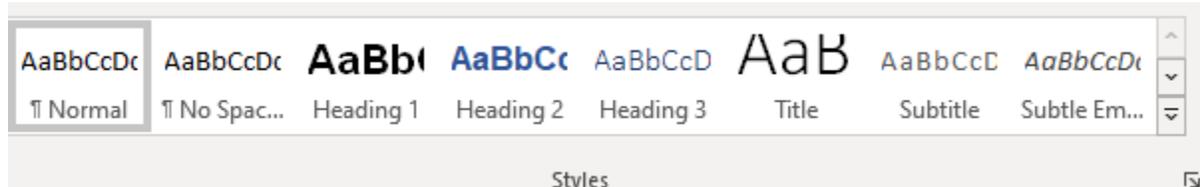


# Creating Accessible Word Documents

## Headings

A good **heading** structure is one of the most important accessibility considerations in Word documents. Headings provide context and a way to navigate through documents. They allow us to easily scan documents and find content, either visually or with a screen reader.

Apply a heading style by using: Home tab → Styles Ribbon

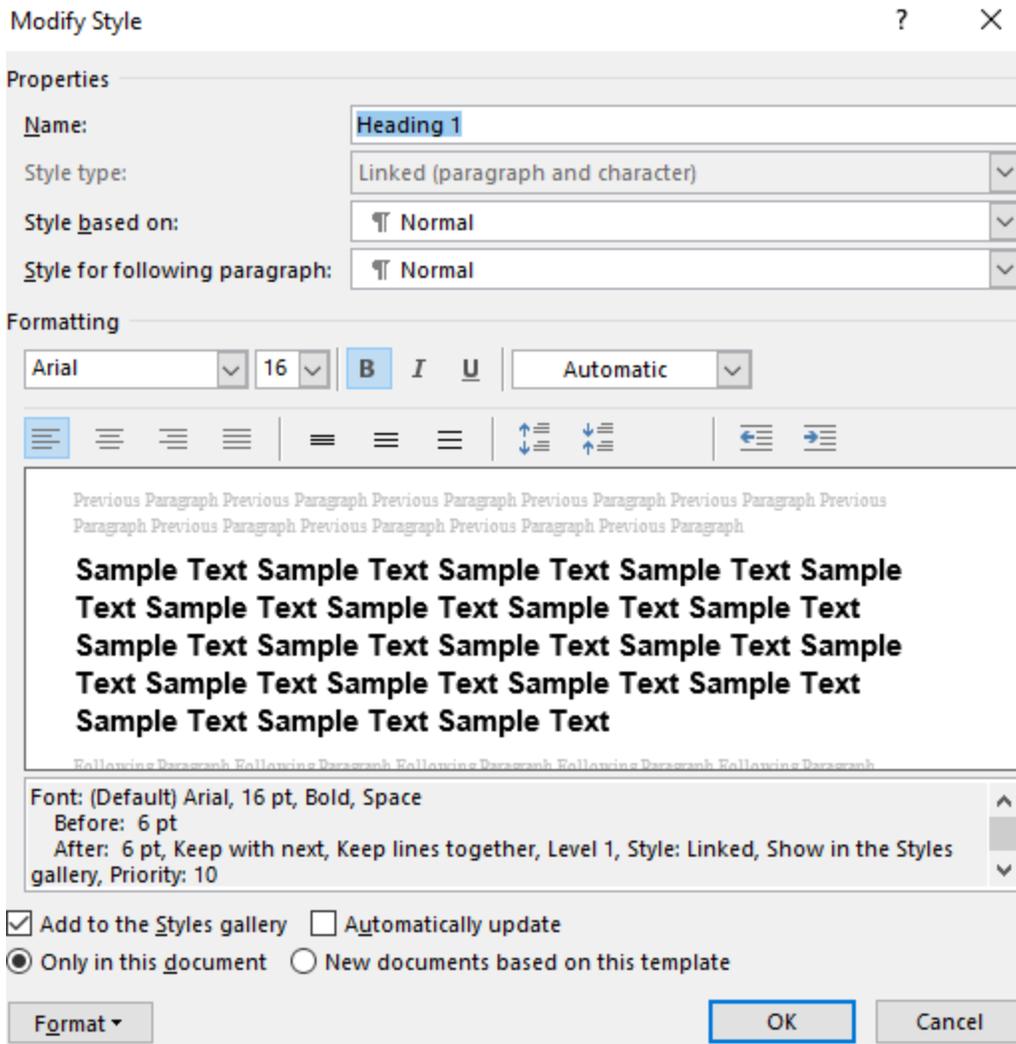


Heading 1 should be the title of the document. Only one Heading 1 should exist in a document.

