

Accessible PDF Files from Word 2007

Agenda

1. What are PDF files?
2. Structured Word Files
3. Alternative Text for Images
4. Making a PDF with Word 2007

What are PDF Files?

- *Adobe* is a company; they are the creators of Acrobat.
- *Acrobat* is a tool for creating, editing and viewing PDF files.
 - Reader is free
 - Acrobat Professional is not free
- *PDF* is a format or type of document. It stands for Portable Document Format. The PDF format was created by Adobe.

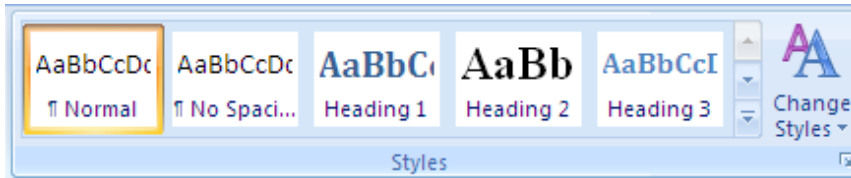
Most PDF files are created using a variety of software. Then the files are *converted* to PDF. But most don't produce 'tagged' PDF files. Tagged files are an essential component for accessible PDF files.

If you are using Microsoft Word or PowerPoint, or Adobe tools such as InDesign, you can often create accessible, tagged PDF files without opening Acrobat.

The accessibility of the PDF depends on the accessibility of the original document.

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Structured Word Files

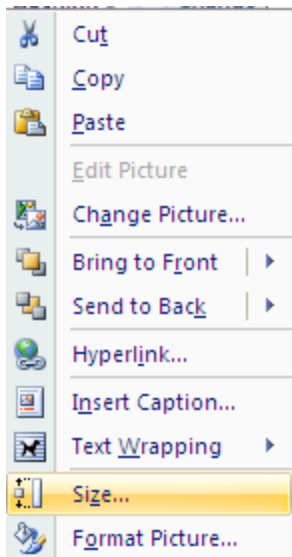


To create a structured Word file, use styles.

Use styles named Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. You can also use other styles available from the Word style menu such as quote and sub title. These styles create 'tags' when the PDF document is created. The tags are read by screen readers.

Alternative Text for Images

In Word 2007 (Windows) right-click on the image and select size.

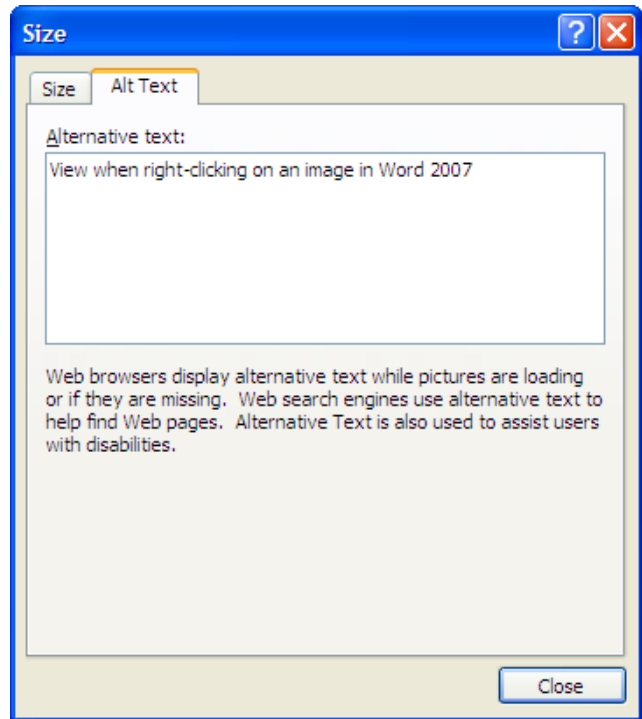


In the dialog box, select the Alt Text tab.

Remove the image name and replace with descriptive text.

In Word 2004 on a Mac, you cannot add alt text to images.

In Word 2008 on a Mac, I could not find a way to add alt text.



