



## Accessibility Tips

### Digital Accessibility

Alternative text helps screen readers describe images used online. [There is a difference between alt text and an image description or caption.](#)

#### GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR ALTERNATIVE TEXT

- Be precise. The alt text should describe the content in the image accurately.
- Limit the alt text to relevant information. You don't need to describe every detail, just those that matter in terms of how the image is used in context and what information the reader needs to retain. For example, alt text might describe what a person would need to remember for a test or understand an image used in an email.
- Imagine you closed your eyes and you couldn't see the image. What description is necessary for the reader to understand the information presented in the image?
- Keep it concise. A short phrase or sentence will be enough for many images.
- Avoid using "image of" at the beginning of the description. It's unnecessary since the screen reader will already announce it as an image.
- If an image is simply decorative, then the alternative text can just be the word "null" or "decorative."
- If you have infographics or images of text (like charts and tables), the alt text should state all the information provided, including every word on the image. Alternatively, you can provide a text version of the information.
- There are times when alternative text can't equate to the purpose of the image. Consider what process you would follow in the classroom or in your office to accommodate a person who is blind. This same process will suffice for the web.
- Captions may also work in place of lengthy alt text if the content is explained elsewhere in the document. Example: "Figure 1, this infographic shows pie charts of the information explained below."

#### SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESSIBILITY

##### Twitter

##### 1. Use accessible photo captions and alt text when tweeting

In 2016, Twitter brought in an option to give descriptions for images on Twitter. The descriptions are read out by screen readers to let blind people or those with low vision hear what's in the picture.

To enable this (it sounds complicated but is very quick to activate):

- Go to Twitter's app/website
- Go to your image in the top right-hand corner of your screen
- Select 'settings and privacy.'
- Choose 'accessibility' from the list on the left.
- Click the 'compose image descriptions' box to activate this option.



Then, when you compose a tweet with an image, an 'add description' button will appear, and you can input 'alt' (alternative) descriptions of up to 420 characters.

This is particularly important if there are words in the picture but not always necessary if the image is abstract or purely decorative.

**Note:** If you're adding an infographic with complex information, it's a good idea to link to a data table with the same information, which is likely to be more easily accessible.

For full info on adding Twitter image descriptions using your voice or with screen reader assistance, see [Twitter's help page here](#).

Most Tweet scheduling platforms don't have an Alt text option, but Buffer and Twitterific do offer this option.

## 2. Add full photo description within the main Tweet for text-heavy images

For infographics or images with big chunks of written information contained in the picture, i.e. a menu - it's simpler and neater to add a text alternative in the main text of the tweet.

## 3. Make your hashtags accessible

Use what's known as 'camel case' for the hashtags in your tweets #ABitLikeThis. When you do, it means screen readers used by blind or visually impaired people will hear the words individually rather than as a long, incoherent word

## 4. Use plain English

Avoid acronyms and make sure the meaning of the tweet is very plainly clear. This is likely to help people on the autistic spectrum and someone with a learning disability or dementia. Try these tools to check the readability of your tweets - Flesch-Kincaid readability metrics or Readability-Score.com.

## 5. Color contrast

If your tweet contains an infographic, make sure the colors are well contrasted so they are easy to decipher for people who are color-blind or have a visual impairment. There are various free sites that will check your page for color contrast.

## Instagram

### 1. #CamelCase

Use Camel Case for all of your hashtags so that screen readers can read individual words. Without the capitals the screen reader will "read" a long incoherent word or a string of individual letters.

### 2. Add image descriptions.

Sometimes a visitor may choose not to use a screen reader. Add image description or alt text to the bottom of your post to assist visitors with experiencing your content. If you are posting typographical content, the alt text should be the content of your text-based image. Also consider keeping posts succinct and limiting the use of emojis.

[Instagram accessibility](#)



## Facebook

1. General Post Guidelines:
2. Edit the machine-generated alternative text to add richer, contextual descriptions when you post a photo
3. Add a caption file, or use YouTube's captioning services for Facebook videos
4. Avoid using acronyms in your posts
5. Like Facebook's Accessibility page for updates on new accessibility features
6. Do not use decorative text in posts

## ONLINE ACCESSIBILITY

[Website Accessibility Standards](#) WCAG guidelines

[Website Plugins for ADA](#) WordPress free plugins

[QR Codes](#) a how-to for creating free QR codes

[Powerpoint accessibility](#) how to make your PowerPoint presentation accessible for screen readers

## IN-PERSON ACCESSIBILITY

[Accessibility Events in Museums](#) ideas for creating accessible experiences for every visitor

[Accessibility for museum labels](#) tips on creating accessible labels

[Accessibility for Live and Virtual Events](#) tips on how to make sure events meet accessibility requirements

[Sensational Blackboard](#) tactile drawing pad

[Inexpensive tech for non profits](#) Tech Soup is an informational hub of best practices for tech accessibility and includes services and forums