Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley

Guide to Accessible Documents

AODA

Table of Contents

A.O.D.A. is the Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, passed in 2005.

This Act was meant to create accessibility for all Ontarians with disabilities by January 1, 2025.

Legislation:
There are three Standards under the A.O.D.A.:

- Customer Service Standards
- Integrated Accessibility Standards (I.A.S)
- Built Environment Standard

The I.A.S. was made law as **Ontario Regulation 191/11**. This regulation contains accessibility requirements related to Information and Communications, Employment, Transportation and the Design of Public Spaces.

Action:
A requirement of the Information and Communications section of the I.A.S. Regulation is to provide information in an accessible format, upon request, to help people with disabilities access information.

The Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley will communicate with all customers in a way that is accessible to everyone. The information will be provided in a timely manner and at a cost that is no more than the regular price. In addition to in-person communication, this includes written documents, reports, brochures, forms and extends to multi-media tools, such as the Township's website.

While the Township encourages all documents to be accessible, occasionally inaccessible content will be posted to the Township website, but will be limited to the following scenarios:

- Maps and GIS data

- Engineering drawings or complex technical data

- Legacy applications or data that cannot be updated or cannot be updated with reasonable effort and expense

- Presentation content where making it accessible would take away from its purpose

- Content provided by external contributors such as vendors or community partners

- Older documents created before January 1, 2021

More than Compliance

Accessibility is not just a matter of legal compliance.

The A.O.D.A. requires the Township to provide accessible formats for people with disabilities, upon request. With little effort, we are in position to do even better.

Implementing Accessibility Standards will facilitate inclusiveness and enhance access to municipal goods, services and facilities in a way that respects the dignity and independence of people with disabilities.

This Guide to Accessible Documents aims to produce website ready, user-friendly documents for all customers and staff, including people with disabilities.

Readability should be the first step in making administrative documents accessible to everyone.

Avoid complicated, decorative or handwriting fonts.

Choose "Sans-Serif" fonts such as Arial. These fonts have easily recognizable upper-case, lower-case and numerical characters. Narrow versions of these fonts should be avoided.

Arial	This font is accessible
Garmond	This font is not accessible
Monotype Corisva	*This font is not accessible*
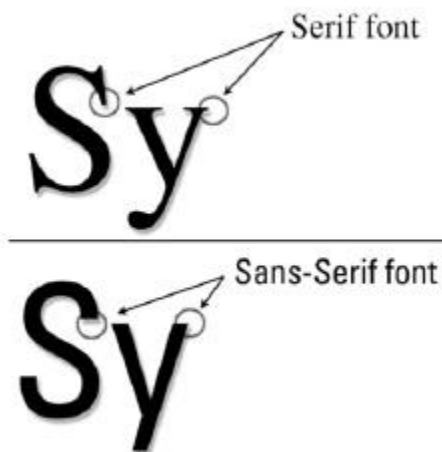
The Township's standard font family is **Arial.**

Use appropriate Font Size

Make text large, preferably between 12 and 18 points.

The size of the font is a fundamental factor in legibility. Font size

12 is the standard for main body text. A minimum font of size

16 is the standard for presentation documents. A font size of

10 point and smaller is not accessible and should be avoided where possible.

Font Size 10	Size 10 or less is not accessible
Font Size 12	Township standard for main body text
Font Size 14	Township standard for main headings
Font Size 16	Township standard for large print

Note: Font size varies between font families. This guide is based

on the Arial font. If using sans-serif fonts other than Arial, use

Arial as the base for determining appropriate font size.

For example:

Arial, font size 12	Standard for main body text
Calibri, font size 14	Calibri 14 is similar in size to Arial 12
Verdana, font size 11	Verdana 11 is similar in size to Arial 12

Use of Bold, Italics and Underling for emphasis

- # Use bold for emphasis

- # Avoid *italics*

- # Use <u>underlining</u> for links only

Bold fonts are used for emphasis to make certain words and phrases stand out from surrounding text. However, use restraint. Whole paragraphs of text set in bold type are hard to read. Use bold formatting for titles, headlines or key words and phrases.

