

Providing Accessible Materials

What is this and why is this important?

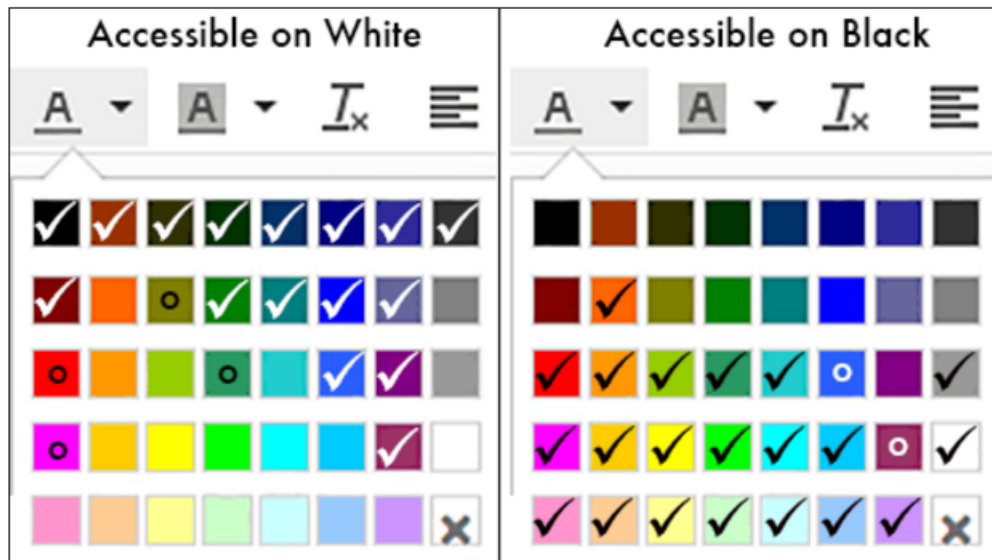
We need to make and provide materials, including instructional materials, so that information is accessible for those with disabilities. Common scenarios include those involving various vision impairments and hearing impairments. This document provides an overview of key considerations and techniques, supported by links to additional resources and examples. When reviewing this document, note that assistance with accessibility is prominently incorporated in Office 365. Learn how to [get Office 365 for free](#).

Output	Use of color	Hyperlinks	Alt text for images and other graphics	Text setup for reading aloud	Tables	Captions/Script
.docx, .pdf	Color	Hyperlinks	Alt text	Text setup	Tables	Not applicable
.pptx or similar	Color	Hyperlinks	Alt text	Text setup	Tables	Captions/Script if there is audio (e.g., narration, embedded video)
.mp4 or other video file	Color	Usually not applicable	Use Alt text if visually conveyed information is not addressed in narration	Not applicable	Not applicable	Captions/Script
.jpg or other image file	Color	Not applicable	Alt text	Text setup	Not applicable	Not applicable
audio file	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Captions/Script
webpage	Color	Hyperlinks	Alt text	Text setup	Tables	Captions/Script if there is audio (e.g., narration, embedded video)
implementation in MyCourses	Color	Hyperlinks	Alt text	Text setup	Tables	Captions/Script if there is audio (e.g., narration, embedded video)

Use of Color

- Avoid using color-coding as the *only* way of conveying information.
- Create sufficient contrast between text color and background color. **This is insufficient color contrast.** See more examples of contrast below, including contingency on text size.
- Check color contrast with [Office's Check Accessibility feature](#) or an [online color contrast checker](#).
- Using solid color backgrounds (rather than gradient backgrounds) will help provide sufficient contrast.

✓ = accessible colors ○ = colors that are accessible only for large text (Header 2, or 24 px and larger)



Hyperlinks

- [Format hyperlinks](#) so the underlined hyperlink text accurately describes the content if read on its own. Why? Users with visual impairments can request screen readers to read hyperlinks only.
- Example: Does the blue underlined text on "[click here](#)" accurately describe what kind of content will open? A better hyperlink text for would be "[Everett Library's newspaper databases](#)."