Headings 2 and 3 should be used to identify sections (Heading 2) or subsections (Heading 3).

To modify a heading:

1. Right click the heading and select modify
2. Select the font, font size, and bold
  - Choose a san serif font (e.g. Arial, Calibri)
  - Choose 16 pt font for Heading 1 and either 12 pt or 14 pt for Heading 2
  - Bold the heading so it is easier to see



3. While still in “Modify Style,” select format at the bottom left.
4. Adjust the spacing so there is 6 pt before and after, and adjust the line spacing to “multiple” and at least 1.2

**Indents and Spacing** | **Line and Page Breaks**

**General**

Alignment:

Outline level:    Collapsed by default

**Indentation**

Left:    Special:   By:

Right:     Mirror indents

**Spacing**

Before:    Line spacing:   At:

After:     Don't add space between paragraphs of the same style

**Preview**

Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph  
Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph Previous Paragraph

Sample Text  
Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text  
Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text Sample Text

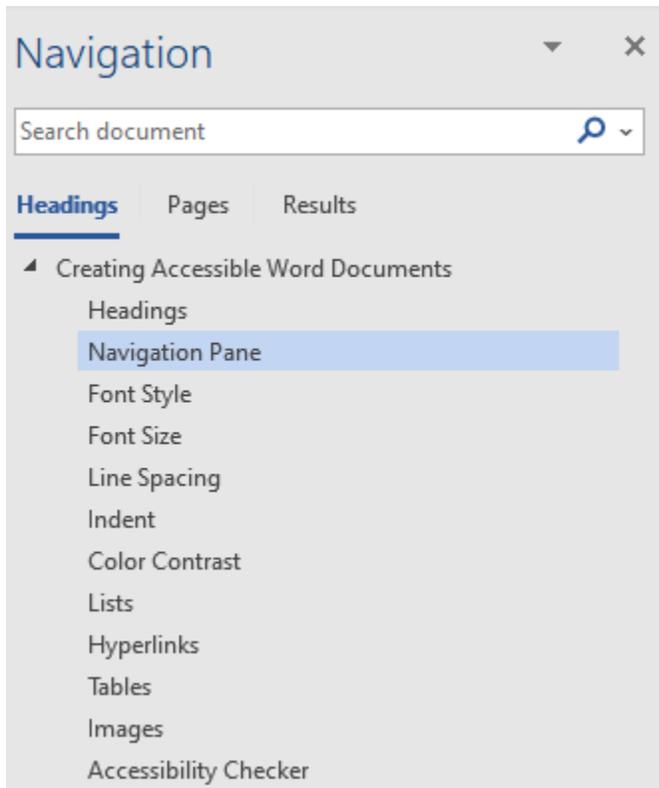
Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph  
Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph Following Paragraph

## Navigation Pane

The Navigation Pane gives an overview of the document structure in a word document.

To view the navigation pane:

View Tab → Check the Navigation Pane checkbox



## Alignment

All text (including headings) should be left aligned. Individuals with low vision who need to increase the magnification rate of a document may miss information if it is center or right-aligned.

## Font Style

Use sans-serif fonts. Serif fonts may be more challenging for individuals with learning disabilities. Screens with low resolution also make serif fonts more difficult for people to discern.