Italic fonts are more difficult to read than regular fonts, mainly due to the output of angled characters on a digital screen with poor resolution. There may be exceptions to using italics, such as when required to meet standard formatting (for example, citation in legal documents or Latin versions of tree species). Keep in mind, if the font is very large, italics may be more legible. As a general rule, avoid italics where possible.

Underlining interferes with lower case letters. Do not use underlining as tool to emphasize words and phrases. Only use underlining when describing links such as email addresses and web pages. Use the international standard of a blue font. Links referenced in documents should always be formatted as live links.

Note: Links should describe content, so avoid using "click here". When formatting a word or phrase as a link, provide the full URL address in brackets after the live link. For example, this document is called the Township's Guide to Accessible Documents. (www.ektwp.ca/GuideToAccessibleDocuments)

Avoid sentences in all UPPER CASE letters

A sentence written with a combination of upper and lower case letters is easier to read.

The ascenders and descenders found in lower-case letters provide word shape, causing mental reading clues to speed up the process of reading. Sentences written in all upper case do not benefit from these clues and are more difficult to read.

CAPITALS DON'T GIVE CLUES.

Different shapes give clues.

It may make sense to use all upper case in some instances, such as short headings, titles with a maximum of two words or when text is used as a graphic image and not intended to be read. In these examples, there is no benefit to having the mental reading clues. However, upper case can give the impression of shouting at the reader and therefore should be avoided where possible.

If the intent is to convey a shout, an exclamation point may be better. Screen readers generally do not read text differently if it is in all upper case letters, so listeners will not know that the author is shouting. Screen readers do change the voice inflection with exclamation points.

Also, upper case acronyms should have periods to allow screen readers to properly interpret the text as an acronym and not a word. For example, A.O.D.A. is more accessible than AODA.

Use appropriate Text & Image Alignment

- # Align text to the left margin
- # Avoid floating images

Text aligned to the left margin makes it easier to find the start of the next line and keeps spacing between the words even.

Centre text alignment is not accessible.

For example, a person with vision loss who has their computer display set up to zoom in at five times the normal display, will have difficulty finding words that are located in the middle of the document. They would rely on left alignment to find the starting point of a line.

Left and right text alignment (justified) is not accessible. It causes uneven spaces between words. It is more difficult to read because the human eye can't move smoothly along a sentence and has to search and jump to the start of each word.

Image Alignment

When images are used with text, align the image to the left of the page. Use the "In Line with Text" text wrapping option and the text with be placed above and below the image. Alternatively, align the image to the right of the page with the "Square" text wrapping options and keep the text aligned left. Avoid floating images.
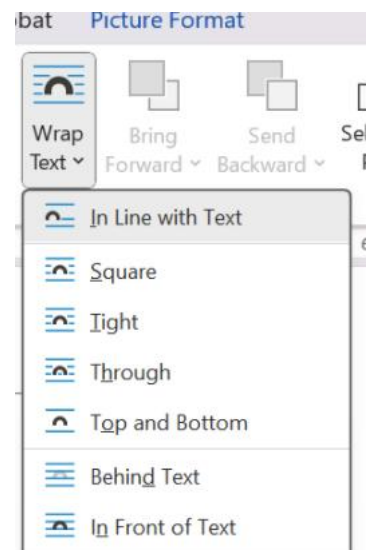
Use smart Headings, Paragraph and Spacing

# Use Styles to create a reference structure and help users navigate the document.

Use the Microsoft Office "Styles" tool to quickly apply formatting choices to headings and paragraphs. Benefits are:

• Screen readers can identify and navigate sections.

• A table of contents with links to document sections can be automatically generated, as formatted in this document.

• Formatting is consistent throughout the document.

• Bookmarks are created when converting to a PDF.

Don't Use hard returns to create spacing.

If you hit "enter" twice, a screen reader will interpret the second "enter" as a new paragraph with no text. The screen reader will read the word "blank" out loud for every blank line.

