Quick Start to Create Accessible M365 Documents

Accessible M365 Documents

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# Purpose

The Government of Canada (GC) is working to increase accessibility within the Microsoft

365 (M365) environment. Shared Services Canada’s Digital Communications and

Collaboration User Experience team is helping departments understand and maximize

the use of accessibility features within the M365 suite in compliance with the [Accessible](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/)

[Canada Act](https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/A-0.6/).

This document is the first of a series of quick start guides. Our goal is to provide a short

collection of GC and third-party resources.

This guide will help users with M365 skills create accessible documents when using the

Microsoft desktop applications (Word, PowerPoint, Excel, Visio, Outlook, OneNote and

PDF). If you are new to M365, check out the [M365 Training Materials](https://wiki.gccollab.ca/M365/Home).

# Checklist for creating documents

## 1 Make it accessible

An accessible document is fully usable by persons with and without disabilities. Making

your documents accessible allows users to navigate them in different ways. Refer to [How](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/)

[to create accessible documents in Office 365](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/) for format-specific instructions.

1. Start with an accessible template. For example,

* Use the [SSC templates](https://163gc.sharepoint.com/sites/msteams_06f457/Shared%20Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?viewid=bc1d62cb%2D0420%2D4ae3%2D949b%2D67cc35c98cc8&id=%2Fsites%2Fmsteams%5F06f457%2FShared%20Documents%2FGeneral%2FTemplates%20%2D%20Gabarits) from the **SSC Image Library**.
* Use a template from the **Office of Public Service Accessibility's Accessibility Hub**:
  + [Accessible MS Word template](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/gcwiki/images/6/6c/Accessible_Word_primer-template_eng.dotx). The instructions are in the template.
  + [Accessible PowerPoint template](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/gcwiki/images/2/2d/Accessible_presentation_template_eng.potx). Please refer to [Accessible presentation template instructions](https://163gc.sharepoint.com/sites/DCCSTeam/Shared%20Documents/DCC%20Accessibility%20-%20Accessibilité%20du%20CCN/Checklists/Accessible%20presentation%20template%20instructions) to learn how to use the template.

1. Run [Check Accessibility](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/improve-accessibility-with-the-accessibility-checker-a16f6de0-2f39-4a2b-8bd8-5ad801426c7f) and follow the **Digital Accessibility Toolkit** instructions to correct the errors and warnings

* [Word documents](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/accessible-word-documents-365)
* [PowerPoint documents](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/accessible-powerpoint-documents-365)
  + The **Reading Order** pane (under Review, Check Accessibility) is a fast way to check Reading Order, Alt Text, and to set Mark as decorative. [Make slides easier to read by using the Reading Order pane (microsoft.com)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-slides-easier-to-read-by-using-the-reading-order-pane-863b5c1c-4f19-45ec-96e6-93a6457f5e1c)
* [Excel documents](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/accessible-excel-documents-365)
* [Visio diagrams](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/accessible-visio-diagrams-365)
* [PDF documents](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/guides/office365/accessible-pdf-documents-365)
  + The **Reading Order** pane (under Review, Check Accessibility) is a fast way to check Reading Order, Alt Text, and to set Mark as decorative. [Make slides easier to read by using the Reading Order pane (microsoft.com)](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-slides-easier-to-read-by-using-the-reading-order-pane-863b5c1c-4f19-45ec-96e6-93a6457f5e1c)

1. Follow the [Microsoft Document Compliance Checklist](https://bati-itao.github.io/resources/ms-doc-compliance-checklist-en.html) developed by **Employment and Social Development Canada**.

## 2 Use plain language

Plain language is writing the reader finds easy to read, understand, and use. It avoids jargon and wordy, complex language.

1. Follow the GC plain language guidelines when writing your document:

* [Plain Language in Canada.ca Content Style Guide](https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/services/government-communications/canada-content-style-guide.html#toc6)
* [Plain Language - The Canadian Style - TERMIUM Plus® - Translation Bureau](https://www.btb.termiumplus.gc.ca/tcdnstyl-chap?lang=eng&lettr=chapsect13&info0=13)

1. Use the **Spelling & Grammar** tool in the **Review** menu.

## 3 Make documents available in both official languages

By default, documents should be available in both official languages, English and French.

1. Draft the document in the language of your choice.
2. Ensure the final document is available in both official languages. Refer to [Resources of the Language Portal of Canada](https://www.noslangues-ourlanguages.gc.ca/en/index) for services and information.

