



How to Make a Scanned Document Accessible

for Travis County Staff

Purpose

Scanned documents must be made accessible before being published to public-facing Travis County websites. This guide provides step-by-step instructions for making a scanned document accessible.

Prerequisites

- The scanned document must be a PDF file to make it accessible. If your scanned document is an image file, convert it using a free online tool like [Adobe's converter tool](#). Adobe may limit how many conversions you can perform.

Important: *When creating accessible documents, be mindful of the online tools you use.*

- At minimum, PDF accessibility relies on the PDF being properly tagged. Whether you are using Adobe Acrobat Pro or not, this guide will help you tag your PDF. However, **only Adobe Acrobat Pro users** can perform the accessibility actions provided in Steps 2-6 and are encouraged to do so for a more accessible PDF.

Step 1. Auto-Tag

Tags help identify the different components of a document and are fundamental to accessibility.

1. Visit [Adobe's auto-tag tool](#) webpage.
2. Upload your PDF.
3. Select **Auto-Tag PDF**. The auto-tagging process will take less than a minute to complete. When it's complete, the new file will be saved as a ZIP file to your designated downloads location.
4. In the download location, unzip the file to open the non-compressed tagged PDF:
 - On Windows, right-click the ZIP file, select **Extract All** and then **Extract**.
 - On macOS, double-click the ZIP file.

The extracted PDF includes "tagged" in the filename indicating it has successfully been tagged and has achieved minimum accessibility.

Note: *The Adobe Acrobat Pro desktop application also contains an auto-tag tool. However, you are discouraged from using it since it generally produces less accessible tags.*

Adobe Acrobat Pro users are encouraged to complete the next steps to increase accessibility.

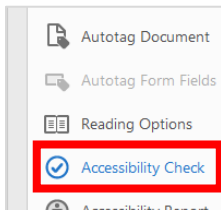
Step 2. Update the Document Properties

1. Select **File** and then choose **Properties** to update the document metadata.
2. Enter a **Title**. Titles are read by screen readers when the document is opened.
3. Enter an **Author**. The author can be a department name.
4. Enter any **Keywords** that will help with online search discoverability.
5. Select **OK** and save the PDF.

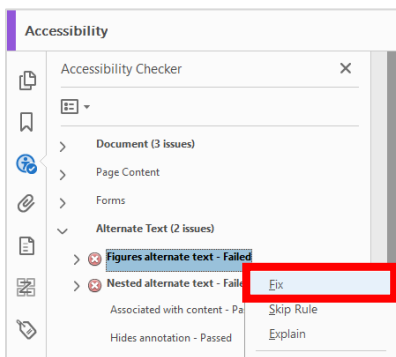
Step 3. Add Missing Alt Text to Images

Alternate text (alt text) should be added to all substantive images. This descriptive text explains the purpose and context of each image and is read aloud to users of screen readers.

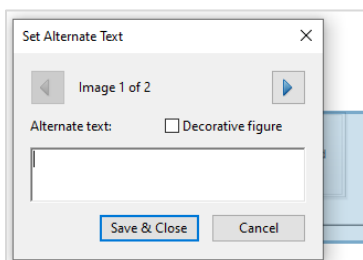
1. To open the **Accessibility** pane, select **View**, then **Tools**, then **Accessibility**, and then choose **Open**.
2. Select **Accessibility Check**.



3. On the dialog that appears, select **Start Checking**. The PDF is checked for accessibility errors and the **Accessibility Check** pane appears with the results.
4. On the **Accessibility Checker** pane, find the alt text errors. If there are no **Figures Alternate Text – Failed** errors, continue to [Step 4 Add Missing Links](#).
5. Right-click **Figures Alternate Text - Failed** and choose **Fix**.