Instead, use paragraph spacing tools to adjust the spacing before (above) or after (below) a line.
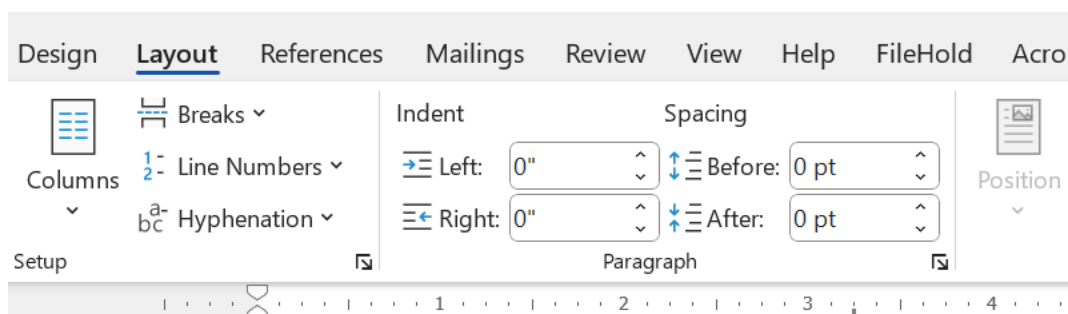
Use High Contrast

Use a minimum 4.5:1 colour contrast ratio between the background and the foreground.

What does a 4.5:1 colour contrast ratio mean?

The better the contrast between the background and the foreground, the more legible the document will be. Black text on a white background provides the best contrast, but is not the only option.

Test Number	Contrast Ratio
Test 1	21:1
Test 2	21:1
Test 3	19.56:1
Test 4	15.27:1
Test 5	14.73:1
Test 6	10.37:1

Test Number	Contrast Ratio
Test 7	7:1
Test 8	4:1 (fail)
Test 9	4:1 (fail)
Test 10	3.04:1 (fail)
Test 11	2.18:1 (fail)
Test 12	1.43:1 (fail)

A good way to check contrast is to print in black and white and check if the document is legible. Online contrast testing tools are also available, which allow you to test colour combinations to determine the exact contrast ratio. See Snook Contrast Checker. (www.snook.ca/technical/colour_contrast/colour.html)

Note: fonts larger than size 18 and fonts formatted to be bold have lesser requirements than a 4.5:1 contrast ratio. Adequate contrast is required for only objects that are intended to be read.

Use Alt Tags for Graphics

# Add a short description to all graphics inserted into a document.

An "Alt tag", or alternative text, is a brief description of any graphic inserted into a document. It can be read by a screen reader to allow someone with a vision disability to understand what the graphic is.

It is also displayed in place of the image when software does not support the display of images or when the user has chosen not to view images. As an added bonus, it can be read by search engines.

For example, the image to the right of this text has the following alt tag:

Right click on the image and select "Size" to add an Alt Tag to the pine tree symbol from the "It's a Natural" logo (applies to Microsoft Word 2007).

When using images, charts, maps or graphs, ensure the quality and/or resolution is high. Grainny blurry or pixelated images are difficult to read and understand. Try to find the original source or the highest quality version.
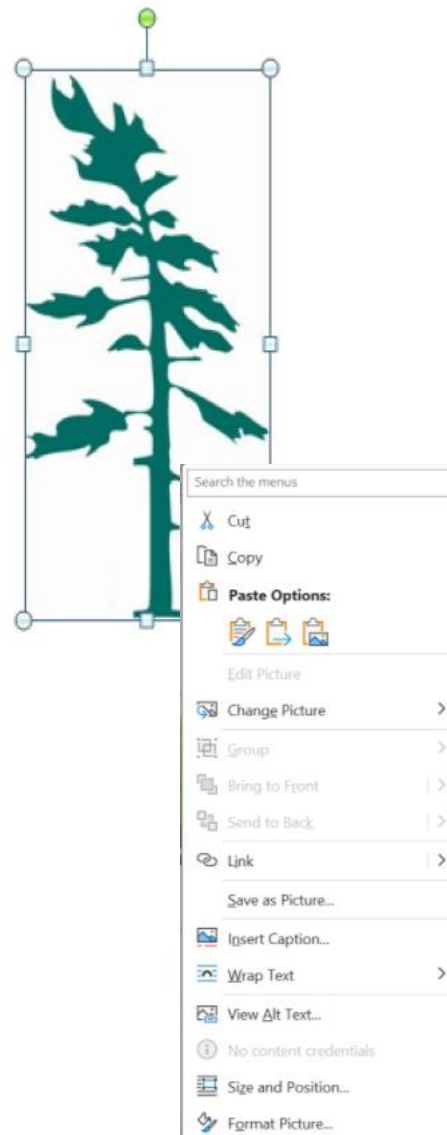
Township Logo

The Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley logo can be used by all municipal departments primarily for municipal documents and assets including but not limited to correspondence, reports, stationary, tender documents, policy documents, advertisements, souvenirs, gifts, forms, clothing and vehicles.

In a Word document the Township logo should be placed at the top left or centre or bottom right of the document. Where possible, use a template where the logo is already in the correct position.

The Township logo must not be altered, cropped or reconfigured in any way. To ensure the best reproduction quality, always use the original artwork files, as either a vector file or high-resolution raster graphics. Vector graphics are preferred.

When using a single colour, 100% bland or 100% white are the only acceptable uses of the logo.

If the logo must be on another solid colour or photo, first priority would be the full colour version. Use a solid black or white if more visually appealing.

Unacceptable uses of the Township of Elizabethtown-Kitley Logo;

- Do not change any colour of any part of the logo
- Do not outline the logo
- Do not stretch or distort the logo

Add a short description for images, tables, chats, chapes, embedded objects and audio/video files. Alt (Alternative) text is a brief description of any object inserted into a document. A person using a screen reading will read alt text to understand non-text information. The alt text will display a place of an image when software does not support the display of images. As a bonus, search engines read alt text.

To ad alt text for an image in MSD Word, right click on the image and select Edit Alt Text. The amount of Alt Text needed depends on the image being used. If using Alt Text on a complex image, provide as much description as possible

When adding alt text:

- Be brief, use a maximum of 125 characters
- Describe the important content or purpose of the object
- Do not start with "image of", "table of" or "link to". A screen reader will read out the type of content the object is

Tell the screen reader to skip the object if it has no meaning. Use alt text of two double quotes with no spaces between ("").

Aim for a Clear, Organized, Readable document

Clear print that is organized will be readable to a broader audience.

Use the following guidelines to make documents more accessible:

Clarity:

• Do not provide too much information.

• Use bullet point summaries, rather than dense text.

Organization:

• Do not place text over cluttered backgrounds.

• Set adequate margins (minimum 0.5 inches).

• Use larger line spacing.

• Leave larger spaces between sections than between paragraphs.

Readability:

• Printed Material should have a matte finish, not glossy.

Use auto-generated Table of Contents tools to make document navigation easy.

You should never need to create a manual table of contents. Software, such as Microsoft Word can do this for you, but you must use 'Styles' to format your headings.

How to Insert a Table of Contents (TOC) in **Microsoft® Word for Microsoft 365**:

1. Place cursor where you want the TOC to appear.
2. Click 'References' tab and find the 'Table of Contents' group.
3. Click 'Table of Contents'. A menu displays.
4. Click 'Insert Table of Contents..' to open the TOC dialogue box.
5. Click 'Options…'
6. Fill in the 'TOC level' text boxes to represent the desired TOC heading order. Based on the TOC example above:
    a) Set 'Heading 1' (main headings) to TOC level '1'
    b) Set 'Heading 2' (sub-headings) to TOC level '2'
7. Click 'OK' and 'OK'. The TOC appears in your document.
8. When document changes are made, click 'Update Table' and select 'Update entire table'.

Use standard Date Format

The international standard for date format is yyyy-mm-dd.

Dates are formatted differently around the world which may confuse readers and cause misunderstandings.

The simplest way to write dates is to spell out the month portion of the date. For example, use "April 2, 2013" or "2 April 2013". The moment the month is spelled out, the date is no longer misinterpreted.

