Acrobat DC Accessibility

Acrobat DC features new accessibility enhancements and a complete set of tools to create and optimize accessible PDF files from almost any source.

Start with an Accessible Document

Accessibility starts with accessibility in mind. PDF files are created in a variety of ways, but typically in applications that have PDF exporting capabilities. Accessibility should begin in these applications with their native document formats. For example, a Microsoft Word document should be made accessible before being converting to PDF document. Accessibility enhancements like adding alternative text, defining structural headings, adding table headers, and having document titles are available to do in Word and can be transfer to converted PDF files.

Native files that are accessible require less repetitive work in Acrobat. For example, if a published document needed to be revised, the accessible native format would have the accessible enhancements already saved from the last edit. No duplicated accessibility tasks would need to be performed. Also, sometimes certain elements of a document must be implemented in the native format, like the use of sufficient contrast of colors on text color from background.

If native documents are not available, the PDF can still be made fully accessible by using the Acrobat's accessibility tools. Acrobat provides the "Make Accessible" action wizard, the "Touch Up Reading Order" tool and the accessibility checker to help with accessibility.

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Getting Started with Acrobat DC

By default, Acrobat DC will not have the "**Accessibility**" or the "**Action Wizard**" tools displayed with the rest of the tools on the right-side Tools Pane. Add shortcuts to these tools from the tools center:

1. Go to "Tools".
2. Click the "Add" button under the "Accessibility" icon (Located under "Protect & Standardize").
3. Click the "Add" button under the "Action Wizard" icon (Located under "Customize").

   The Accessibility and Action Wizard tools will be added to the right-side tools pane.

➢ NOTE: Adding the "Accessibility" and the "Action Wizard" shortcuts will only need to be done one time.

Accessibility Tools

The accessibility tools in Acrobat DC are organized different from the previous Acrobat versions. However, most tools will be easy to find. Here is an overview of the accessibility tools in Acrobat DC:

- **Autotag Document** – adds tags to the PDF when the document was not properly converted to a PDF.

- **Autotag Form Fields** – detects form fields and tags them.

- **Reading Options** – Allows the document to be read like a screen reader.

- **Full Check** – opens the Full Check setting to start the full accessibility check.

- **Accessibility Report** – Opens a detailed report and hints for repair from the latest full check's results.

- **Identify Form Fields** – recognizes descriptive labels for form fields.

- **Set Alternative Text** – detects all figures in the document and their associated alternative text.

- **Setup Assistance** – Setups how Acrobat show documents and interacts with assistive technologies.

- **Reading Order** – Opens the "Touch Up Reading Order" tool and outlines page elements by reading order
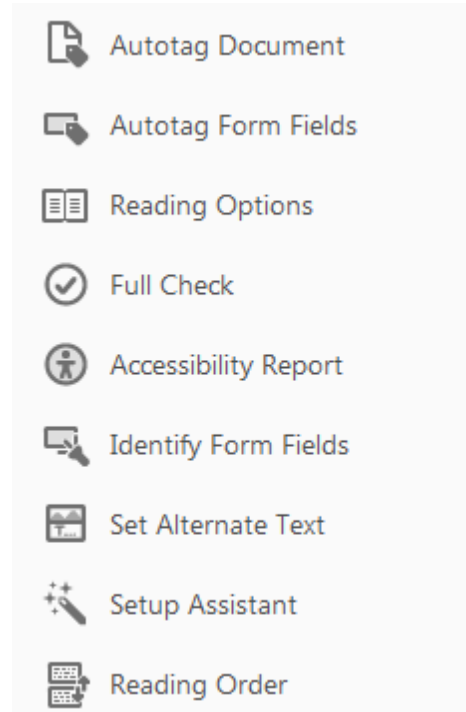
Exporting from Microsoft Word

There are many ways to convert your WORD document into a PDF, but the recommended way is using the "**Make Accessible**" feature found in the "ACROBAT" ribbon. This method will tag PDF documents correctly and guide you through steps to make a PDF accessible. Save your WORD document first before proceeding.

1. Go the "ACROBAT" tab.

2. Click on "Create PDF and Run Action".

3. Click "Make Accessible".

4. Name your file. Save as type will be "PDF files".

5. Click "Save".
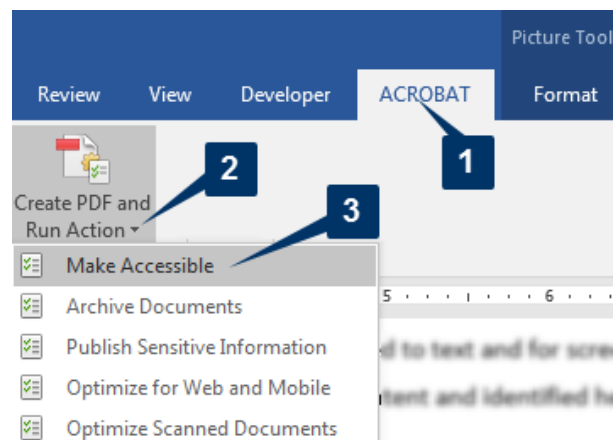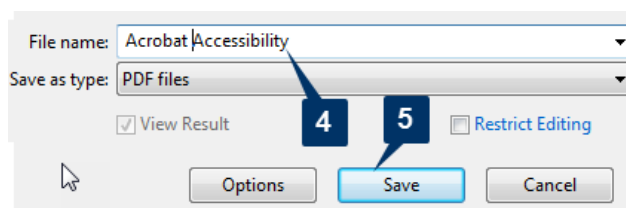
The document coverts to PDF and opens in Acrobat ready to start the "Make Accessible" action wizard.