A few good examples of sans-serif fonts are **Calibri**, **Arial**, **Verdana** (Remember CAV)

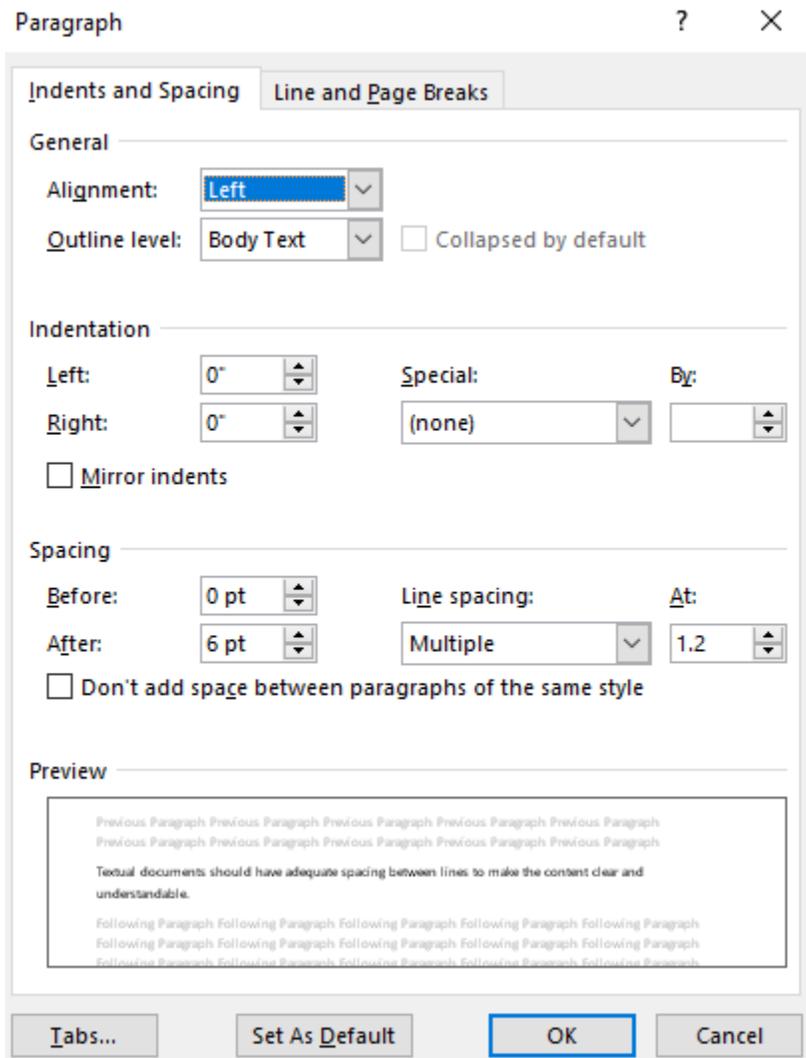
## Font Size

Font size should be between 10 pt and 14 pt, although preferred text size is 12 pt.

## Line Spacing

Textual documents should have adequate spacing between lines to make the content clear and understandable.

- Select the text → Home tab → Line and Paragraph Spacing
- Select the text → right click and select “Paragraph”
- Adjust “After” to pt 6 and adjust the line spacing to “Multiple” and at least “1.2”



## Indent

- Select the text → Home tab → Decrease Indent/Increase Indent
- Select the text → Page Layout tab → Paragraph ribbon
- View tab → Select Ruler bar check box → Adjust the ruler bar's hour glass
- **Do not** use the space bar to indent because the spaces will be recognized as blank space by a screen reader.

## Color Contrast

The text and background in a document should have a sufficiently high level of contrast.

People who have low-vision or color-blindness have difficulty reading documents when text color does not strongly contrast with the background color. Readers with macular degeneration, glaucoma or other eye diseases may have great difficulty reading text which is small or which does not contrast strongly with the background.

Never use color alone to provide important information. Consider using another means to identify important information, such as **\*Important Note\***. By stating this and placing it in bold, it will be recognized by all people, regardless of disability status.

When developing documents using color to distinguish between more than one option, always provide a redundant element to allow for understanding. The table below illustrates multiple ways project completion can be identified.

Project	Due Date	Completed
Pre-test	September 1	Y
Workshop	October 20	N
Post-test	November 1	N

## Lists

1. Add appropriate buttons on Word's formatting toolbar:
  - Bullets – Unordered Lists
  - Numbering – Ordered Lists
2. Avoid making lists with just dashes or asterisks; otherwise a screen reader may not be able to read the list in the proper order
3. Screen readers will properly announce the text as being part of a list.
4. List formatting provides the user with a means to quickly navigate between items as well as move in and out of lists.