If the month is not spelled out, use the international date format of yyyy-mm-dd for consistency and ease of reference. For example, April 2, 2013 should be noted as "2013-04-02". This date format is preferred when incorporating dates into digital file naming.

Use Plain Language

Aim for a Grade 7 or 8 reading level allowing the greatest number of people will get the message.

Plain language is a way of organizing and presenting information so that it makes sense and is easy to read the first time. Information is written in plain language when the intended audience understands it. Where possible, strive to make information available in plain language.

Plain Language Tips:

• Write for your audience.

• Use short sentences and paragraphs.

• Use simple sentence structure and grammar.

• Use simple everyday words instead of technical jargon.

• Use full words such as "Street" instead of abbreviations. such as "St."

• Use a positive tone.

• Use the active voice.

Example:

Original (grade 11.6) – Ottawa residents who have limbs and debris from privately owned trees are asked to use the City's Green Waste Collection program for their disposal needs.

Plain Language (grade 5.9) – The City has a Green Waste Collection program. Use this system to dispose limbs and debris from trees on private property.

Use Page Numbering

Add automatic page numbering using the Header and Footer tool.

Numbering the pages of a document helps readers to effectively navigate and reference the contents.

 Microsoft Office products have a variety of page numbering templates that can be automatically inserted into documents.

This document uses the automated page numbering feature available in Microsoft Office.

Arrow pointing down to the automatically generated page numbering system located on the bottom of this page

Use Accessible Tables and Charts

Avoid tables and charts where possible. If they are needed, format them to be accessible.

Sometimes tables and charts are needed to make a large amount of information clear to readers. Use the accessible document rules in this guide, such as font size, to make them accessible. Also, avoid merged cells and use formatting options to create different types of lines or apply textures rather than colours.
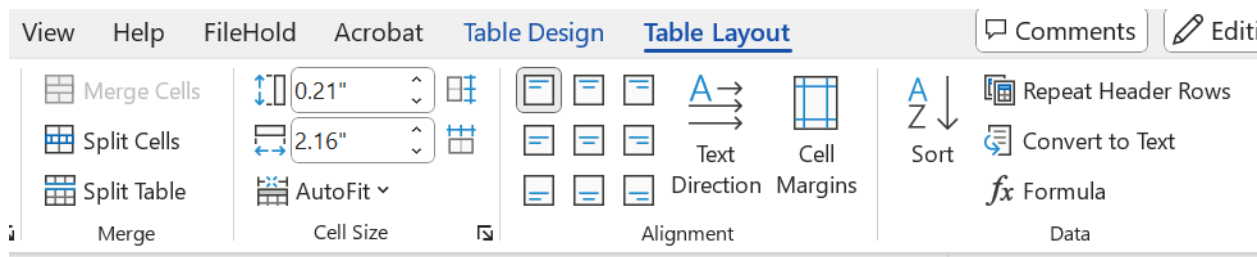
Simple steps to make a table more accessible:

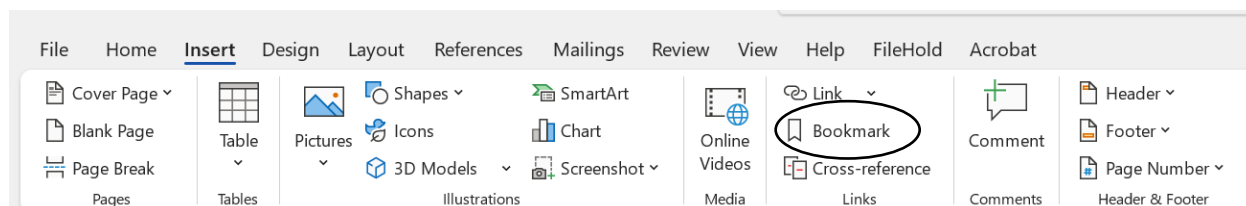**Step 1:** Add headings to the columns (and rows if needed).