The "Make Accessible" Action Wizard

The action wizard will guide you through the steps to make a PDF accessible. This wizard will look for common accessibility elements that need further accessibility improvements. Click on the "Action Wizard" from the Tools Pane and select "Make Accessible" if you did not run the wizard from WORD. The right-size pane changes with the outlined steps once the wizard has been activated.

NOTE: This wizard will not work on dynamic forms.

1. **Start -** Click on the "Start" button. The start button will guide you through all the action wizard's steps.

2. **Title -** Uncheck the "Leave As Is" checkmark to edit the title, if necessary. Click "OK".

3. **Text -** Click "OK". Leave General Settings as default.

4. **Fields -** "No, Skip this Step" or "Yes, Detect Form Fields" to have the Wizard tag form fields it recognizes on the document.
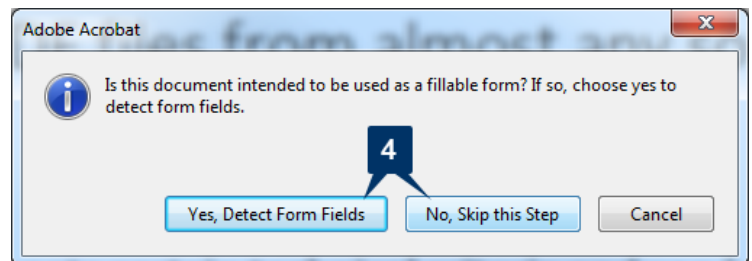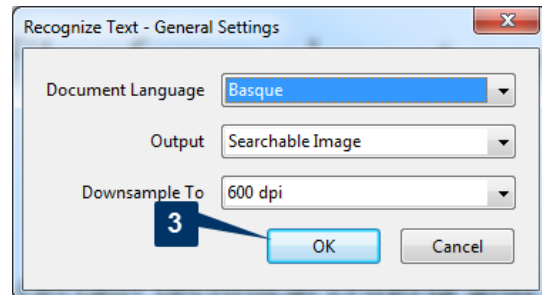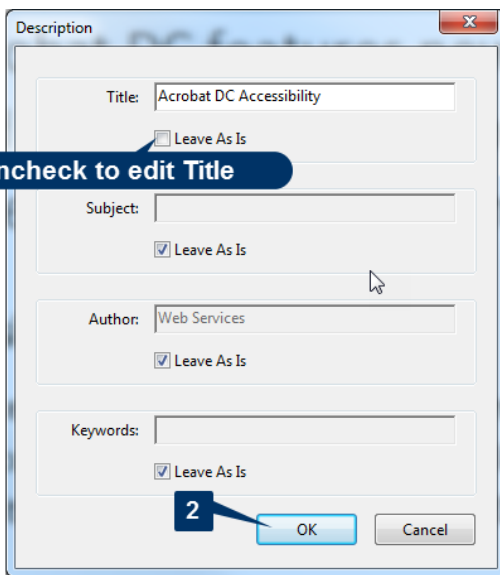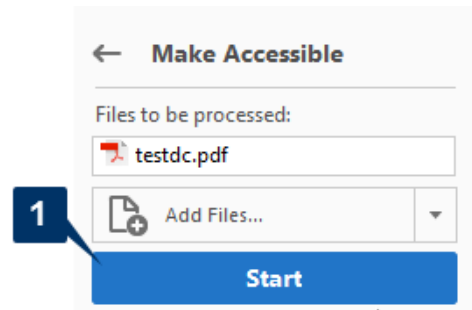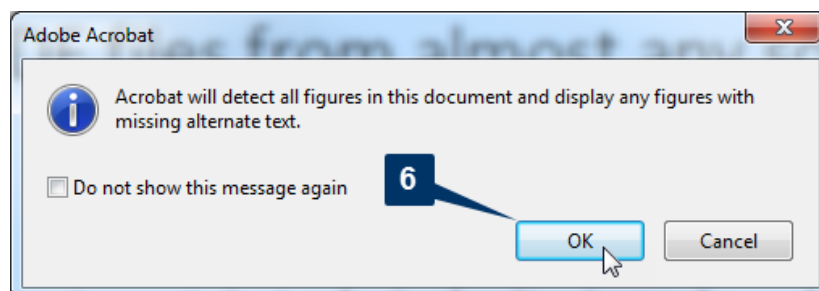
5. **Language** – Click "OK". Leave "English as default.