## Hyperlinks

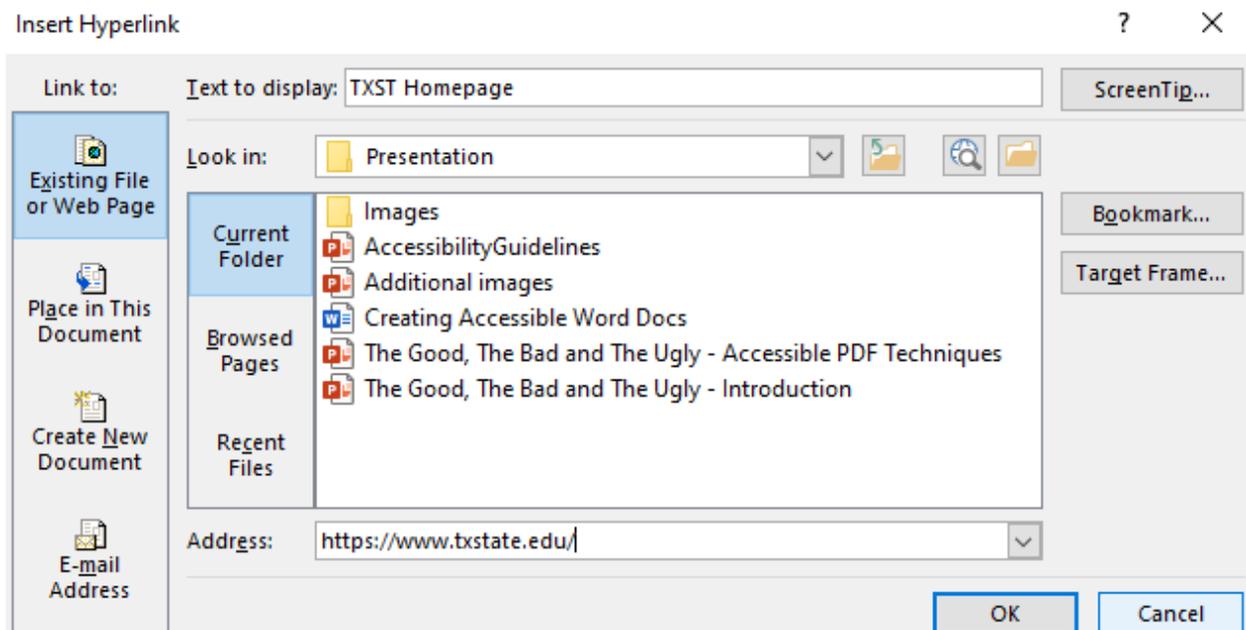
People who use screen readers sometimes scan a list of links. Links should convey clear and accurate information about the destination.

### Don't

- Identify the link as “Click here” or “learn more.”
- Pasting a link that is convoluted and nonsensical like:  
<https://www.google.com/search?q=navigation+pane+word&og=navigation+pane+&aqs=chrome.0.0j69i57j0l4.9015j0j9&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8>
- Using the word “link” to describe the link. Example: Link to UHCL website

### Do

- Select the text that has to be hyperlinked → right click → link and enter a descriptive text for the hyperlink in Text to display field.
- Add meaningful hyperlink text and ScreenTips so that it accurately describes the content of the website.
- Example: [TXST Homepage](https://www.txstate.edu/)