Step 2: Check the "header row" box to recognize headings exist.
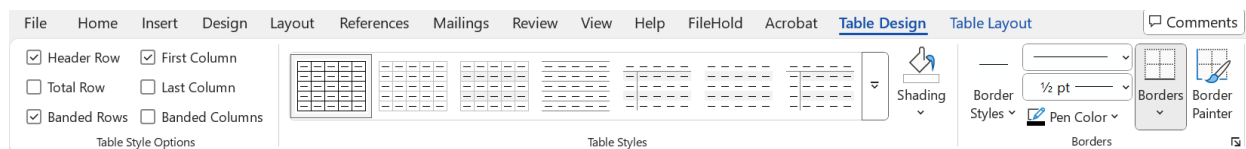
Step 3: Set the "header row" to repeat at the top of each page.

**Step 4:** Add a bookmark to the table (advanced formatting).

Use Real Lists

Format lists as "real lists" by using automatically generated bullets or numbering systems.

When creating a list, it is important to format it as a "real list". Otherwise, assistive technologies such as screen readers will interpret the list as a series of short separate paragraphs instead of a coherent list of related items. Microsoft Office products have a variety of automatically generated list options.

Auto-generated list tools are found in the 'Paragraph' group.
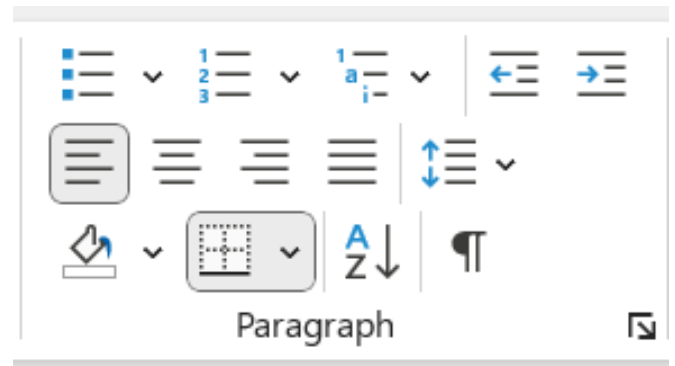
- Use bulleted lists if the information is a related set of points.
- Right click a bullet in your list to join or separate lists.
- Use numbered lists if the information is sequential. To create a numbered list:
  1. Select a line of text.
  2. Click 'Home' tab and find the 'Paragraph' group.
  3. Click the arrow to the right of the 'Numbering' icon.
  4. Select number format from the 'Numbering Library'.
     Note: a preview of the number format will be visible when you hover over a number format.
- Right click a number in your list to restart, continue or format the numbers.

Use Accessible Forms

All forms placed on the website should be fillable.

Using fillable forms allows users to complete the information digitally without having to print the form and write it by hand.

Tips when creating forms:

- Organize the fields chronologically.
- Ensure forms are keyboard accessible.
- Ensure the form will tab through cells in logical order.
- Make sure label and field locations are easy to use.
- Make sure the information asked is short and basic.
- Avoid using asterisks (*) to indicate required fields.
- Offer standard entry fields for phone numbers and dates.
- Where signature is required, ensure there is sufficient space.

Accessible Document Checklist

- ☐ Font Size
- ☐ Font Family
- ☐ Use of Bold, Italics and Underlining for Emphasis
- ☐ Upper Case Letters (no sentences with all upper case)
- ☐ Align Text to the Left and Avoid Floating Images
- ☐ Use Smart Headings, Paragraph and Spacing Tools
- ☐ Contrast
- ☐ Alt Tags
- ☐ Clarity, Organization, Readability
- ☐ Table of Contents with Live Links
- ☐ Date Format
- ☐ Plain Language
- ☐ Page Numbering
- ☐ Tables and Charts
- ☐ Lists
- ☐ Accessible Forms

Contact the Township Clerk or Deputy Clerk if you require more information on any of the above topics.

Small changes,

big rewards.

A.O.D.A. is the Accessibility for
Ontarians with Disabilities Act,
passed in 2005.

This Act is meant to create accessibility for all
Ontarians with disabilities.