



# Section 508 Checklist for HTML

Note: The pass/fail criteria in this document represent an interpretation of Section 508 Web standards. This checklist is **NOT** official Section 508 documentation.

SEC. 508 STANDARD	PASS	FAIL
<p>(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content).</p>	<p>Every image, Java applet, Flash file, video file, audio file, plugin, etc. that conveys content has an equivalent alt description or text description, or is described in the adjacent text.</p>	<p>A non-text element has no alt or text description or the description is not equivalent, or is not described in the adjacent text.</p>
	<p>Complex graphics (graphs, charts, etc.) are accompanied by detailed text descriptions, either through a description in the body of the page, a link to a description on a separate page, or the longdesc attribute [See Note 1]</p>	<p>Complex graphics have no alternative text or the alternative does not fully convey the meaning of the graphic.</p>
	<p>The alt descriptions succinctly describe the <i>content conveyed by</i> the objects, without being too verbose (for simple objects) or too vague (for complex objects).</p>	<p>Alt descriptions are verbose (picture of, image of, etc.), vague, misleading, inaccurate or redundant to the context (e.g. the alt text is the same as the text immediately preceding or following it in the document).</p>
	<p>Alt descriptions for images used as links are descriptive of the link destination.</p>	<p>Alt descriptions for images used as links are not descriptive of the link destination.</p>
	<p>Decorative graphics with no other function are inserted as background images using CSS or have <i>empty alt</i> descriptions (alt= ""), but they never have <i>missing alt</i> descriptions. Images with text alternatives in element content are given empty alt text (alt="").</p>	<p>Decorative graphics have alt descriptions that say "spacer", "decorative graphic," or other extraneous text. Graphics have alt descriptions that are redundant with text descriptions within content.</p>

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(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.	Video files have <i>synchronized</i> captions.	Video files do not have captions or captions are not synchronized.
	Audio files have captions and/or transcripts.	Audio files do not have captions or transcripts.
(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.	Color is not used solely to convey important information.	Color is the sole means of conveying information.
	Sufficient contrast is provided.	Contrast is poor.
(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.	Style sheets may be used for layout, but the document is still understandable (even if less visually appealing) when the style sheet is turned off.	The document is confusing or information is missing when the style sheet is turned off.
(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.	Separate text links are provided outside of the server-side image map to access the same content that the image map hot spots access. Client-side image maps CANNOT be used to provide the same hot spot areas (see section f).	The only way to access the links of a server-side image map is through the image map hot spots, which usually means that a mouse is required and that the links are unavailable to assistive technologies. Client-side image maps can provide the same hot spot areas.
(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.	Client-side image maps are used and appropriate alt text is provided for the image as well as each hot spot region.	Server-side image maps are used when a client-side image map would suffice. Appropriate alt text is not provided for the image and each hot spot region.
(g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.	Data tables have the column and row headers appropriately identified (using the <code>th</code> tag).	Data tables have no header rows or columns.
	Tables used strictly for <i>layout purposes</i> do NOT have row or column headers.	Tables used for layout use the header attribute when there is no true header.
(h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.	Data table cells are associated with the appropriate headers (e.g. with the <code>id</code> , <code>headers</code> , <code>scope</code> and/or <code>axis</code> attributes).	Data table cells are not associated with column and row headers or they are associated incorrectly.

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(i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation.	Each frame is given a <code>title</code> that describes the frame's purpose or content.	Frames have no <code>title</code> or a <code>title</code> that is not descriptive of the frame's purpose or content.
(j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.	No elements on the page flicker at a rate of 2 to 55 cycles per second, thus reducing the risk of optically-induced seizures.	One or more elements on the page flicker at a rate of 2 to 55 cycles per second, increasing the risk of optically-induced seizures.
(k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes.  [See Note 2]	A text-only version is created <i>only when</i> there is no other way to make the content accessible or when it offers significant advantages over the "main" version for certain disability types.	A text-only version is provided when the main version is not accessible, but could be made fully accessible.
	The text-only version provides equivalent content and is up-to-date with the "main" version.	The text-only version is not up-to-date with the "main" version.
	The text-only version provides the functionality equivalent to that of the "main" version.	The text-only version is an unequal, lesser version of the "main" version.
	An alternative is provided for components (e.g. plug-ins, scripts) that are not directly accessible.	No alternative is provided for components that are not directly accessible.
(l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be identified with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.	Information within the scripts is text-based, or a text alternative is provided within the script itself, in accordance with (a) in these standards.	Scripts include graphics-as-text with no true text alternative.
	All scripts (e.g. Javascript pop-up menus) are either directly accessible to assistive technologies and the keyboard or an alternative method of accessing equivalent functionality is provided (e.g. a standard link).	Scripts only work with a mouse and there is no keyboard-accessible alternative either within or outside of the script.