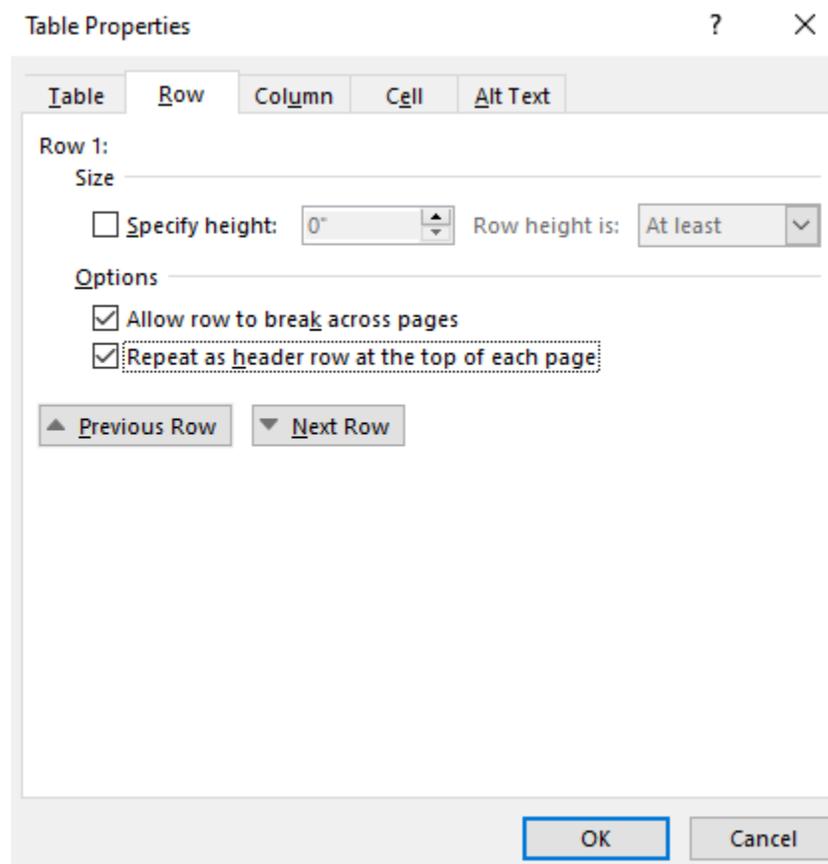
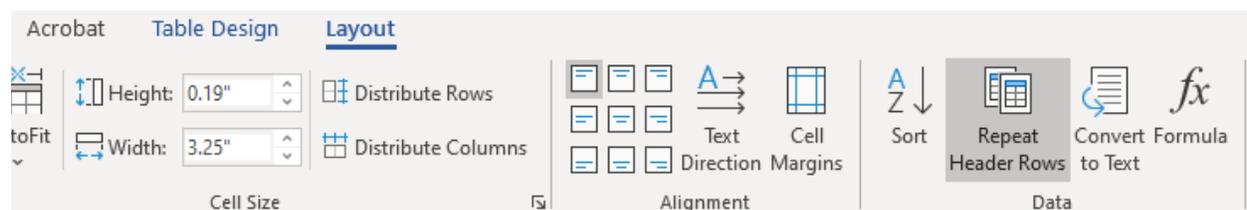


## Tables

Tables are very useful for displaying a large amount of data in an organized manner, such as your course schedule, office hours, etc.

In order to make tables accessible:

1. Provide **Row and Column Headers** to distinguish the heading text from the data section of the table. Header rows are also important if the table spans more than one page.
  - Place the cursor anywhere in the table → Layout → Select “Repeat Header Rows.”
  - Select the first row of the table → Right click → Table Properties → Row tab → Check “Repeat as header row at the top of each page” checkbox. Alternatively, Select first row of the table → Layout tab → Select Repeat Header Rows.



## 2. Add **Alt Text** to tables

- Right click the table → Table Properties → Alt Text tab → Type a description

*Table 1- Workshop Projects*

<b>Project</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Completed</b>
Pre-test	September 1	Y
Workshop	October 20	N
Post-test	November 1	N

## 3. Adjust Cell Spacing

- Right click the table → Table Properties → Table tab → Options button → Adjust the Default cell margins

Table Properties



**Table** | Row | Column | Cell | Alt Text

Size

Preferred width: 0" Measure in: Inches

Alignment

Indent from left: 0"

Left | Center | Right

Text wrapping

None | Around

Positioning...

Borders and Shading... Options...

