

Accessible Links



Accessible links make content more navigable. This page aims to answer the following questions:

- Who benefits from accessible links?
- How do I make links accessible?
- What tools are available to help me create accessible links?
- Where can I learn more about accessible links?

Who benefits from accessible links?

Accessible links benefit everyone, especially:

- People with visual disabilities who are using a screen reader.
- People with cognitive disabilities.
- Anyone trying to access content.



Accessible links will tell users where links will take them and won't burden a screen reader.

How do I make links accessible?

Do:

- Use concise and meaningful language text for links.
- Be clear about where a link will direct the user.
- If it's not apparent by the context of the link, explain what information the source of the link will provide.
- Be sure the hyperlink text is underlined and in another color. Typically, the program or site you're using will do this for you.

Don't:

- Use "click here" as link text.
- Use vague phrasing like "read more" or "learn more" as link text.
- Use "link" in the link text. A screen reader will indicate that it is reading a hyperlink.
- Use URLs for link text. A screen reader will read each letter to the user (see the first example of inaccessible links below).

Examples: Inaccessible and Accessible Links

What tools are available to help me create accessible links?

Screen Readers

A screen reader describes aloud what appears on your computer screen; it speaks the text that's in documents and windows. Screen readers allow blind or visually impaired users to read the text that is displayed on the computer screen with a speech synthesizer or braille display.

Both Mac and Windows OS have built-in screen readers. Using a screen reader to read your content will give you an idea of how users will experience your content.

✓ Note: Using Built-in Screen Readers

ChatGPT/AI

Are you unsure of what context to give for a link you're adding to a page? Use ChatGPT or another AI content generator to write the context for you.

- 1. Go to ChatGPT and log in.
- 2. Click New Chat.
- 3. Enter a prompt like, "I need you to write text for a link I will hyperlink to text on a page. The text you will write will give the user context as to what they will get from going to the page."
- 4. Click send.

Chat GPT will generate a short paragraph about the link. You can use this paragraph as a starting point for writing context for the link.

Caution: Chat GPT sources its answers from a large data set, *not* the actual webpage. It may add incorrect information about the page, so it's important to double-check what ChatGPT writes to help ensure the context is correct.

Where can I learn more about accessible links?

- <u>Create Accessible Links</u>: See more examples of accessible links.
- <u>Accessible Social: A Beginner's Guide to Creating Inclusive Social Media Content:</u> Learn more about creating accessible social media, including creating accessible links.
- NV Access: Before there were built-in screen readers in most computers, there was the NVDA screen reader. Learn more about the ethical screen reader that was built by the blind, for the blind.
- Accessible Hyperlinks: Learn additional best practices to use when creating accessible links.
- Cisco Learning & Development has several courses available that tie to International Association of Accessibility Professionals (IAAP) certifications:
 - Fast Track to Accessibility for Non-Technical Roles
 - MS PowerPoint Accessibility Techniques
 - o Accessibility Fundamentals Disabilities, Guidelines, and Laws
 - MS Word Accessibility Techniques

