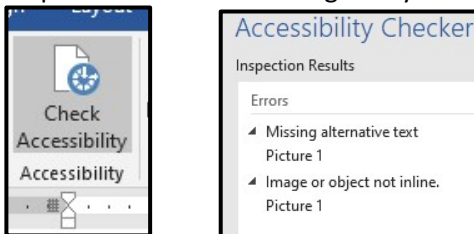


## Make MS Word Documents Accessible: Using Heading Styles and Table of Contents

Why use Word styles in creating your Word document? Using Styles in your Word document allows screen readers to progress logically through your document, reading it in a logically sequential way to users. Additionally, embedding Styles in your document enables the generation of a dynamic Table of Content (TOC), enabling users to navigate more immediately to the content they want to read. An important note about Styles: the best time to implement Styles is in the beginning stages of drafting your Word document.

### Styling of Headings and Body Text

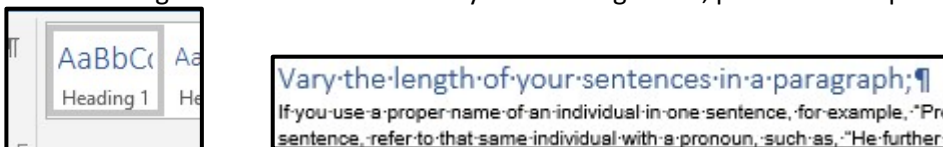
1. Open your Word document. On the Home Ribbon, select the Review tab. Click on the Check Accessibility tool to run an initial accessibility check. The check will produce a report featuring Inspection Results to the right of your main document pane.



2. Expand your main document pane so that it minimizes the Accessibility Checker Inspection Results. We will fix the errors it displays later in the tutorial.
3. Returning to the Home Ribbon, mouse over to the Styles Goup and click on the dropdown menu arrow to open Styles. Expand your Word document by clicking and dragging on its corners to increase the size of your document pane overall. Note that increasing the size of your Word document pane further opens the Styles tab group to display the various choices there.



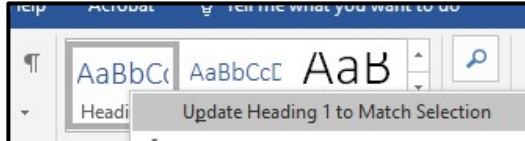
4. In your main document pane, click and highlight the title text or the main text which is usually the first line of text in your document. With the text highlighted, mouse up to your Styles ribbon menu and select the option Heading 1 tab. Note your highlighted text is now blue and a bit of a larger font-size. To reformat your Heading 1 text, proceed to step 5.



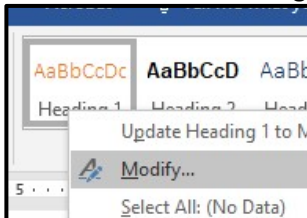
- To change the formatting of your Heading 1 text, highlight it, and reformat it in the usual manner: by choosing the font, size and color you like from the Font group on the Home Ribbon. Here, I've selected an Arial font, size 11, I've bolded it and chosen a font-color that's black.

Vary the length of your sentences in a paragraph; ¶  
If you use a proper name of an individual in one sentence,  
sentences refer to that same individual with a proper name.

- Once your Heading 1 text is formatted the way you like, highlight it again if it's not already. Return to the Styles group again, find the Heading 1 button, right click on it, and select the first option: Update Heading 1 to Match Selection.



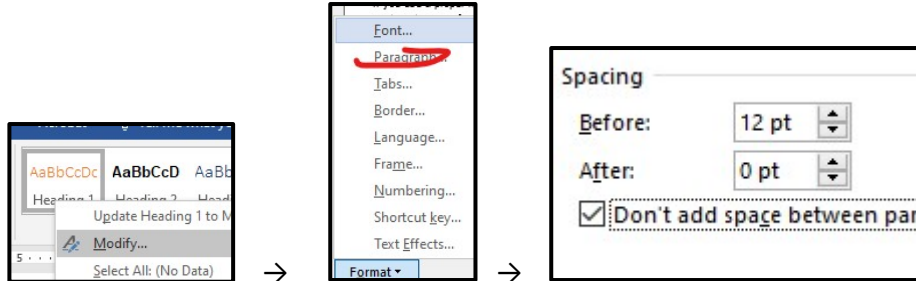
- Repeat the same process for your second level heading, choosing Heading 2 from the Styles group, modifying the formatting and updating it again. Do this throughout the entirety of your document.
- If you want to update one of your Heading styles, mouse up to Styles, pick the Heading you want to modify, and right click on it. Select Modify. Work through the Modify menu items to make the text formatting edits you would like to implement with your Headings.