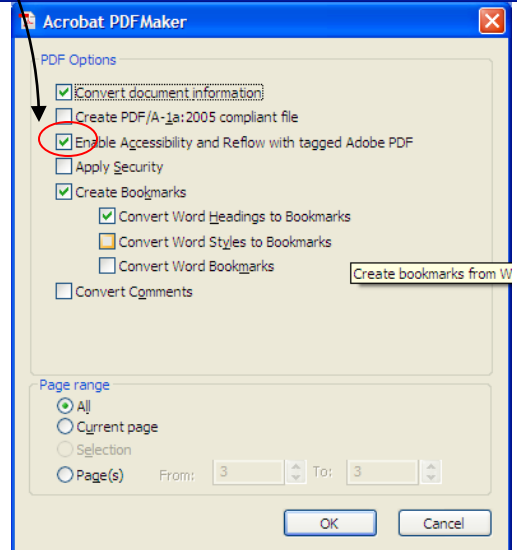
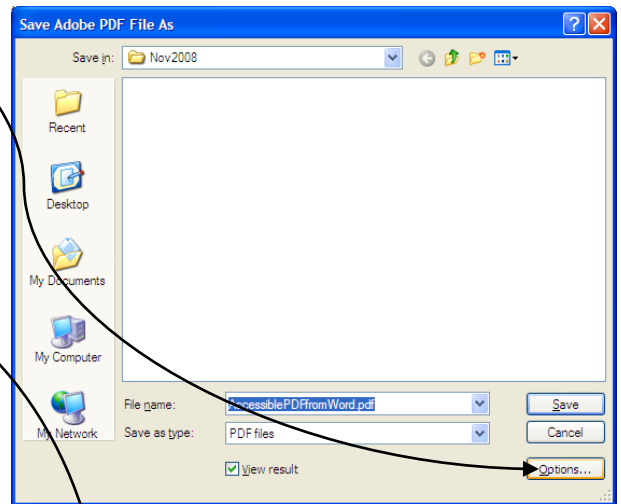
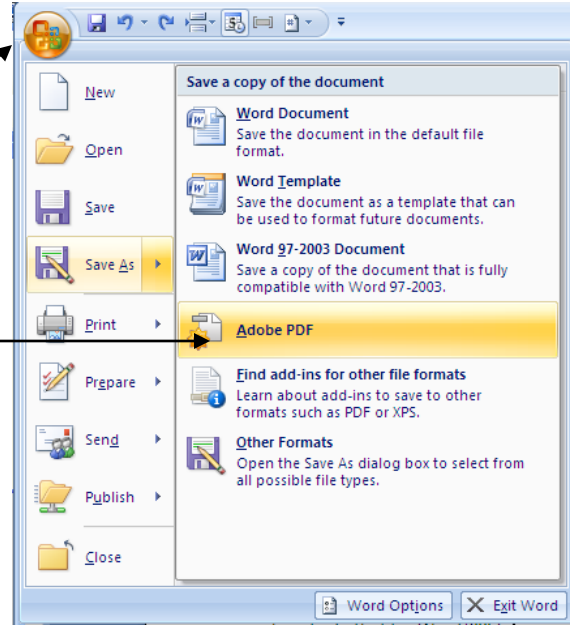
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Creating the PDF File with Tags

Tags must be included in the PDF file. Here's how to do that for Word 2007.

If you have Word 2007, the free add-in has already been installed. Here is how export to PDF:

1. Click on the Office Button, hover over Save As, and select PDF
2. Select Options and ensure that the Document structure tags for accessibility option are selected.
3. Click OK
4. Click Save



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Wrap up

Though PDF files are becoming more accessible, it is still important that you avoid requiring surfers to download and open a document to access information when the same information could be offered primarily as a Web page with html.

A Word document with complex tables or forms, or with a multi-column layout, may need to have the tagging process completed in Acrobat Pro (\$70 at UB Micro).

If your only choice is offer users a PDF file, it must be accessible. To make an accessible PDF from Word, the document must be structured, have alternative text for images and include tags in the PDF.