OK Cancel

Table Options



Default cell margins

Top: 0" Left: 0.08"

Bottom: 0" Right: 0.08"

Default cell spacing

Allow spacing between cells 0"

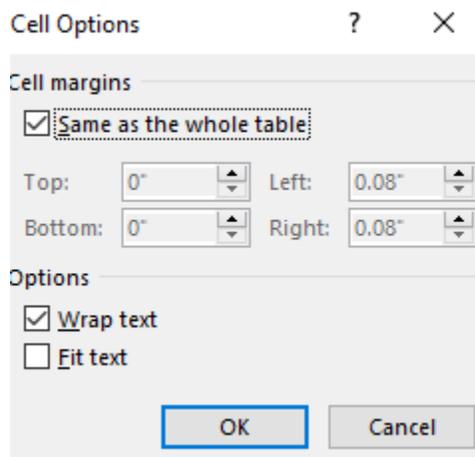
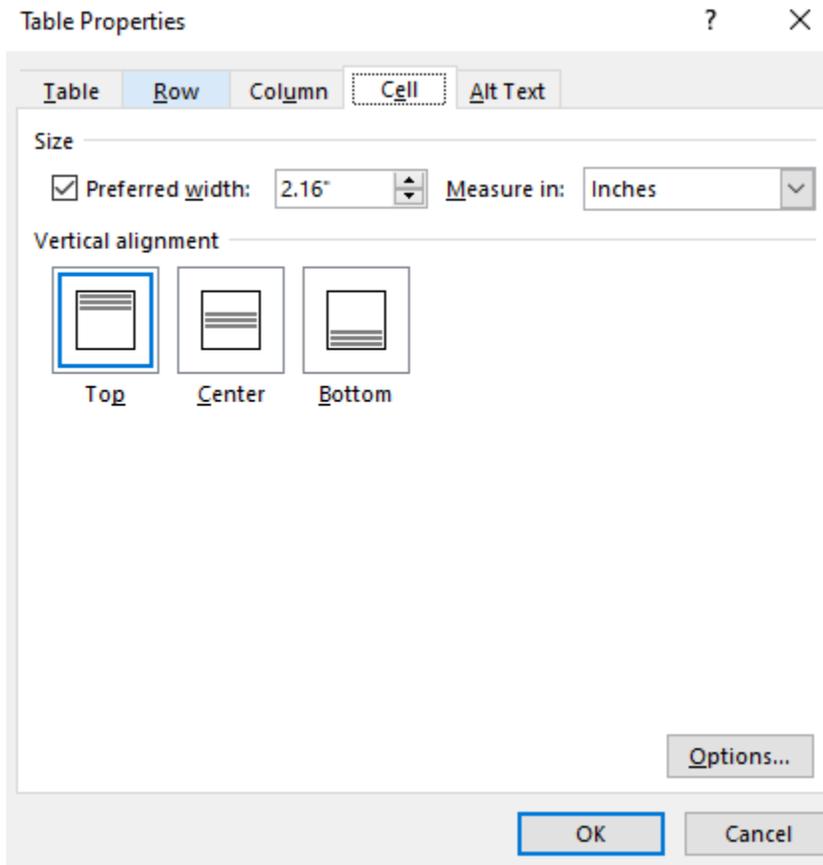
Options

Automatically resize to fit contents

OK Cancel

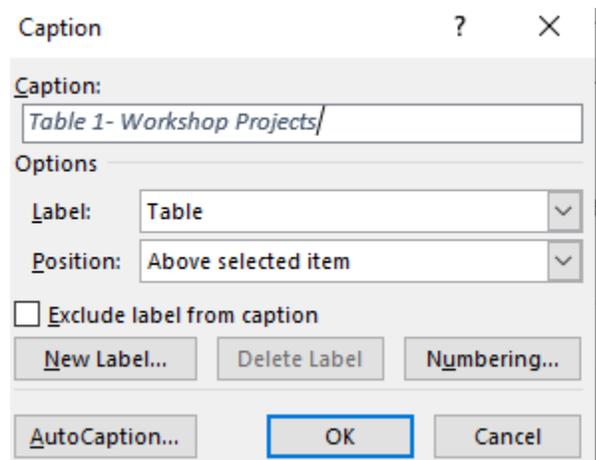
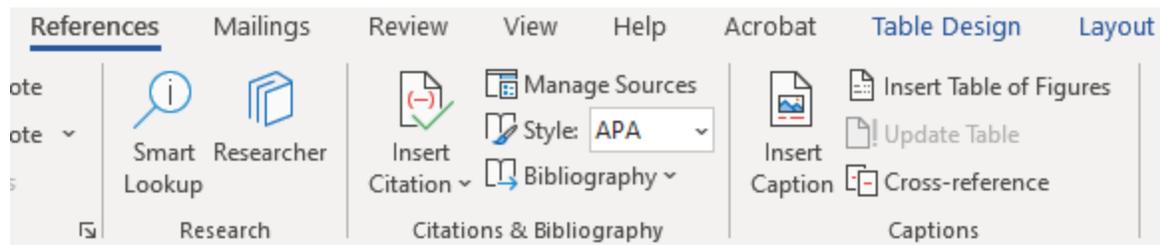
#### 4. Adjust Cell Padding

