



Microsoft Excel Accessibility Reference

→ Designing Tables

Good table design follows some basic principles.

- Use one (1) table per worksheet.
- Keep table structure simple with each data cell associated to only one (1) row and/or column header. This includes avoiding merged cells.
 - Alternative: Split complex tables into multiple simple tables.
- Do not use spaces or **TAB** stops to simulate structure.
- Remove blank rows and columns. Instead, increase the width to increase white space.
- Avoid blank cells, especially table header cells.
- Avoid placing paragraph text around tables.

→ Mark Data Cells as a Table

1. Highlight the cells that are to be a table.
2. Navigate to the **Insert** ribbon and activate **Table** within the **Tables** group.
3. In the **Create Table** dialog, confirm the **My table has headers** checkbox is checked.
4. Navigate to and activate **OK**.



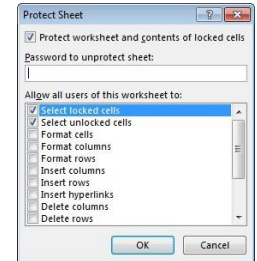
→ Repeat Table Headers on Each Page

1. Navigate to **Page Layout** > **Page Setup** group > **Print Titles**.
2. Confirm the **Sheet** tab is active in the **Page Setup** dialog.
3. Under **Print titles**, choose which **Rows to repeat at top** and which **Columns to repeat at left**.
4. Navigate to and activate **OK**.

→ Protecting Data

Worksheet restrictions can be necessary but it is important that all users have access to the cells.

1. On the **Review** ribbon, in the **Protect** group select **Protect Sheet**.
2. In the **Protect Sheet** dialog, confirm **Select Locked Cells** and **Select Unlocked cells** are checked in the **Allow all users of this worksheet to** section.
3. Navigate to and activate **OK**.



→ Illuminate with Color and Contrast

Using color sensibly will ensure that content is appealing and accessible.

1. Color cannot be the only means of visually conveying information or prompting a response. Textured patterns (to represent data sets) or textual representation (i.e. an asterisk [*]) must be included to distinguish content.
2. Confirm sufficient contrast is provided between the foreground and background colors. A minimum contrast ratio of 4.5:1 is required. Use the **Font Color** picker from the **Home** ribbon to choose an appropriate color against the background.

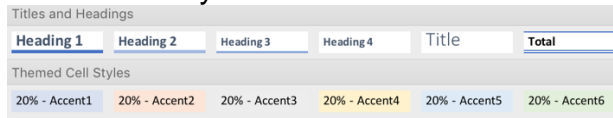
→ Style Sections as Headings

Headings indicate a new content section. Headings show the hierarchy of content in the document. Utilize one of Excel's four heading levels while keeping in mind to a) limit the use of Heading 1 and b) when possible use headings sequentially.

1. Highlight the cell that contains the desired phrase.
2. Navigate to the **Home** ribbon and locate the **Styles** pane



3. Select **Heading 1 – Heading 4** for the phrase respective to its hierarchy in the document.

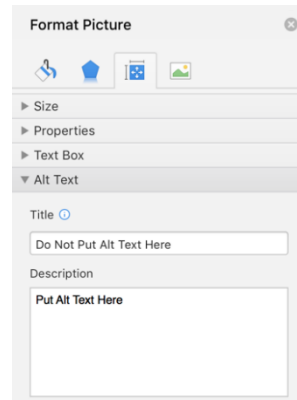


→ Add Descriptions to Graphics

Alternate (ALT) text should be added to pictures, clip art, charts, and shapes. Keep ALT text to 250 characters or less.

Note: Complex images, such as organizational charts and data graphs, require text alternatives be provided. Users must be directed to the additional description.

1. *Pre-step for Complex Images:* For an image made of multiple pieces, select all the pieces and activate the context menu (or right click) to select **Group > Group**.
2. Activate the context menu of (or right click) the image or object and activate **Format Picture** (or **Format Shape**).
3. Navigate to **Layout & Properties > Alt Text**.
4. Provide the purpose of the image or object in the **Description** field.



→ Inject Hyperlinks

Ensure the link text sufficiently describes the purpose of the link.

1. From **Insert > Links** group, activate **Hyperlink** to open the **Insert Hyperlink** dialog.
2. In the **Text to display** field, type a phrase that describes the link's purpose.
3. Place the URL in the **Address** field.
4. Navigate to and activate **OK**.

→ Give Worksheets Unique Names

Sheet names provide information about what is the purpose of the worksheet. Blank sheets in a workbook should be removed.

1. Navigate to a worksheet tab and activate the context menu (or right-click) and select **Rename**.
2. Type a brief, unique name that is descriptive of the sheet contents.



→ Title the Document

Document titles assist users in identifying the desired document.

1. Navigate to and select **File > Info > Properties**
2. Select **Advanced Properties > Summary**
3. Enter a meaningful title in the **Title** field.
4. Optional: Enter an **Author** (i.e. organization name)
5. Navigate to and activate **OK**.

→ Perform a High Level Accessibility Check

Use the **Check Accessibility** feature to check items that can be automatically reviewed. Manual inspection is required in order to perform a full accessibility check.

1. Navigate to **File > Info > Check for Issues > Check Accessibility**
2. Locate and confirm the **Accessibility Checker** pane opens with results.
3. Select an issue to see **Additional Information** and steps to resolve the issue. Note: False positives are possible.



Instructions based on Microsoft Office 2016.