



Vermont State
University

Accessible Course Materials

Best Practices

- Use sizeable sans-serif fonts
- Provide alternative text descriptions for images
- Underline hyperlinks and use clear, succinct hypertext
- Use a high contrast color palette

Making text accessible

- Simple sans-serif fonts are more legible than serifed fonts or cursive:

For example, “Come join us,” instead of “**Come join us**” or “*Come join us*”

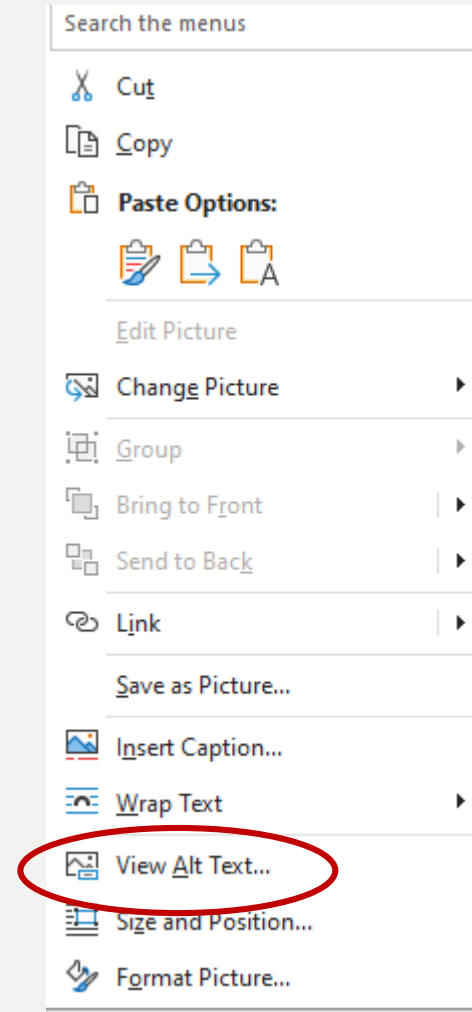
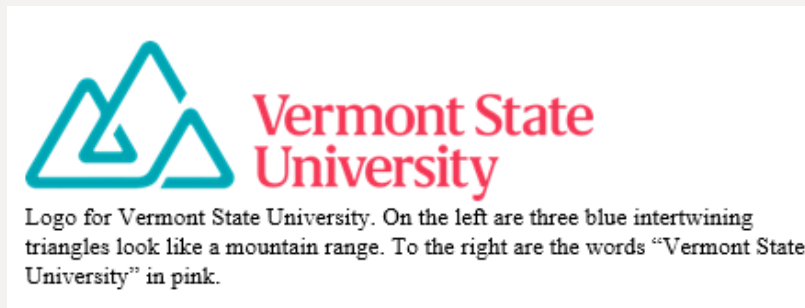
- Make sure your font size is legible (on different devices), 12 pt font minimum, and resizable
- Use headings to communicate hierarchy
- Keep line lengths manageable (between 47-75 characters)

Making images accessible

Alternative Text Descriptions tell a Screen Reader what to say an image represents.

To enter an Alternative Text Description for an image, right-click on it. You'll see a menu with the option **View Alt Text**. Select it and enter a brief description of the image.

For
example:




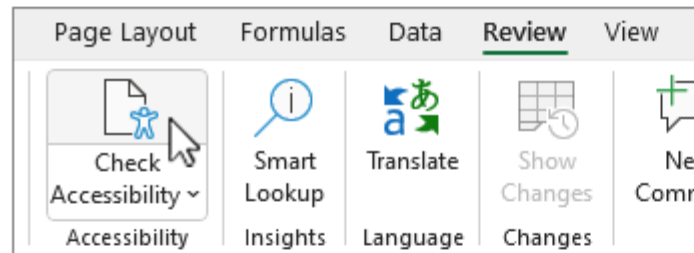
Use an accessibility checker

All Microsoft Office products include an accessibility checker

- Open Outlook
- Start a new email
- Click on 'Review' tab (computer-based) or 'Options' tab (web-based)
- Click on 'Check Accessibility'

Use the Accessibility Checker

1. Select the **Review** tab. In Outlook, you'll only see the **Review** tab when writing or replying to messages.
2. Select  **Check Accessibility** to open the **Accessibility** pane on the right.



Tip: For Word, Excel, and PowerPoint desktop, select the lower half of the **Check Accessibility** button for more options.

3. In the **Accessibility** pane, review and address the findings under **Inspection Results**.

View your course materials on different platforms and devices

To ensure accessibility to students with differing technology and a range of abilities, course materials should be legible and functional across...

Different browsers such as Chrome and Edge

Different hardware such as cell phones, tablets, and laptops

Different forms of assistive technology such as screen readers and alternative input devices

Final Grades.