- Right click the table → Table Properties → Cell tab → Options button → Adjust the Cell margins



#### 5. Provide appropriate Table Captions where necessary.

- Click anywhere on the table → References tab → Insert Caption button → Provide a meaningful table caption



## Images

In order to make images accessible:

1. Add **Alt Text** to images

A reader who is visually impaired depends on a screen reader to convey information about an image. This information is called alt text. The screen reader will stop on the image and read the alt text that is given.

Images that have meaningful content need a short description for their alt text. A long description is not helpful and may even be confusing.

A decorative image in Word or PowerPoint that is not meaningful does not require an alt text.

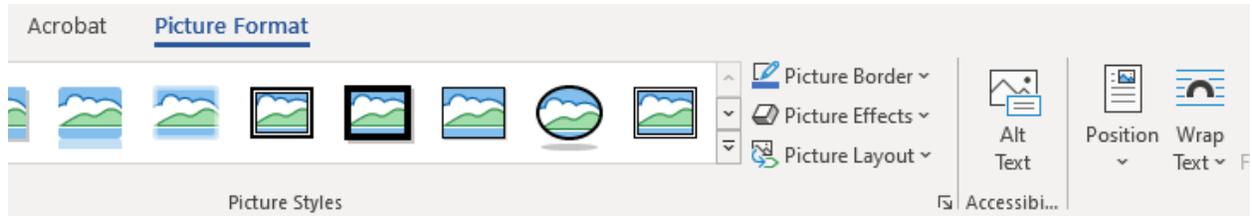
To add an alt text for an image:

- Right click on the image → Edit Alt Text
- Enter a short and meaningful description of the image in the description field



- Images should be **inline** with the text. Text that wraps around an image or graphic often times will confuse a screen reader, making it difficult for the user to understand.

- Right click the image and select Text Wrapping, then choose In Line with Text.
- Select the picture, then choose “Picture Format → Wrap Text → In line with text

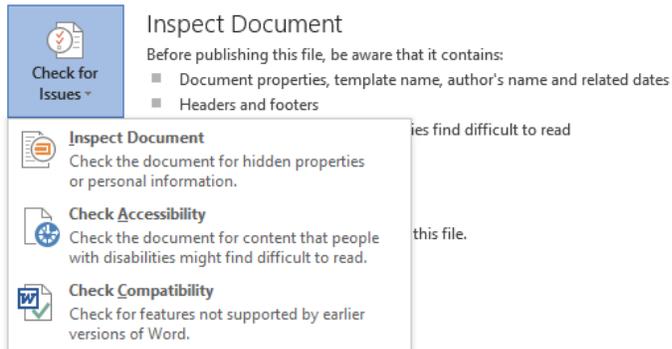


## Accessibility Checker

Accessibility checker enables us to identify and correct any accessibility issues in a document.

- File → Info tab → Check For Issues button → Check Accessibility

The Accessibility Checker pane will have Errors/Warnings listed under 'Inspection Results' that could be rectified by following the instructions in 'How to fix' section under 'Additional Information'.



### Note:

- Not all errors are detected by the Accessibility Checker. When the Inspection Results section shows no accessibility issues, it doesn't totally guarantee that all accessibility issues are addressed. For example, an alt text that says "jpeg348" is technically accessible; however, it does not provide any usable information to a person who is blind.

# Accessibility



Inspection Results

## Errors

- ✓ **Missing alternative text**  
Picture 2

Keep accessibility checker running while I work

## Additional Information