

# Web Accessibility Essentials

A brief guide to a better site



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## Why it matters

Making your website accessible isn't just about compliance—it's about improving the experience for **all users**, including those with disabilities. Not addressing accessibility issues can result in legal challenges, lost customers, and poor usability.

This guide explains some of the most prevalent and severe web accessibility violations and ways to resolve them. (Be sure to visit the hyperlinked resources throughout for even more helpful information!)

## Common pitfalls

Here are some of the **top accessibility violations** to avoid (or remedy ASAP):

- Inadequate color contrast
- Missing or inappropriate landmarks
- Keyboard traps and other navigability issues
- Forms that are missing labels
- Form error handling issues
- Lack of focus states to make it clear where a user is within a page (in addition to hover states)



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## For content authors

Here are some quick improvements you can make in the moment. (These may be low-code or no-code fixes, depending on your CMS.)



### Content:

- Use heading levels consistently to organize text and improve readability.
- Avoid using tables for content layout; reserve tables for presenting data.
- Data tables should have column/row headers.

### Media:

- Avoid using images that contain a lot of text.
  - Ensure any text within an image is also included in the image alt text.
- Add descriptions and captions for video content.
- Move content out of PDFs and into web pages (HTML) wherever possible, and/or make sure PDFs are accessible.

### Links:

- Ensure descriptive link text in calls to action (CTAs).
- Ensure consistent link text for each instance of a recurring link destination.

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## For designers & developers

These remedies may require a deeper dive into your website's codebase. Seek assistance from your website support team, or give Pixo a call!



### Design:

- Ensure adequate color contrast.

### Wayfinding:

- Include a sitemap in an easy-to-find location on your homepage.
- Ensure pages contain appropriate landmarks.
- Use focus states (not just hover states) to make it clear where a user is on your page.
- Ensure content is entirely navigable without the use of a mouse (i.e., avoid "keyboard traps").
- Avoid heavy navigation by providing multiple ways to access site content (e.g., via menus, site map, and search bar).
- Avoid empty hyperlinks.
- Add aria-labels to widgets and other interactive elements.

### Forms:

- Ensure all fields are appropriately labeled.
- Ensure accessible form error handling.

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## Testing tools

Here are links to some of our favorite **free** web accessibility tools and resources:



- Accessibility Bookmarklets (co-authored by Pixo):  
[accessibility-bookmarklets.org](https://accessibility-bookmarklets.org)
- Pa11y toolkit: [pa11y.org](https://pa11y.org)



## Need additional accessibility support?

Pixo is here to help! Learn more about our web accessibility services, including audits, testing, remediation, content author training, and more:

[pixotech.com/services/web-accessibility](https://pixotech.com/services/web-accessibility)

[info@pixotech.com](mailto:info@pixotech.com) | (217) 344-0444