I am now finished with everything in Canvas for your class. Your grades should be correct at this point. I plan to go through my email to be sure I haven't missed anything, and if you wish to add something, please email me. I plan to shut down any submissions after tomorrow at midnight. That will allow me to wake up early on Wednesday and enter grades for everyone.

If you find yourself close, but not quite where you want or need to be, I plan to be available for most of today. I have a few errands to run, but each should take less than an hour at a time.

It's been a pleasure having you all for the semester. Good luck with all your future work.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachments in Canvas cannot be read by the built-in screen reader. Students will need to download attachments and use their device's screen reader to access them. If you include an attachment in a module or assignment, be sure it is accessible by testing it with a screen reader (e.g. Microsoft's Narrator, Apple's VoiceOver, and Android's TalkBack).

Text-based documents are generally accessible - you should be safe with them.

Files with images, screenshots, and pdfs are more hit or miss. See the next slides for tips.

Making accessible PDFs

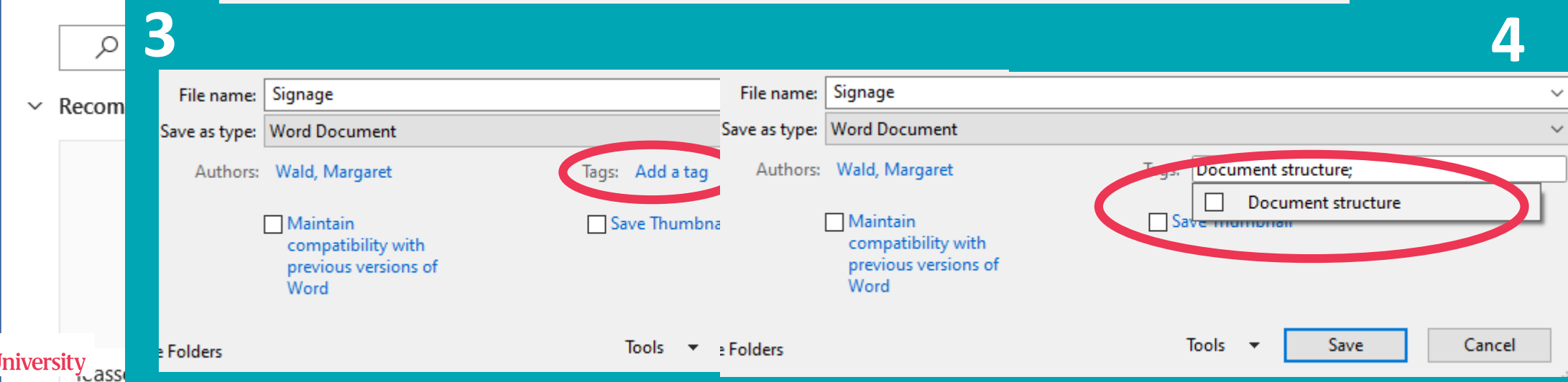
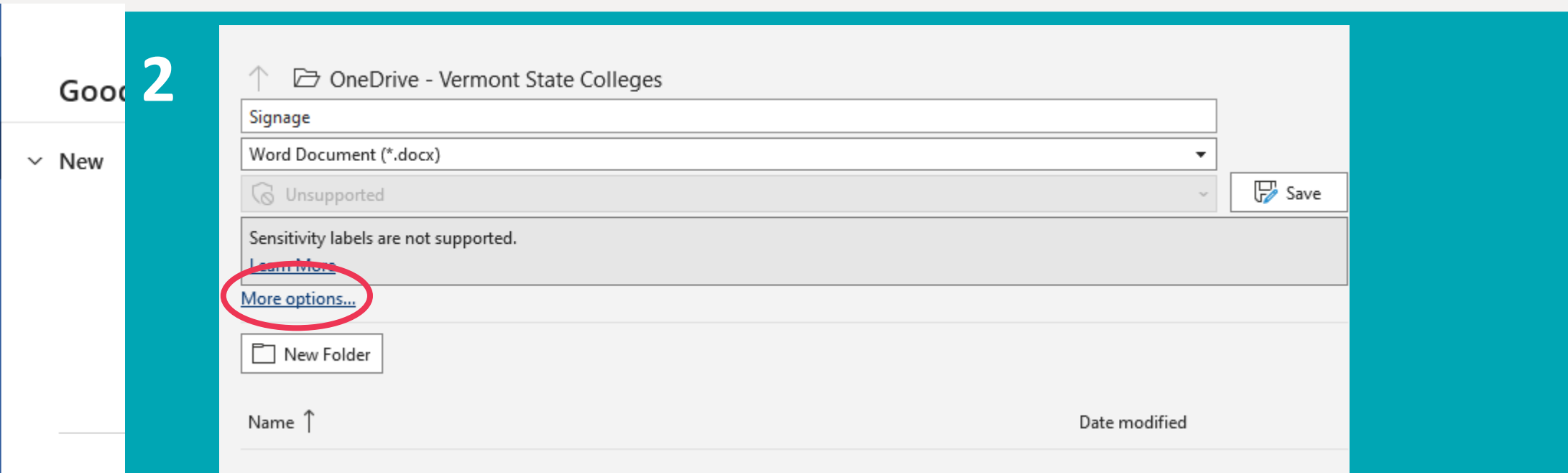
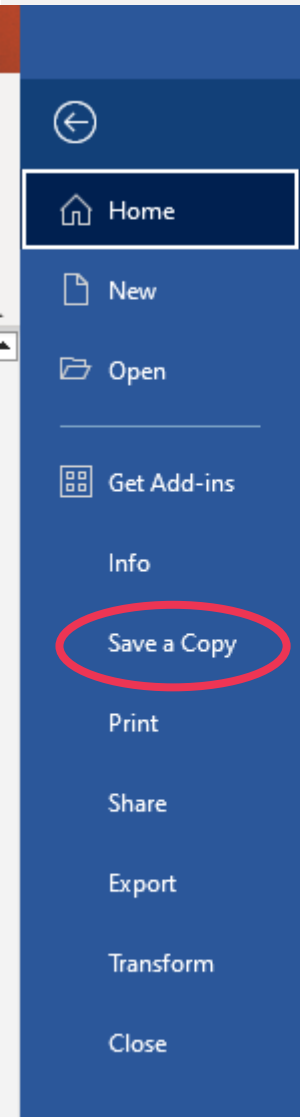
In Microsoft Word, both web-based and computer-based, save your file as a pdf.

