

# ACCESSIBILITY INCLUDES RETRIEVAL OF MATERIALS

We are educators and makers. Knowing how to create quick loading, easy-to-access materials is valuable for everyone. Students need to receive course materials in order to engage with them. Make files inexpensive for students to get in terms of data, bandwidth, and time.

Students may not have access to Word, PowerPoint, or Photoshop. Most people can open a PDF using a web browser. Web browsers have built-in tools for individuals with low or no vision to use.

If a PDF isn't required, don't make one. HTML—a web page—may be easier to make and quicker to load depending upon file size.

## Fast ways to increase access to materials:

- Make materials - reduces book fees
- Use common file types - increases accessibility and reduces file sizes
- Decrease the storage size of materials - makes them quicker and thus more cost-efficient to download
- Break content into chunks to increase student engagement with and access to materials
- Choose audio files over video files when the visual element is extraneous
  - Audio files are smaller

## Update your documents

File type matters. Saving work as .docx versus .doc reduces the size. The newer file type includes steps during the save process that compresses the contents. This is true of Excel and PowerPoint files too.



Students image by Jeswin Thomas, Unsplash. The original file size is 250k. The resulting PDF size, including the image, is 70k.

## Make it easy for you to do and for others to maintain:

- Use an accessible template when creating a new document, flyer, or series of slides
- Deliver the content in the most up to date formats
  - Open older materials and 'Save As' the newer document type
- Practice using an accessibility checker on your materials routinely

## Do you need it?

Consider that many students are using mobile devices to access course materials. Ask 'do they need this? Do I need this?' Content may flow differently depending on the device used.

## Who benefits?

Students, Co-teachers, TAs, Graders ... need content in the most used formats: .docx, .pdf.

## Read more

Full presentation content including linked references available at [bit.ly/TP-poster](https://bit.ly/TP-poster).

## Next steps

Once you make your collection of videos, screencasts, documents, audio, and text for a unit check each item. You gain efficiency with each accessible item you craft. As you learn you discover items to double-check.

If your campus does not supply or recommend specific editors look for open-source items. Ask your peers what they use. Use WebAIM, *web accessibility in mind*, for information and tools.

[/webaim.org/resources/designers](http://webaim.org/resources/designers)

## How to check

### Text document or HTML?

Compare the resulting file sizes. Make as many of your materials HTML pages as you can. The same text in a .html document will be quicker to open and load than most any equivalent text in another file type.

### Resize or compress images

- Use as few as you need.
- Resolution matters: 72 dots per inch for web, 150 dpi for print, and 300 dpi for magazine quality.

### Free resize tools on the web

- Easy resizing  
[www.befunky.com/create/resize-image/](http://www.befunky.com/create/resize-image/)
- Compress your image at  
[picresize.com/en/compress-image](http://picresize.com/en/compress-image) - has cropping, rotation, etc. included. You can choose the maximum size for your image file.

## In short

- Common document problems include missing titles or skipped heading sizes.
- Many tools have accessibility functions built-in. Practice using them.
- Check your work as you go; don't wait until the end.
- Once you have an accessible document use it as a template.
- A PDF may be smaller, thus faster to download/open (and cheaper re: data) than an image.
- In the learning management system (LMS) use proper HTML heading sizes appropriately: H1, H2, ... H3.

## Resources

W3C Web Accessibility Initiative,

[/www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/](http://www.w3.org/WAI/fundamentals/)

Behl, D., Getz, K. (9/3/2017). What's the difference between DOC and DOCX files, and which should I use? *The Union*.

[www.theunion.com/news/business/tech-tips-whats-the-difference-between-doc-and-docx-files-and-which-should-i-use/](http://www.theunion.com/news/business/tech-tips-whats-the-difference-between-doc-and-docx-files-and-which-should-i-use/)

McMahan, J. (10/20/2020). Three ways to make your course more accessible,

[iteachu.uaf.edu/three-ways-to-make-your-course-more-accessible/](http://iteachu.uaf.edu/three-ways-to-make-your-course-more-accessible/)

Woodgate, R. (8/24/2018). How to Reduce the Size of a Microsoft Word Document. *How-To Geek*.

[www.howtogeek.com/361463/how-to-reduce-the-size-of-a-word-document-apart-from-compressing-images/](http://www.howtogeek.com/361463/how-to-reduce-the-size-of-a-word-document-apart-from-compressing-images/)

## How do I know?

14+ years as a web developer

11 years as an instructional designer

8 years teaching web design

3+ years being an advocate for accessibility