Alt text for images and other graphics

- Alt text is an invisible description of a graphic that is read aloud to those with visual impairments using a screen reader. If you do not provide alt text, the screen reader will simply say "Image."
- [Give alt text](#) when using these types of graphics to convey information: images, SmartArt, charts, shapes, tables (e.g., right-click and use "Edit Alt Text"). Briefly describe the image (up to about 125 characters is recommended). Mark an image as decorative if it does not convey information. It is preferable to avoid placing text within an image (as you might see in evites and web banners); if you must place text within an image, it is imperative to also place the text in the alt-text of the image.
- More information is available on [providing alt text for graphics in PowerPoint](#).
- Text in SmartArt can be read aloud by Adobe when a .docx or .pptx file is saved as a .pdf file. Be aware that text in SmartArt may **not** be read in other situations.
- Check for issues with [Office's Check Accessibility feature](#). Click the down-arrow to implement solutions.
- For how to provide alt-text within MyCourses, please see [Online Faculty Resources inside MyCourses](#).

Text setup for reading aloud

- [Use Heading styles](#), which convey the hierarchical structure of content to those with visual impairments. Start with the largest Heading (e.g., Heading 1 in Office, or Heading (large) in MyCourses). Use an [accessible document template](#) on CAFÉ's website to save time.
- Arrange content to support a screen reader's reading order (left to right, top to bottom). Avoid text boxes. In PowerPoint, animations and text boxes may alter this order, making content confusing.
- Content in header and footer sections of a document may or may not be read out aloud, depending on the screen reader used. To be safe, also include any critical information outside the header and footer.
- "Save as Adobe PDF"; do not "Print to PDF."
- Avoid providing documents as scanned .pdfs unless you perform OCR (optical character recognition).
- Check for issues with [Office's Check Accessibility feature](#). Click the down-arrow to implement solutions.

Tables

- Use tables for presenting data, not for formatting a document.
- [Set up the table](#) by designating a header row and setting it to be repeated on subsequent pages. Designate a header (first or last) column, if appropriate to the table.
- Avoid blank, split, and merged cells. Don't nest one table inside another table.
- Consider a screen reader's reading order (left to right, top to bottom) when first structuring a table. With this in mind, would the table on p. 1 be as useful if rows and columns had been swapped?
- Provide alt text for the table (right-click → Table Properties). Enter a title and longer description.
- Check for issues with [Office's Check Accessibility feature](#). Click the down-arrow to implement solutions.

