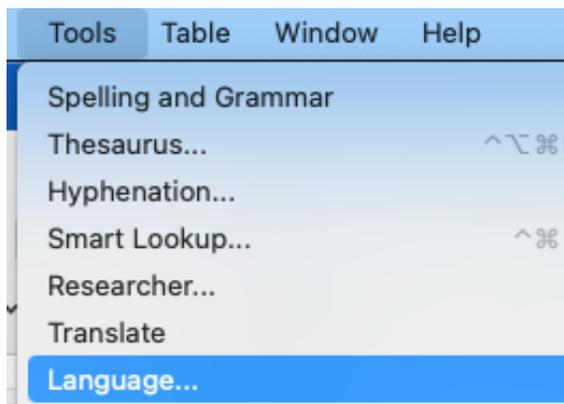
### Identify Document Title and Keywords

- File > Properties > Summary



Identify Document Language

- Tools > Language



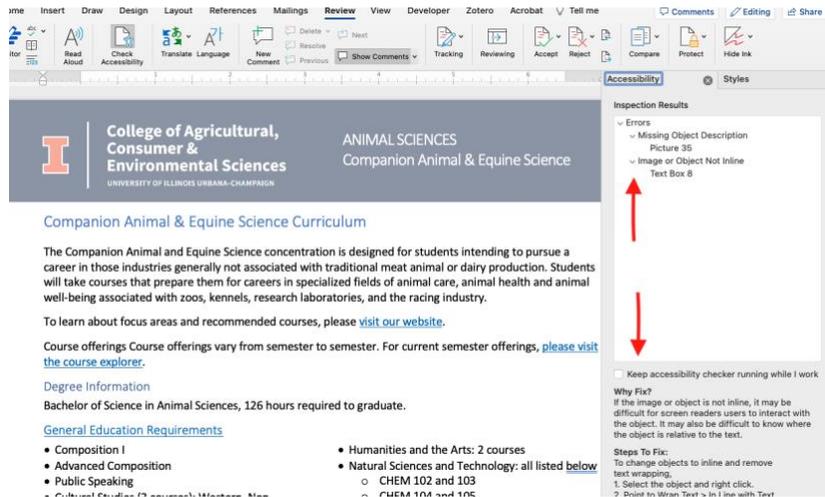
Run the Microsoft Office Accessibility Checker

Microsoft Office includes a built-in accessibility checker tool that will examine your document. The checker will alert you things like to missing alt text for images, problems with reading order, potential color contrast issues, and more.

To run the Accessibility Checker, go to the Review tab of the Ribbon and select “Check Accessibility.” You can read more about using the tool in the [Microsoft Office 365 support pages](#).



The checker will open up the Accessibility panel and display detected errors and make suggestions to address them.



## Save Document with Accessibility Settings

- File > “Save As”
- Choose “PDF” as “File Format”
  - Check the button next to "Best for electronic distribution and accessibility."
  - Click “Export”

File Format:

Best for electronic distribution and accessibility  
 (uses Microsoft online service)

Best for printing

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