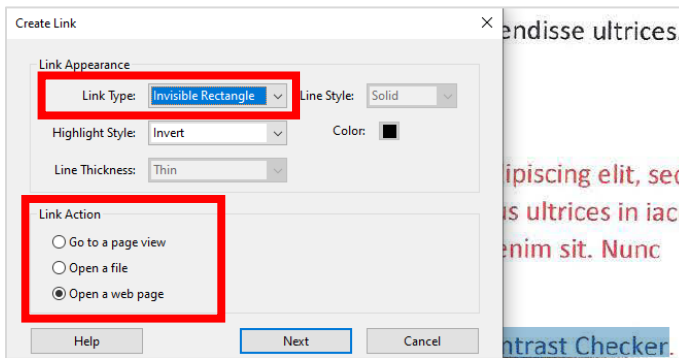
The **Set Alternate Text** dialog appears, and the figure is highlighted on the document.



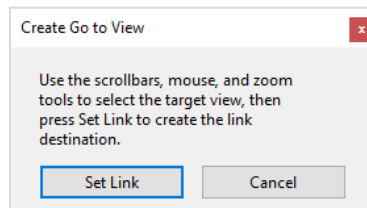
6. Enter an alt text for substantive images or graphics or select **Decorative Figure** for any non-substantive images or graphics that don't need alt text.
Tip: Avoid using punctuation marks in alt text as they may be read by screen readers.
7. Select the arrow button to continue to the next figure and enter alt text, as needed.
8. After you've completed all figures, select **Save & Close**.
9. Save the PDF.

Step 4. Add Missing Links

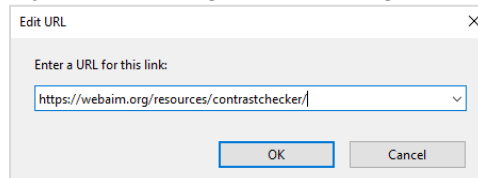
1. Highlight and right-click the text that you want to make into a hyperlink.
2. Select **Create Link**. The **Create Link** dialog appears.
3. Select **Invisible Rectangle** as the **Link Type** and select the appropriate **Link Action**:
 - Select **Go to a Page View** if you are linking to a spot within the same document.
 - Select **Open a Web Page** if you are linking to an online webpage.
 - Never select **Open a File**.



4. Select **Next**.
5. A dialog appears based on the **Link Action** selected:
 - a. If you are linking to another location in the document like for a Table of Contents, scroll to that location, select the area or text, and select **Set Link**.



- b. If you are linking to a web page, enter the webpage URL and select **OK**.



6. Select **OK**.
7. Repeat as needed and save the PDF.

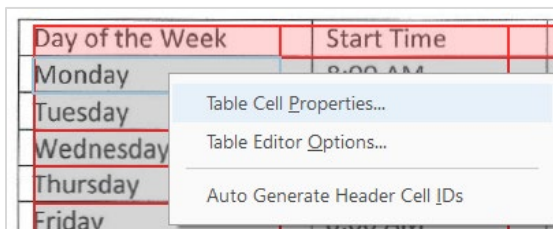
Step 5. Identify Missing Table Headers

Table header cells contain a label or title that describes the content of the corresponding row or column. They must be identified in Acrobat as a header cell so that screen readers can correctly read the table. While the auto-tag tool can correctly identify header cells, follow these steps to manually identify any missing table header cells.

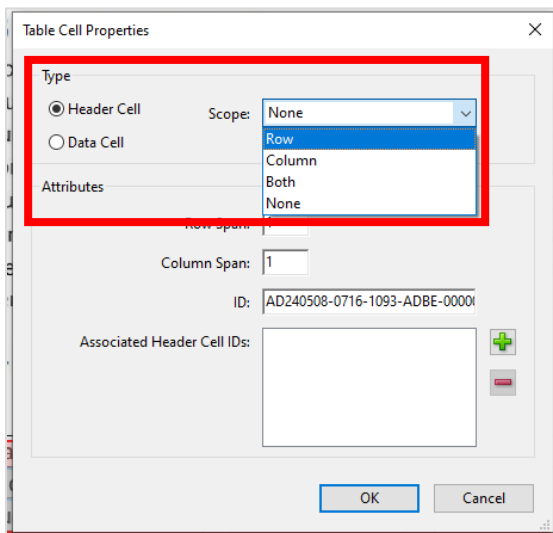
1. On the **Accessibility** pane, select **Reading Order**.
2. Select the table in your PDF. The **Table Editor** button is now available to select.
3. Select **Table Editor**. The **Reading Order** dialog disappears, and the table is shown with red cell borders. Header cells are identified with a red fill.