➢ **NOTE:** If the document is another language, choose the correct language from the drop-down.
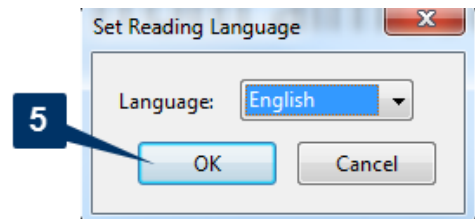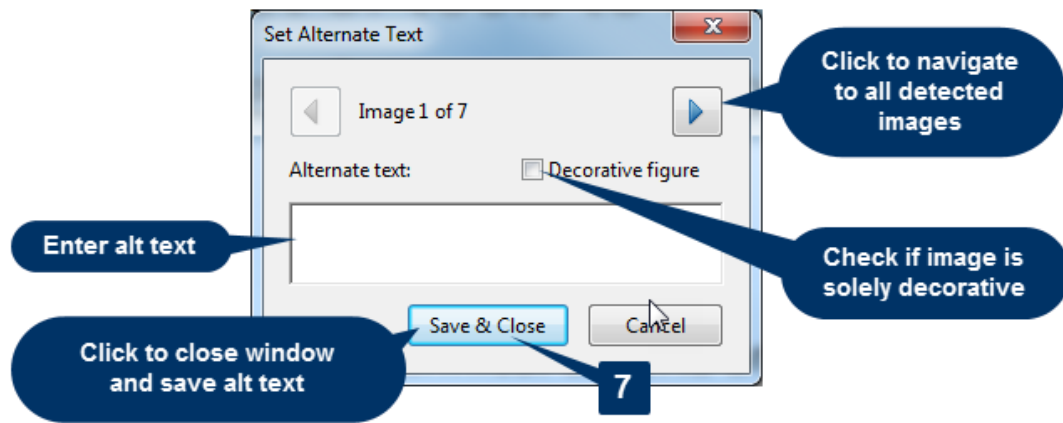
6. **Images -** Click "OK". Acrobat will detect images with missing alternative text.
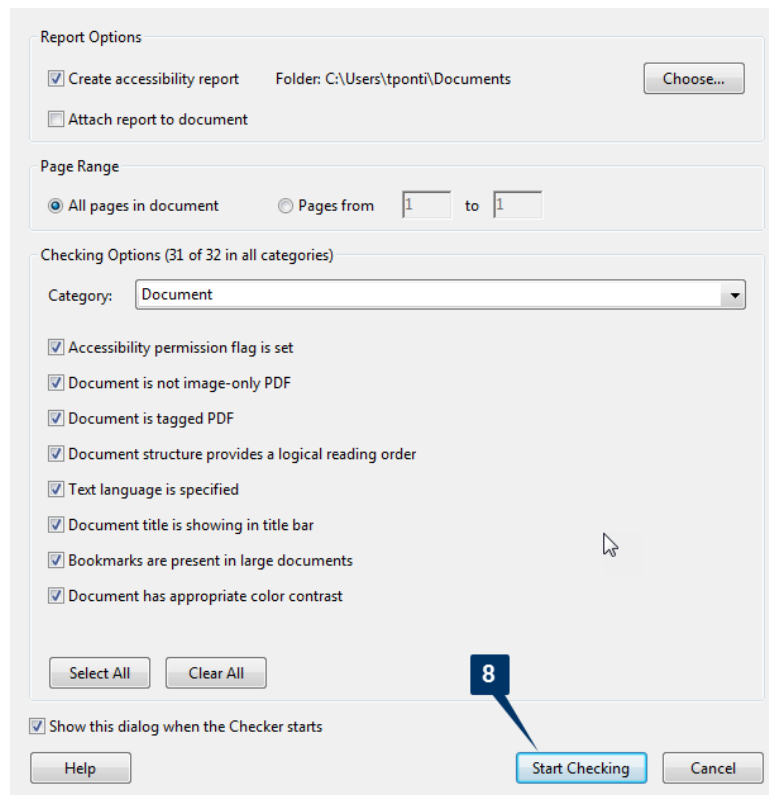
7. If there are no images, the wizard will let you know in a window message. Click "OK".

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ⓘ There are no figures with missing alternate text.

☐ Do not show this message again

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OK
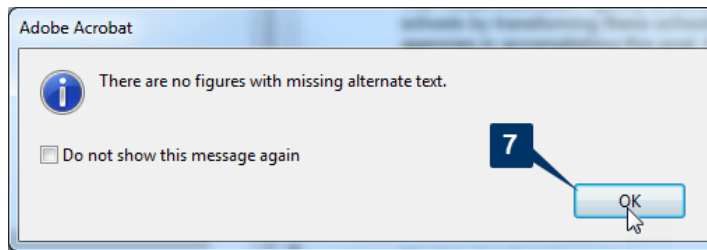
If images are detected, the "Set Alternate Text" window will appear. Enter alternate text for informative images, or check the "Decorative Figure" checkbox if the figure is only decorative.
Click "Save & Close".