# Microsoft's accessibility resources

Microsoft Office Support also offers step-by-step instructions and best practices to make documents accessible. Check out the information sheets available for each Microsoft product:

* [Accessibility video training](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/accessibility-video-training-71572a1d-5656-4e01-8fce-53e35c3caaf4?ui=en-us&rs=en-us&ad=us)
* [Make your Word documents accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-word-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-d9bf3683-87ac-47ea-b91a-78dcacb3c66d)
* [Make your PowerPoint presentations accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6f7772b2-2f33-4bd2-8ca7-dae3b2b3ef25)
* [Make your Excel documents accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-excel-documents-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-6cc05fc5-1314-48b5-8eb3-683e49b3e593)
* [Make your Visio diagram accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-visio-diagram-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-e2c847a9-f010-4fef-af65-16e252829d44)
* [Make your Outlook email accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-outlook-email-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-71ce71f4-7b15-4b7a-a2e3-cf91721bbacb)
* [Make your OneNote notebooks accessible to people with disabilities](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-onenote-notebooks-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-3c82a6cf-17aa-4e8b-bb2b-7ce210855616)
* [Create accessible PDFs](https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/topic/create-accessible-pdfs-064625e0-56ea-4e16-ad71-3aa33bb4b7ed)

# Additional resources

* [Accessibility guides and tools | My SSC (ssc-spc.gc.ca)](https://myssc-monspc.ssc-spc.gc.ca/en/worktools-processes/accessibility/tools-resources) (only available on the SSC network)
* Accessibility, Accommodation and Adaptive Technology (AAACT), [How can AAACT help you? (Canada.ca)](https://www.canada.ca/en/shared-services/corporate/aaact-program/how-aaact-help-you.html)
* Office of Public Service Accessibility's Accessibility Hub, [Communications and Technology / Communications et technologie (GCpedia)](http://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/Communications_and_Technology/_Communications_et_technologie)
* Digital Accessibility Toolkit - [Digital Accessibility Toolkit / Sharing space (Canada.ca)](https://a11y.canada.ca/en/)
* [GC Accessibility Training and Events (GCpedia)](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/GC_Accessibility_Training_and_Events_/_Formation_et_%C3%A9v%C3%A9nements_du_GC_sur_l'accessibilit%C3%A9?setlang=en&uselang=en)
* Shared Services Canada's [M365 Accessibility Training (GCwiki)](https://wiki.gccollab.ca/M365/Home/Accessibility)
* ESDC’s [AccessAbility Playbook: Play 5 - Make communications accessible for everyone (ceacs-cesca.github.io)](https://ceacs-cesca.github.io/playbook/play5/)
* [Myths of accessible typography (wcag2.com)](https://wcag2.com/accessible-typography-and-style/) (only available in English)
* [Colour Contrast Analyser (Vision Australia)](https://www.visionaustralia.org/services/digital-access/resources/colour-contrast-analyser) (only available in English)
* [Making communications accessible in the Government of Canada (Canada.ca)](https://www.canada.ca/en/treasury-board-secretariat/topics/government-communications/making-communications-accessible.html)
* [Accessible communications (GCintranet)](https://intranet.canada.ca/wg-tg/gc-cg/accessible-communications-accessibles/index-eng.asp)

# Contact

For further information or to provide feedback, please:

* send an email to Digital Communication and Collaboration Accessibility, [dcc.accessibility-accessibilite.cnn@ssc-spc.gc.ca](mailto:dcc.accessibility-accessibilite.cnn@ssc-spc.gc.ca?subject=Quick%20Start%20to%20Create%20Accessible%20M365%20Documents) or
* Or visit Shared Services Canada's [Accessible-M365 (GCpedia)](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/Accessible-M365).

For notifications of [GC Accessibility Training and Events](https://www.gcpedia.gc.ca/wiki/GC_Accessibility_Training_and_Events_/_Formation_et_%C3%A9v%C3%A9nements_du_GC_sur_l'accessibilit%C3%A9?setlang=en&uselang=en), please contact:

* AAACT-Events / AATIA-Événements (SSC/SPC), [aaact-events-aatia-evenements@ssc-spc.gc.ca](mailto:aaact-events-aatia-evenements@ssc-spc.gc.ca?subject=GC%20Accessibility%20Training%20and%20Events)