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(m) When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).  [See Note 3] [See Note 4] [See Note 5]	A link is provided to a page where the plug-in can be downloaded.	No link is provided to a page where the plug-in can be downloaded.
	All Java applets, scripts and plug-ins (including PDF files and PowerPoint files, etc.) and the content within them are accessible to assistive technologies, or else an alternative means of accessing equivalent content is provided.	Inaccessible plug-ins, scripts, and other applications are used without providing an accessible alternative.
(n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.	All form controls have text labels.	Form controls have no labels.
	Form elements have labels associated with them in the markup (i.e. the <code>id</code> and <code>for</code> or <code>label</code> elements).	There is no association between the form element and its label.
	Dynamic HTML scripting of the form does not interfere with assistive technologies and is keyboard accessible.	Dynamic HTML scripting makes parts of the form unavailable to assistive technologies or is not keyboard accessible.
(o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.	A link is provided to skip over lists of navigational menus or other lengthy lists of links.	There is no way to skip over repetitive lists of links.
(p) When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.	The user has control over the timing of content changes.	The user is required to react within limited time constraints.

**Note 1:** Until the `longdesc` tag is better supported, it is best to use it in conjunction with a standard link to a longer description.

**Note 2:** "Text-only" and "accessible" are NOT synonymous. Text-only sites typically only help people with certain types of visual or cognitive disabilities. They are usually not helpful to users with disabilities.

**Note 3:** Standalone media players are usually more accessible than embedded media players.

**Note 4:** A PDF file can be made accessible to screen reader users, but it may be best to include an accessible HTML version of a document instead of or in addition to PDF.

**Note 5:** PowerPoint files are currently not directly accessible unless the user has a full version of the PowerPoint program on the client computer. It is recommended that an accessible HTML version be provided instead of or in addition to the PowerPoint version.

## Part 2: for Scripts, Plug-ins, Java, etc.

The following standards are excerpted from Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, §1194.21.

<b>SEC. 508 STANDARD</b>
(a) When software is designed to run on a system that has a keyboard, product functions shall be executable from a keyboard where the function itself or the result of performing a function can be discerned textually.
(b) Applications shall not disrupt or disable activated features of other products that are identified as accessibility features, where those features are developed and documented according to industry standards. Applications also shall not disrupt or disable activated features of any operating system that are identified as accessibility features where the application programming interface for those accessibility features has been documented by the manufacturer of the operating system and is available to the product developer.
(c) A well-defined on-screen indication of the current focus shall be provided that moves among interactive interface elements as the input focus changes. The focus shall be programmatically exposed so that assistive technology can track focus and focus changes.
(d) Sufficient information about a user interface element including the identity, operation and state of the element shall be available to assistive technology. When an image represents a program element, the information conveyed by the image must also be available in text.
(e) When bitmap images are used to identify controls, status indicators, or other programmatic elements, the meaning assigned to those images shall be consistent throughout an application's performance.
(f) Textual information shall be provided through operating system functions for displaying text. The minimum information that shall be made available is text content, text input caret location, and text attributes.
(g) Applications shall not override user selected contrast and color selections and other individual display attributes.
(h) When animation is displayed, the information shall be displayable in at least one non-animated presentation mode at the option of the user.
(i) Color coding shall not be used as the only means of conveying information, indicating an action, prompting a response, or distinguishing a visual element.
(j) When a product permits a user to adjust color and contrast settings, a variety of color selections capable of producing a range of contrast levels shall be provided.
(k) Software shall not use flashing or blinking text, objects, or other elements having a flash or blink frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.
(l) When electronic forms are used, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.