Set Alternate Text   ✕

◄   Image 1 of 7   ►

Click to navigate to all detected images

Alternate text: ☐ Decorative figure

Enter alt text

Check if image is solely decorative

Save & Close   Cancel

Click to close window and save alt text

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8. **Accessibility Checker** – Click "Start Checking".

Report Options

☑ Create accessibility report   Folder: C:\Users\tponti\Documents   Choose...

☐ Attach report to document

Page Range

⦿ All pages in document   ○ Pages from 1 to 1

Checking Options (31 of 32 in all categories)

Category: Document   ▼

☑ Accessibility permission flag is set

☑ Document is not image-only PDF

☑ Document is tagged PDF

☑ Document structure provides a logical reading order

☑ Text language is specified

☑ Document title is showing in title bar

☑ Bookmarks are present in large documents

☑ Document has appropriate color contrast

Select All   Clear All   **8**

☑ Show this dialog when the Checker starts

Help   Start Checking   Cancel

Accessibility Checker Options

From the **Accessibility Checker Options** dialog box, it is possible to select what accessibility issues to scan for. Set the Full Check options to match the screen shots below. The options can be set only once and saved as default.

Document: Accessibility permission flag is set, Document is not image-only PDF, Document is tagged PDF, Text language is specified, Document title is showing in title bar.

Category: Document

☑ Accessibility permission flag is set
☑ Document is not image-only PDF
☑ Document is tagged PDF
☐ Document structure provides a logical reading order
☑ Text language is specified
☑ Document title is showing in title bar
☐ Bookmarks are present in large documents
☐ Document has appropriate color contrast

Page content: All page content and multimedia is tagged, Tab order is consistent with structure order, Reliable character encoding is provided, no inaccessible scripts and repetitive links.

Category: Page content

☑ All page content is tagged
☐ All annotations are tagged
☑ Tab order is consistent with structure order
☑ Reliable character encoding is provided
☑ All multimedia objects are tagged
☐ Page will not cause screen flicker
☑ No inaccessible scripts
☑ Navigation links are not repetitive
☐ Page does not require timed responses

Forms, Tables and Lists: All form fields are tagged and have description; TR must be a child of Table, THead, TBody or TFoot; TH and TD must be children of TR; Tables must have headers, LI must be a child of L.

Category: Forms, Tables and Lists

☑ All form fields are tagged
☑ All form fields have description
☑ TR must be a child of Table, THead, TBody, or TFoot
☑ TH and TD must be children of TR
☑ Tables must have headers
☐ Tables must contain the same number of columns in
☐ Tables must have a summary
☑ LI must be a child of L
☐ Lbl and LBody must be children of LI

Select All   Clear All

Alternate Text and Headings: Figures require alternate text, Elements require alternate text, and Appropriate heading nesting.

Category: Alternate Text and Headings

☑ Figures require alternate text
☐ Alternate text that will never be read
☐ Alternate text must be associated with some content
☐ Alternate text should not hide annotation
☑ Elements require alternate text
☑ Appropriate heading nesting

Full Check

The "**Full Check**" is used to scan the entire document and perform a thorough check for many characteristics of accessible PDFs, such as the use of alternative text on images, the presence of tags, document language, and fonts that can be mapped reliably to Unicode text.