- To stylize your normal text, repeat the same process with your paragraph text, highlighting it and selecting the Normal tab from the Styles group. After you set your Normal text style, Word defaults all further paragraph text to the "Normal" Style's formatting. It will not, however, update your headings to a Style in the same way. You will have to select each heading individually, and then click on Heading 1 or 2, etc. from the Styles group.
- Another formatting issue that should be checked at this point is the way in which your paragraphs are spaced in your document. Do not use the enter button to separate paragraphs from each other or to move them down the length of your paper. Using the enter button in this way impedes screen readers from progressing seamlessly through your Word document. If you need to move a paragraph in this way, use the style modification panel instead to adjust spacing between paragraphs of text.

I would like add-s  
matter. ¶  
¶  
¶

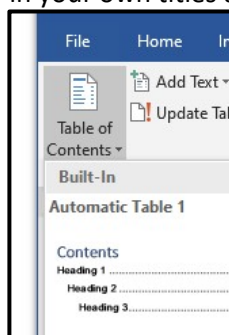
11. To check for this issue, select the Paragraph icon from the Paragraph group in the Home ribbon tab, and click on it to turn on paragraph visibility within your Word document. Check your document for paragraph icons occurring between paragraphs, which indicates that lines of empty text have been entered to create spacing between them. Delete the paragraph skips and use the Modify Styles panel to adjust line height between Paragraph texts.



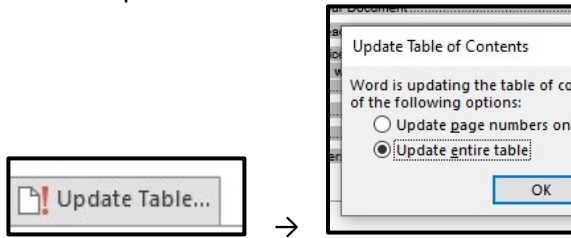
12. It's usually a line of header text following a normal text paragraph, which will require an adjustment to spacing. To change the header's line spacing, right click to select it in your document. Next, in the Styles group tab, right click on the Heading 1 or 2 (or which ever heading style it is). and select the Modify option. A pop-up menu will open. Down in the left hand corner, click on the Format button and select Paragraph to adjust your header spacing. The amount of point spacing you'll need is typically 2 points more than your header's font size. A header that is 12 points, for example, will typically have a spacing of 14 points before it, and the lines of text that follow it are spaced at your document's default value. Adjust these values as necessary.
13. Ticking the "Don't add space..." option will prevent every instance of that heading from having that spacing in instances where two headings of the same type follow each other. Again, try the option ticked in your document, if it does not format your paper correctly, try unticking it.

### Create a Navigable Table of Contents (TOC)

14. Insert your cursor at the top of your document. If you have text in the first textline space, click Enter on your keyboard to move the text down a line. Now mouse up to your Home Ribbon and click on the References tab. In the Table of Contents group, click the drop down menu, and select your preferred formatting option. The Automatic Table 1 option will use the actual headings in your document to create the TOC. The other options allow you the ability to write in your own titles and to make other edits to the TOC.



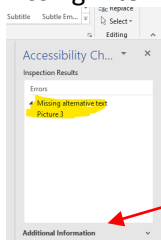
15. To update your TOC in the case where you've made edits in your document, right-click on the Table it to select it. Next, select the tab at the top of the box that says Update Table, and then tick the Update entire table radio button. Hit OK.



### Add Alternative Text to Images and Align the image to Inline with Text

Why add Alt Text to images? Adding alt (alternate/alternative) text to images allows screen readers to provide visually impaired readers with a description of the image, which is important if the image lends important meaning to the document overall.

16. When you first ran your Accessibility Check, it returned a report of your document's images missing Alternative Text.

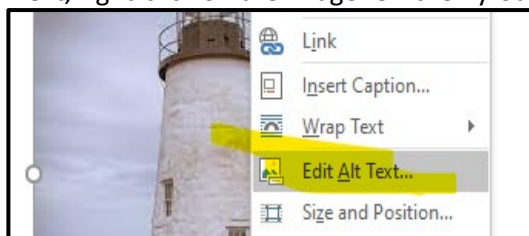


One way to add Alt Text is to follow the steps recommended in the Inspection Result's Additional Information drop-down menu. Otherwise, you can follow the next set of steps below.

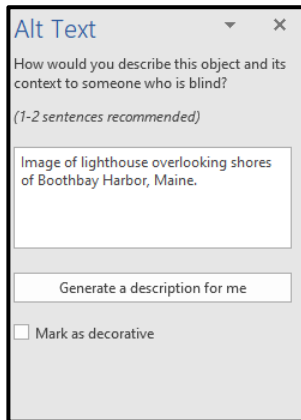
17. First, right click on your image, and click the "inline with text" option that appears next to your inserted image. You may need to move your text down with your keyboard's return key.



18. Next, right-click on the image. On the fly-out menu that appears, click Edit Alt Text.



19. A pop-up window will appear, which prompts you to enter Alt Text for your image. Enter a line or two of text that best describes the photo, and then, save your document. Do not include intro phrases, for example, "This is an image of..."



20. Now that you have added your Alt Text, a re-running of the Accessibility Checker will indicate that your document has no issues found. Save your document as a Word file or export it as a PDF/XPS. Your Alt Text will carry over to the other file formats.

