

# Correcting Accessibility in PDFs

How to revise an existing PDF to fix accessibility errors.

## Converting and Editing a PDF

**Step 1:** Download the current version of the PDF.

**Step 2:** Run the document through Acrobat and Convert the PDF back into an editable document.  
PDFs can be converted to Microsoft Word, Powerpoint, or Excel.

**Step 4:** Under the chosen format, choose "Prepare for Accessibility", or "Check Accessibility".  
For example, if using Microsoft Word, This can be found under **Review > Check Accessibility**.

**Step 5:** Correct all errors shown in the accessibility checker. Most errors have a description of what the error is, and how to fix.  
For help Converting a PDF back into an editable format, view the Scribe tutorials found on <https://itacs.rutgers.edu/help/pdf-accessibility>

**Step 6:** After completing accessibility, Export as a PDF and **replace** the existing PDF on your website with the accessible version.  
To replace, when logged in go to **Content > Files >** and search the name of the old PDF. Click "**Edit**" and **choose to replace**.

## Practices for Adobe Acrobat's Accessibility

If you are editing a PDF **without converting**, here are some tips and tools for using Adobe Acrobat's Accessibility Checker.

### Good

#### ★ Scan and OCR your document

To fix this rule check manually, use OCR to recognize text in scanned images:

**Step 1:** From the All tools menu, select Scan & OCR.

**Step 2:** From the Scan & OCR panel, under Recognize Text, select In this file.

**Step 3:** From the Pages dialog, select the pages you want to process, the document language, and then select Recognize text.

#### ★ Auto Tag PDF

Select **All tools > Prepare for accessibility > Automatically tag PDF**.

If there are any issues, the **Add Tags Report** appears in the navigation pane. It lists potential problems by page, provides a navigational link to each problem, and suggests ways to fix them.

#### ★ Add Alternative text

Click **Add Alternative Text > OK**

Adobe will highlight the image, and a pop up will appear allowing you to add an Alt-Text. If it is a decorative image you can click the check box to indicate that.

### Better

#### ★ Fix Reading Order

Go to Prepare for Accessibility > Fix Reading Order

The following toolbar will pop up and your mouse will become a cross-hair. You can drag the mouse to select sections of text and re-order them in the sequence the document should be read.

#### ★ Mark 'Passed' in the Accessibility Report

Once completed go back to your accessibility report by going to:  
**Prepare for accessibility > Check for accessibility**

If it still indicates **Logical Reading Order – Needs Manual check**:  
**Right Click** on Logical Reading Order- Needs Manual Check > **select 'Passed'**.

### Best

#### ★ Tables

Check table elements

**Step 1:** In the Tags panel, expand the tags root to view a table tag.

**Step 2:** Select the table tag <Table> and verify that it contains one of the following elements:

Table Rows, each of which contains Table Header <TH> or Table Data <TD> cells.  
<THead>, <TBody>, and <TFoot> sections, each of which contains Table Rows.  
(The Table Rows contain <TH> cells, <TD> cells, or both.)

**Step 3:** Do one or more of the following:

- **Re-create the table in the authoring application**, and then convert it to a tagged PDF.
- If the tag for the table doesn't contain these elements, but rows, columns, and cells appear in the table in the document pane, use the **Reading Order tool** to select and define the table or individual cells.

- **Set ColSpan and RowSpan attributes:**

**Step 1:** In the Tags panel, select a <TD> or <TH> element.

**Step 2:** Choose **Properties** from the Options menu.

**Step 3:** In the Touch Up Properties dialog box, click the Tag panel, and then click **Edit Attribute Objects**.

**Step 4:** Select Attribute Objects, and then **select New Item** to create an Attribute Object Dictionary.

**Step 5:** Expand the new dictionary, **select the Layout attribute**, and then click **Change Item**.

**Step 6:** Change the Layout value to **Table**.

**Step 7:** Select the Attribute Object Dictionary, and click **New Item**.

**Step 8:** In the Add Key And Value dialog box, type **ColSpan** or **RowSpan** in the Key box. **Enter the number of columns or rows** in the Value box, choose Integer from the Value Type pop-up menu, and select **OK**.