1. **Click "Accessibility"** from the Tools Pane. The Accessibility tools open.
2. **Click "Full Check"**. The Accessibility Checker window opens in a separate window.
3. **Click "Start Checking"**.
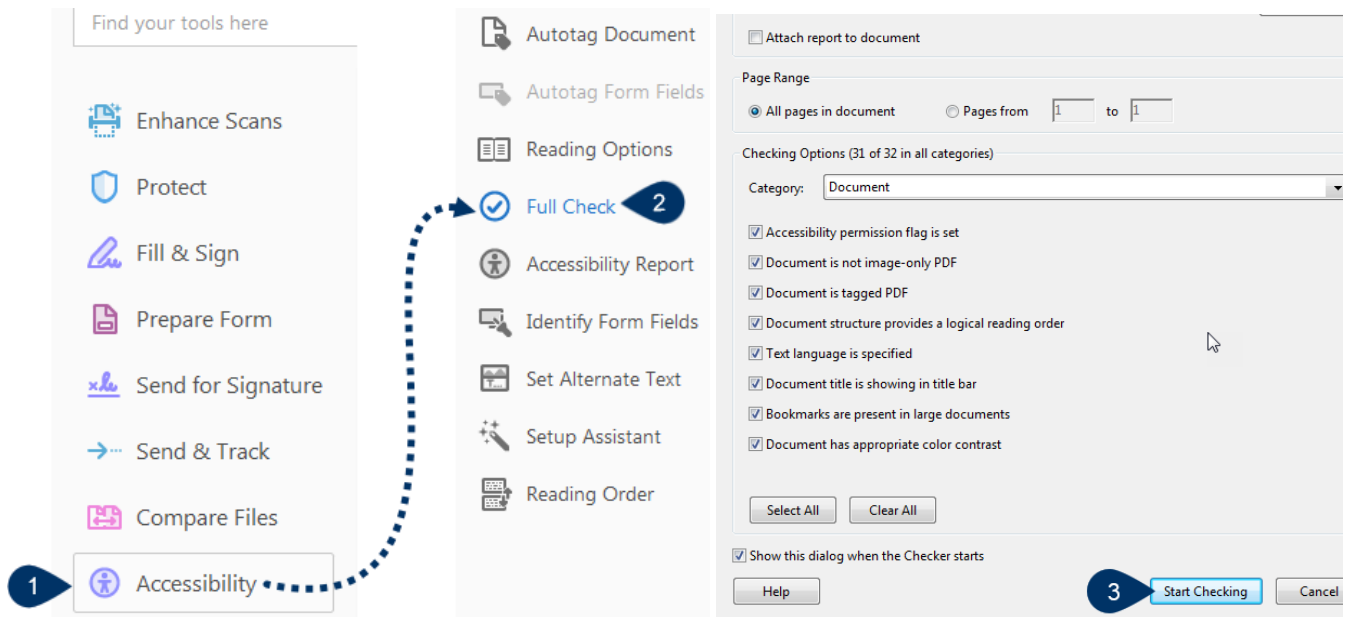
The results will appear on the left-side "Accessibility Checker" pane, and will classify the accessibility checkpoints into the following:
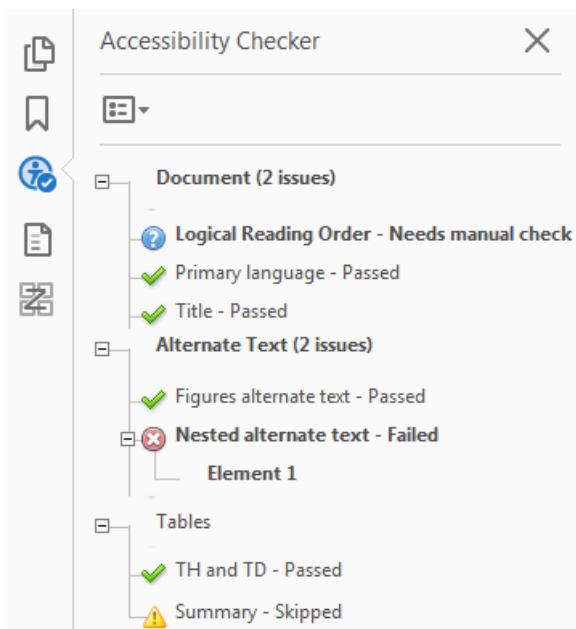
- Passed – meets accessibility standards.

- Failed – does not pass accessibility check.

- Skipped – check was set not to be checked.

- Manual check needed – Acrobat's checker does not have the ability to perform this check. Manual verification is needed.

 **The Failed checkpoints will be the issues that will need to be fixed.**

Touch Up Reading Order Tool

The Touch Up Reading Order tool provides the easiest way to fix basic reading order and tagging issues. Click on "**Reading Order**" under **Accessibility** from the **Tools** menu to activate it.

<div align="center">Tools > Accessibility > Reading Order</div>

When the Touch Up Reading Order tool is activated, this tool will show up as a dialog window with many buttons. Also, the content on the PDF document will be in rectangles (regions) showing the reading order and tag type of page content. Use this tool to:

- Hide decorative or redundant images from screen reader users. To do so, select the image, then click the "background" button.

- Add or edit alt text for images. To do so, right click on an image, then select "Edit alt text".

- Rearrange read order if needed. To do so, click "Show order panel", then drag items to their appropriate location.

- If the page includes data tables, right click on the table, then click the "Table Editor" to apply table headers to the table.
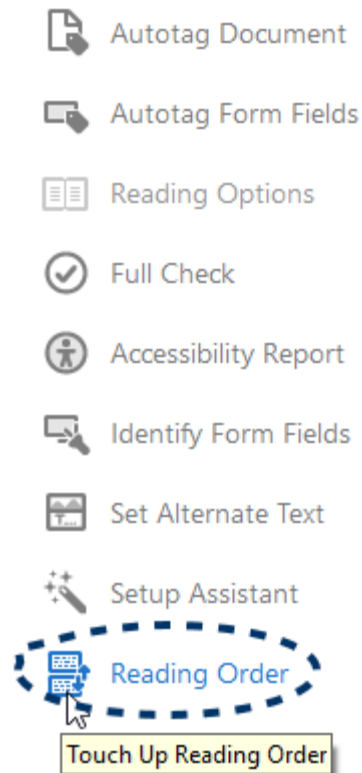
Some the most commonly used tag types used are:

- Text – Regular paragraph text.

- Heading 1, Heading 2, etc. – Heading tags used to add structure to the document.

- Figure – for images and other visual elements.

- Table – to properly tag a table with table headers.