*On a PC, click on **Options** and add "Document structure" as a tag.
On a Mac, check the box "Best for electronic distribution and accessibility" before saving.*

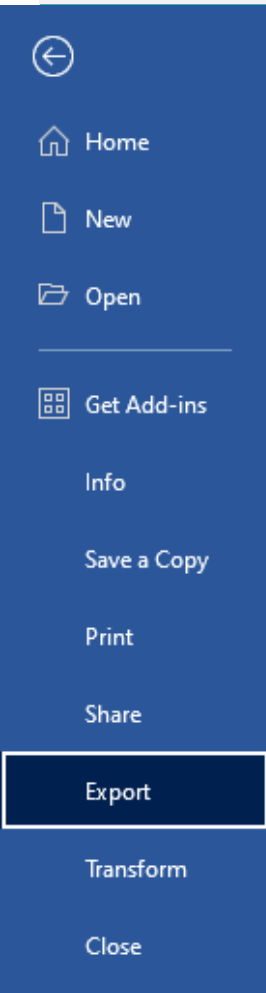
If images are included, they should appear above or below, not next to, text.

To convert a pdf to an accessible pdf, you will need Adobe Acrobat or another pdf editing program. If you can copy and paste the elements into a Word or text file, you can also recreate the file in an accessible format.




Saving in an accessible format



Export to an accessible pdf




Export

-  Create PDF/XPS Document
-  Change File Type
-  Send documents to Kindle


Create a PDF/XPS Document

- Preserves layout, formatting, fonts, and images
- Content can't be easily changed
- Free viewers are available on the web



Create PDF/XPS

We have recommendations that will make the PDF easier for people with disabilities to read.

 Investigate Accessibility

[Learn more about creating accessible PDFs](#)

Best Practices in Canvas

- Use the Accessibility Checker to make sure your course components are accessible.
- Include text instead of linking to it or uploading a file. Text embedded in Canvas is accessible to the built-in screen reader.
- Avoid links to blank pages.
- Give dates whenever possible so that students can navigate without the course calendar.
- Connect assignment prompts with assignment submission pages.
- Consult the [CTLI website on accessibility in Canvas](https://ctli.vermontstate.edu/teaching-with-technology/canvas/developing-an-accessible-class-in-canvas/).
(<https://ctli.vermontstate.edu/teaching-with-technology/canvas/developing-an-accessible-class-in-canvas/>).

Other formatting tips

- Label components of tables (columns/rows) and give tables a descriptive name (not Table 1).
- In PowerPoint, arrange slide components bottom to top in the selection pane.
- Since screen readers don't recognize the color or size of text, indicate through text what you might otherwise indicate through color or size (e.g. important concepts in bold won't stand out to a screen reader, and red numbers in Excel won't be read as a deficit).
- In Excel, don't leave empty cells. Indicate "N/A" or "Intentionally Blank."
- In Excel, don't merge or split cells.
- Screen readers generally do not recognize data validation, conditional formatting, or formulas determining the content of cells in Excel and may identify the location rather than the content of a cell. Exporting as an accessible pdf is a simple way to share data.
- Add ScreenTips if applicable.

Other resources

Guidelines for accessible content can be found here: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

Section 508 Standards can be found here: <https://www.access-board.gov/ict/>