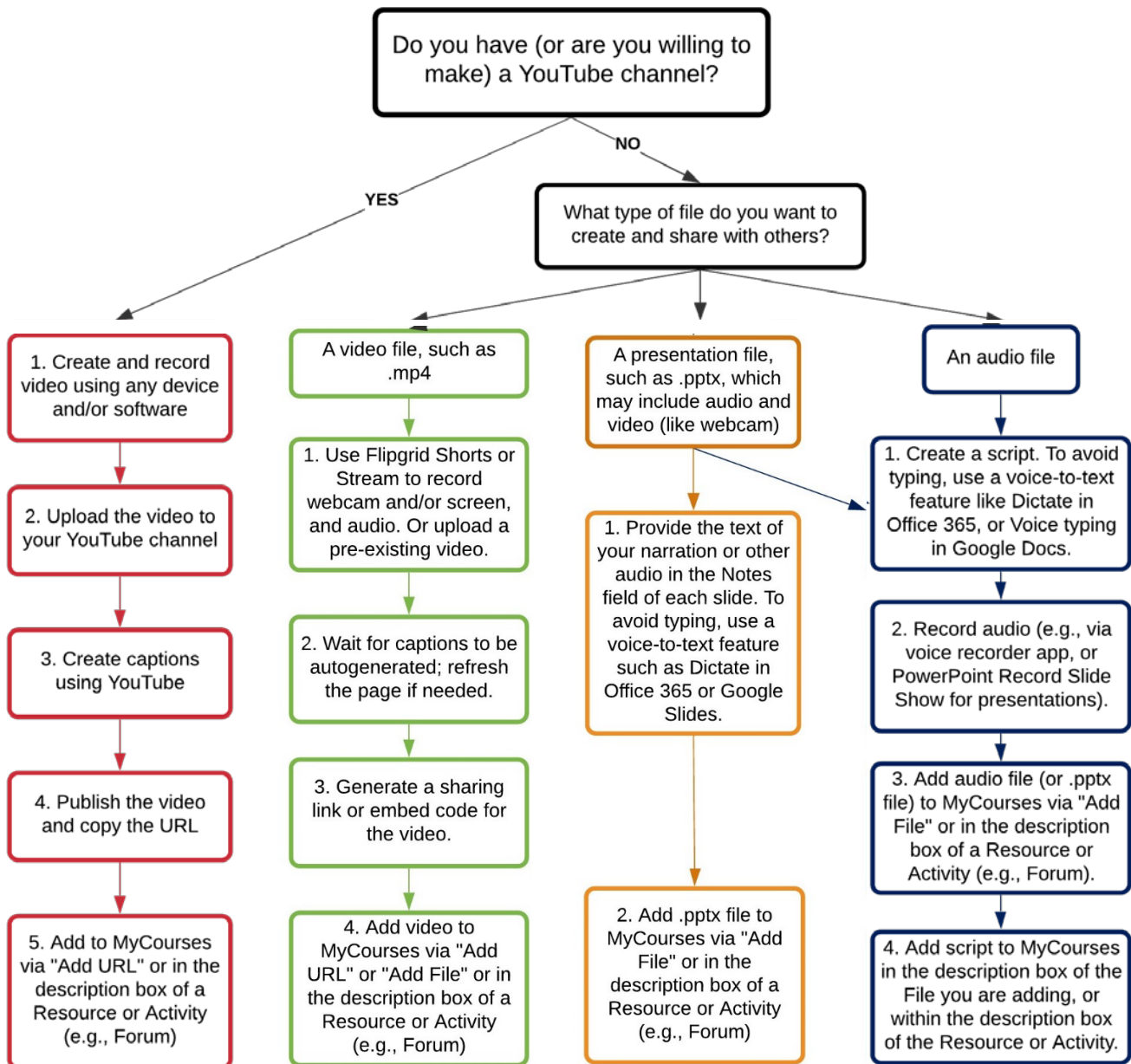
Captions/Script

- When creating materials, provide captions and/or a transcript for videos. Provide a transcript for audio recordings. Closed captions can be closed/opened by the viewer. Open captions are always visible.
- Closed, editable captions for videos can be autogenerated by AI through several free tools. These include [Stream](#), [Flipgrid Shorts](#), and YouTube. Paid [Screencast-o-matic](#) also has this feature.
- During live presentations, you can include captions autogenerated by AI through [PowerPoint's real-time captioning](#) in Office 365. You can also use this to [provide captioning during RingCentral Meetings](#). If you record the RingCentral Meetings session, the captions will be open and uneditable.
- If you embedded in a PowerPoint file another video that **contains** captions, viewers may benefit from help in how to [play back embedded video in PowerPoint with captions](#).
- If a pre-existing video does **not** have captions, creating a transcript (similar to the rightmost workflow) may be most feasible. If using a voice-to-text feature, like that in Office 365, see if [your computer can record its own output](#) or if you can play the video on one device into the speaker of the device on which you are using voice-to-text. Other approaches include uploading the video as a .mp4 file to [Stream](#), [Flipgrid Shorts](#), or YouTube.

Other considerations

- Sans serif font and off-white or dark backgrounds [improve presentations for those with dyslexia](#).
- Be familiar with how to save your main file in other formats (.pdf, .rtf, etc.) to meet users' needs.

- When making interactive content (e.g., webpage, elearning), avoid effects that require a mouse or trackpad (hover effects, pop-ups, drag-and-drop activities, flip boxes, dropdown boxes). Use another way to render your concept so those who use only a keyboard can access the same information.
- Learn more about how people [use screen readers to access web content](#).
- For more detailed guidance pertaining to MyCourses, see [Online Faculty Resources inside MyCourses](#).



This document provides an overview of common considerations and situations and is not an exhaustive list. To learn more about how to provide accessible materials in a specific situation, please contact:

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