- Background – removes
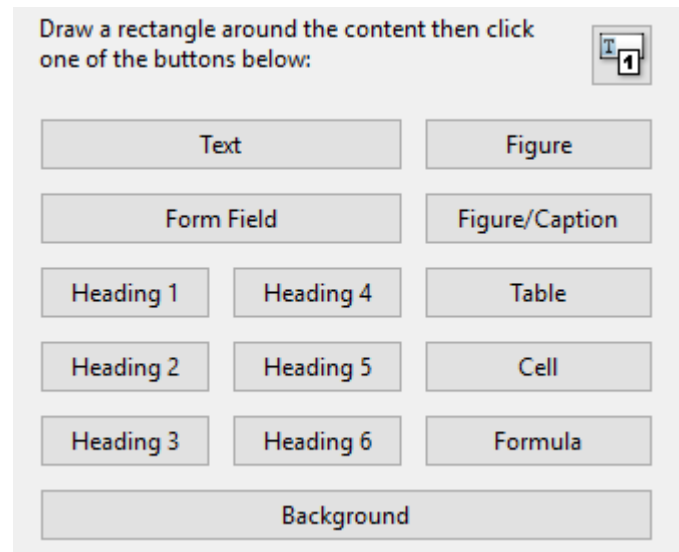
To Tag a Region:

With the Touch Up Reading Order tool active:

1. Place the cursor on the area of the document to start the region (e.g. top left).

2. Click, drag, and then release to draw a rectangle around the content to select it.

3. Click on one of the buttons on the Touch Up Reading Order tool to tag that region.

Change the Tag for a Region

If a page element is not tagged incorrectly, change the tag type for the highlighted region.

4. Click on the number or tag type of a region to select a region. Hover over the number or tag type and the cursor turns to an open hand, click on it and the region is selected and the open hand turns to a closed hand.

5. Click the button for the tag type the highlighted region should be.

Fixing Accessibility Fails

To fix a failed check after running Full Check, right-click on the failed item in the Accessibility Checker panel and choose "Fix". Acrobat either fixes the item automatically, or displays a dialog box prompting you to fix the item manually. The "Fix" option is available on some errors, but not all errors. The Options menu also displays:

- **Skip Rule** – Deselects this option in the Accessibility Checker Options dialog box for future checks of this document, and changes the item status to Skipped.

- **Explain** – Opens the online Help for more information.

- **Check Again** – Runs the checker again on all items. Choose this option after modifying one or more items.

- **Show Report** – Displays a report with links to tips on how to repair failed checks.

- **Options** – Opens the Accessibility Checker to select which checks points are performed.
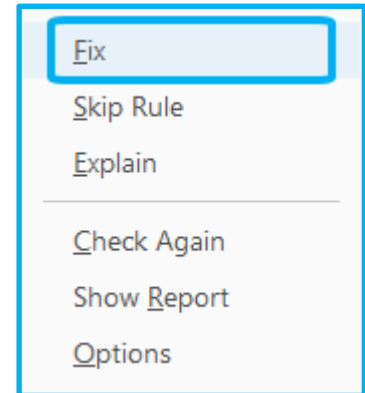
Tagged PDF

All documents need to be properly tagged to specify the correct reading order and document structure.

1. Right-click on "Tagged PDF – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.
2. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.

   Acrobat automatically adds tags to the PDF.
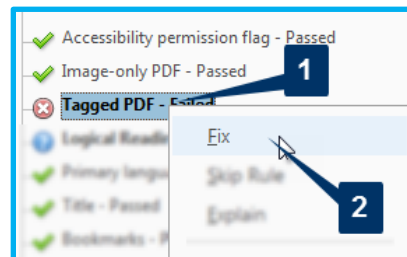
Title

Titles must be clear, concise, but descriptive enough to know what the document is about. Titles help content to get indexed by search engines and allow screen readers not to open and read the entire documents to interpret page content.

1. Right-click on "Title – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.
2. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.

   A dialog window opens.
3. Uncheck the "Leave As Is" checkbox under the "Title"field.
4. Enter the title in the Title text box field. Use the same context as in the main headline of the document.
5. Click "OK" to close the dialog box.
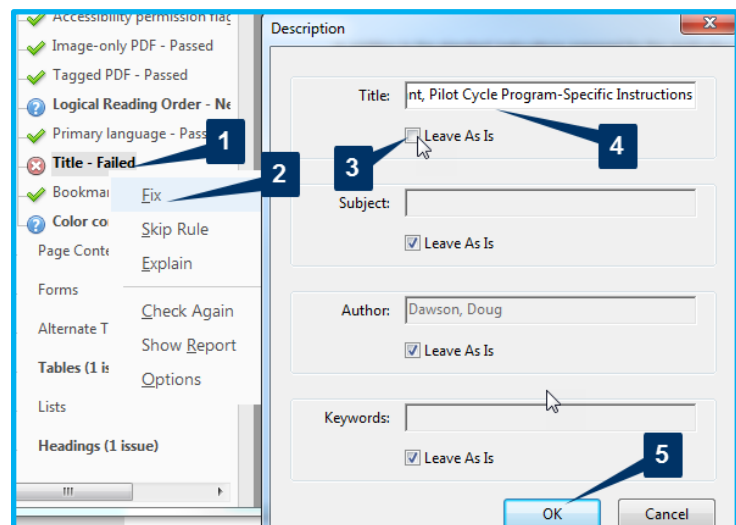
Language

Setting the document language in a PDF enables screen readers to read in the correct language. This check determines whether the primary text language for the PDF is specified.

