

ADA Compliance Website Checklist

Making your website accessible to those with disabilities has never been more critical to your business than it is today. While laws around web accessibility largely pertain to government and educational sites, more and more organizations are defending themselves against lawsuits claiming no accommodations for accessibility on their website.

While there are no hard and fast rules for accessibility requirements, the Web Accessibility Standards are generally used as a benchmark for compliance. Use this checklist below to find out if your website meets the standards for ADA accessibility.

User Control Standards

- The site does not use automatic pop-ups, including discounts, newsletter sign-ups, etc
- Content that automatically refreshes can be paused (rotating ads are an exception to this rule)
- When submitting important information, like financial data, SSN, reservation dates, etc., the user is given an opportunity to review and correct the information before a final submission of the data
- Audio and video does not auto-play; these types of media only play on initiation from the user
- The site doesn't change unexpectedly or without warning
- Timed elements - with the exception of necessary limits like auctions - are user adjustable and extendable
- Timed elements - with the exception of necessary limits like auctions - can be extended by up to 8 times the default limit before the timer begins
- Timed elements - with the exception of necessary limits like auctions - provide a warning before the expiration

Site Appearance Standards

- Site layout and navigation is consistent. Logical variance is acceptable - sub-pages may differ from top level pages in layout, but be consistent across page type (e.g. sales pages can differ from landing pages, but all sales pages should have similar layouts)
- Text can be zoomed without negatively impacting the readability of a website, up to 200% of the original size
- Text links within the body of text is distinctive from the surrounding text, using at least two of the following: color, underlining, bold, italics
- All text on the site has a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1 against the background

Usability Standards

- All links and fields have a way to indicate the element has focus
- All website content and functions are accessible just with the use of a keyboard
- The site has a sitemap that is accessible, at a minimum, from the homepage
- The site has search functionality that is accessible, at a minimum, from the homepage
- A link that allows a user to skip the main navigation of the page is available in the top left of every page on the site
- A default language has been set for the website.

Site Development and Functionality

- The site is free from HTML errors, broken links, and error pages
- All forms field have clear labels that exist outside of the form element
- All form fields have clear instruction on input formats and what is expected
- All form fields have instructions on how to fix errors

- Identical images and element throughout the site also have identical labels and alt tags throughout the site
- Each page uses a hierarchy of headings, starting with the <h1> tag and proceeding to the <h2>, <h3>, and so on to <h6> if needed
- Page titles use clear, descriptive text
- Headings use clear, descriptive text
- Links use clear, descriptive text that indicates the content that follows
- The meaning of website text is not conveyed only with color; additional cues are used if color is the primary conveyance

Content Alternatives

- There are no images of text on the site; all text is coded as text (this does not include logos, graph labels, etc)
- All meaningful images have alt text
- Images with significant information have that information in a caption, and the alt text identifies the image and refers to the caption
- Table data should be easy to understand if read aloud
- Any tables that are too complex to be read aloud have a manageable alternative available, and/or a caption that relates the data accurately is used
- All linked documents not in HTML format, such as PDFs, presentations, spreadsheets, and Word documents, meet basic accessibility requirements for their type
- All video with meaningful audio contains closed captioning that is synched to the video
- All audio files and videos are accompanied by an accurate text transcript that conveys the meaning of the audio or video and is available directly below the file.