Day of the Week	Start Time	End Time
Monday	8:00 AM	3:00 PM
Tuesday	8:00 AM	3:00 PM
Wednesday	9:00 AM	3:00 PM
Thursday	8:00 AM	3:00 PM
Friday	8:00 AM	12:00 PM

4. If a header cell isn't filled with a red highlight, right-click it and select **Table Cell Properties**.



5. Under **Type**, select **Header Cell** and the correct **Scope**. In this example, each cell in the first column is a header in their respective row.

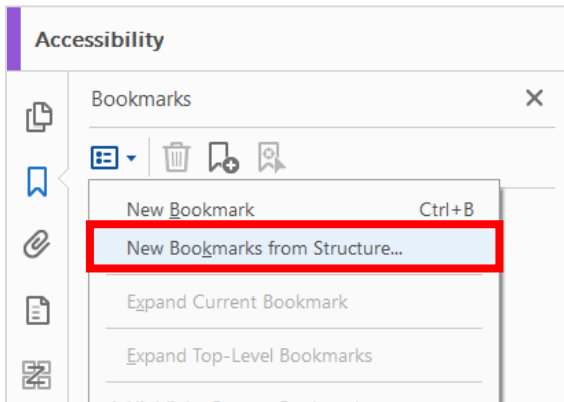


6. Select **OK**.
7. Repeat as needed and save the PDF.

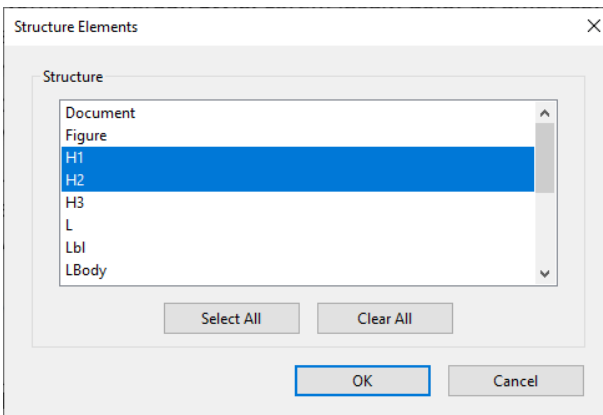
Step 6. Add Bookmarks

Bookmarks give quick access to the sections in a document. They help anyone easily navigate through a document. For this reason, bookmarks should be added to PDFs with 10 or more pages. Follow these steps to easily add bookmarks to your PDF.

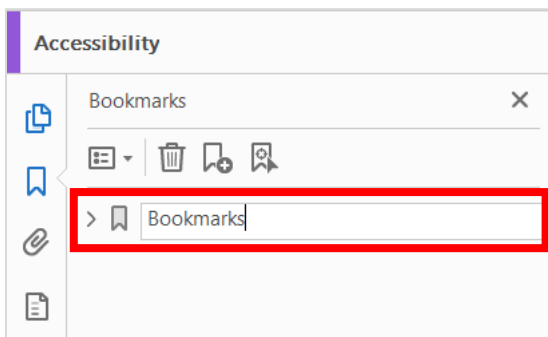
1. On the **Bookmarks** pane, select the options button and then choose **New Bookmarks from Structure**.



2. Press **Ctrl + click** on H1 and H2 levels to highlight them both.



3. Select **OK**.
4. Replace "Untitled" with "Bookmarks" as the bookmark tree structure name.



5. Open the "Bookmarks" tree structure to confirm bookmarks have been added.
6. Save the PDF.

Accessibility Continued...

If you would like to make your PDF even more accessible, see the [PDF Accessibility Error Message Guide](#) for help with fixing common accessibility errors.

Contact

For assistance with the information found in this document, contact Digital & Web Services at WebTeam@traviscountytexas.gov.

Change Log

Ver.	Rev.	Section	Description	Name	Title
1.0	20240702	All	All	Dilip Kanuga	Technical Writer