1. Right-click on "Primary Language – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

2. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.

   The Reading Language dialog window opens.

3. Select "English" from the drop-down list.

4. Click "OK" to close the dialog box.

NOTE: If the document is another language, choose the correct language from the drop-down.
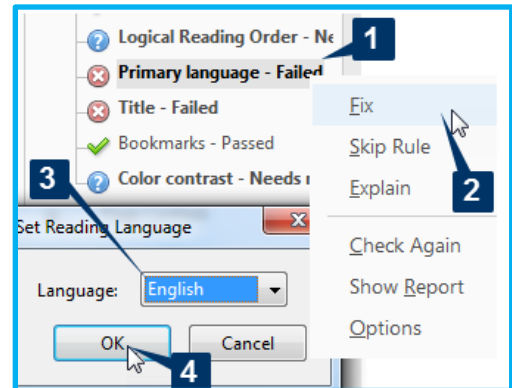
Bookmarks

The check fails when documents have over 20 pages and without bookmarks that parallel the document structure.

1. Right-click on "Bookmarks – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

2. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.
   The Structure Elements dialog window opens.

3. Select the heading (H1, H2, H3, etc.) structure menu. The document needs headings before this step can be performed.

4. Click "OK".
   The document's headings will become bookmarks for the document.
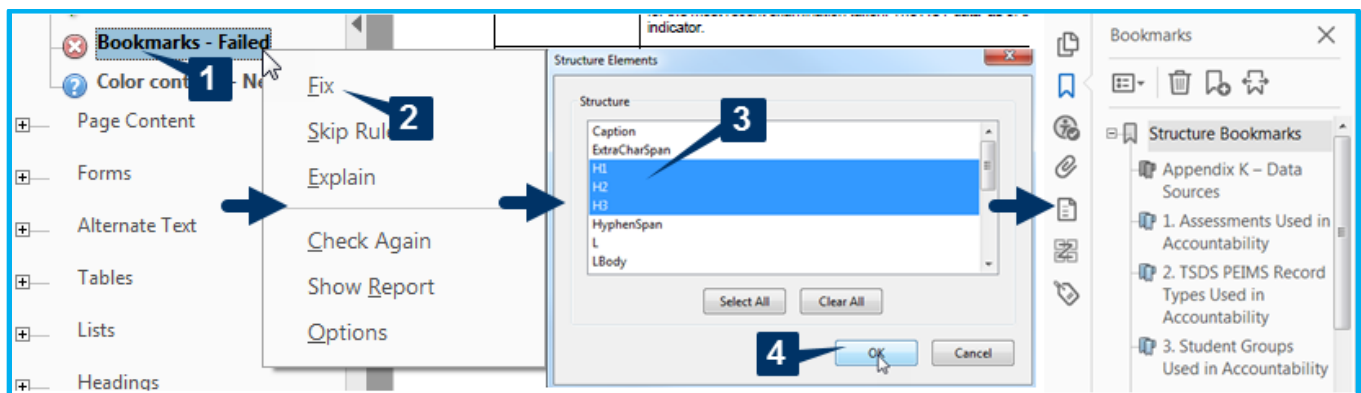
If your document only has a table or don't have headings, add a manual bookmark.

1. Go to the "Bookmark" pane.

2. Click on "New Bookmark"

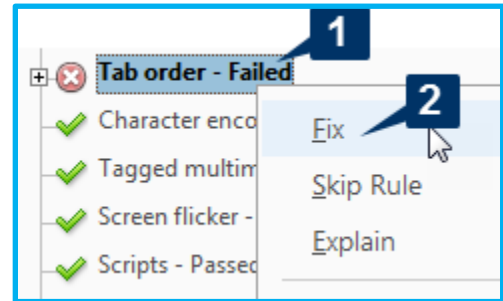3. Enter the document title as the new bookmark.
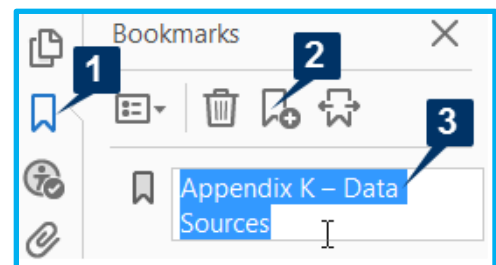
Tab Order

Because tabs are often used to navigate a PDF, it's necessary that the tab order parallels the document structure.

1. Right-click on "Tab Order – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

2. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.

   The tab order is set to parallel the document's structure.

Alternative Text

Make sure that images in the document have alternate text or are marked as decorative.

3. Right-click on "Figures alternate text – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

4. Click "Fix" from the Options menu.

   The Set Alternate Text dialog window opens.

