



Accessibility Network at the University of Cincinnati

Accessibility Best Practices – Software and Applications

Print and use the checklist below to use when testing software and applications for accessibility.

Keyboard

- Does the application provide [clear and precise](#) instructions for use of all keyboard functions as part of the user documentation?
- Does the software provide [keyboard equivalents](#) for all mouse actions, including buttons, scroll windows, text entry fields, and pop-up windows?
- Does the software have a [logical tabbing order](#) among fields, text boxes, and focal points?
- Can you use [the arrow keys to navigate](#) through a list followed by pressing the ENTER key or space bar to select the desired item?
- Are [keyboard shortcut keys](#) provided for all pull-down menus?

Interactive Elements

- If timed responses are present, does the software allow the user to [modify the length of required timed responses](#)?
- Does the software application [pick up the screen size settings](#) that the user has defined for accessibility?
- Does every window, object, and control have a [clearly named label](#) positioned [outside the form field](#)?
- Does the software application use [standard controls](#) rather than owner-drawn or custom controls?

Screen Elements

- Is the [use of icons consistent](#) throughout the application?
- Are [text equivalents provided for all icons](#) in the menu, tool, and format bars?
- Does the software ensure that [color-coding is never used as the only means](#) of conveying information or indicating an action?
- Does the application support [user-defined color settings](#) system-wide?
- Is all visible and nonvisible text [clear and concise](#)?

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Multimedia

- If there are audio alerts, are [visual cues](#) also provided?
- Can the user [disable or adjust sound volume](#)?
- If information is provided in an audio format, is it also capable of being displayed by the user in a [visual format](#)?
- Is the software application [free of patterned backgrounds](#) used behind text or important graphics?
- Can a user override [default fonts](#) for printing and text displays?
- Can a user adjust or disable [flashing, rotating, or moving displays](#)?

Technical Support

- Are all manuals and documentation provided in an [accessible electronic format](#) including text descriptions of any charts, graphs, pictures, or graphics of any nature?
- Is [special training provided for users with disabilities](#) that will enable them to become familiar with the software and learn how to use it in conjunction with assistive technology provided as an accommodation?

Accessibility Check

- Does the software support existing [accessibility features built into the operating system](#) (e.g., sticky keys, slow keys, repeat keys, Voice Over)?
- Have you [tested the application with a sampling of common assistive technologies](#) (including, at a minimum, a screen reader, and, if possible, alternate input devices, screen enlargement software, and voice recognition software and devices)? Describe the accessibility successes and problems you encountered during these testing exercises, as well as your plans for addressing any problems.
- Have you [evaluated similar software alternatives](#) that might have better accessibility features?