5. Add alternate text in the designated field of the Set Alternate Text dialog window or check the "Decorative figure" checkbox.

6. Click the arrow to move to next figures with missing alternate text.

7. Click "Save & Close" to apply changes.
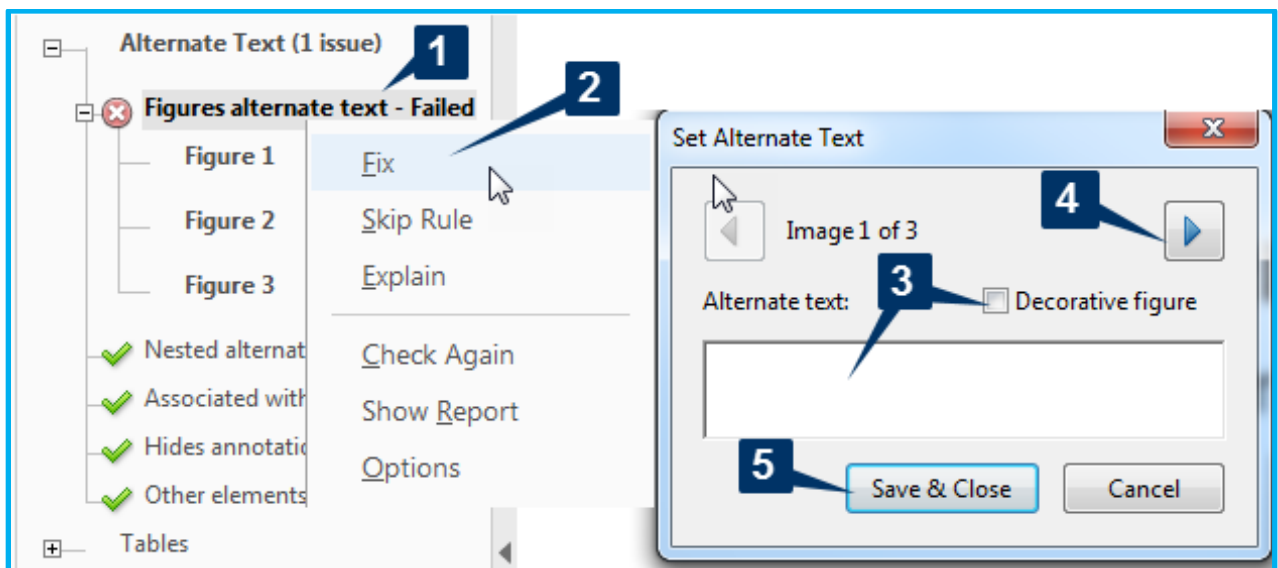
Table Headers

Table headers can be added to a table with the Table Editor. The Table Editor can only be accessed once the Touch Up Reading Order tool has been opened.

1. Right-click the "Element 1" under the "Headers – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

   The table will be shaded on the document to show

2. Click "Reading Order" from the Accessibility Tools Panel.

   The Touch Up Reading Order tool opens.

3. Right-click on the table that is considered "Element 1".

4. Select "Table Editor" from the menu.

In Table Editor mode, the table will have a red border.

5. Right-click the cells that need to be table headers.

   The Table Editor menu appears.

   Note: select multiple cells at once by holding the "Shift" key and clicking on all the cells.

6. Select "Table Cell Properties".

   The Table Properties window appears.

7. Select "Header Cell".

8. Click "OK".

   Table headers will turn a lighter red shade on the table.

Headings

Headings need to be nested correctly in a hierarchical manner within the document. Headings 1 (<h1>) being the most important is typically used only once for the page titles, while heading 2 (<h2>) are used for the major section headings. Heading 3 (<h3>) are sub-sections of <h2> headings, and so on.

1. Right-click the "Element" under the "Appropriate nesting – Failed" from the Accessibility Checker panel.

2. Click "Show in Tags Panel" from the Options menu.
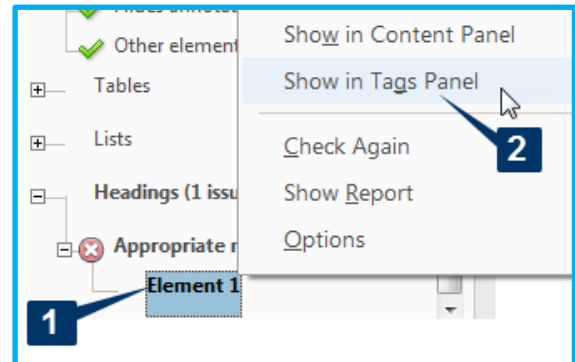
   The Tags panel opens with the tag element shaded gray.

3. Right-Click on the shaded tag.

4. Select "Properties" from the right-click menu.

   The Object Properties dialog window opens.

5. Change the "Type" in the dropdown menu to the appropriate tag.

   The tag should be changed to the correct heading order or nested correctly. Sometimes what is tagged as a heading is not really a heading and can be changed to regular content called "paragraph" or "Text".

6. Click "Close".