Accessible Social Media Checklist

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# Overview

Accessible social media posts increase the number of people your information will reach. If your social media is accessible, it reflects positively on your library because you create an inclusive environment for all patrons. You unintentionally exclude people if your social media posts and tweets are inaccessible!

This checklist summarizes the information from the <Accessible Social Media Webinar>.

# Checklist

Use this checklist as you create your accessible social media posts!

## Include ****Alternative Text**** if you are posting an image or gif.

Learn more about alternative text below…

### What is Alternative Text?

Alternative Text (alt text) is a textual description of an image for people who can't see the image (blind/deafblind). Screen readers will read an image's alt text if it is available.

What happens when you don’t use alt text to images and gifs in your social media posts?

If you do not add alt text to your images, some social media platforms use AI to generate alt text, which is often incorrect and confusing. Or screen readers may read the image's file name or nothing at all, only telling the user there is an "image" or a "graphic" with no label.

If you do not add alt text, people will be excluded from accessing the full meaning of your social media posts.

### How to create good alt text?

Describe your images and gifs clearly, and concisely. Please provide the relevant context for the image as it relates to your social media post (e.g., consider why you have included the image in your post in the first place).

### Alt text tips and guidelines

1. Write for your audience. You will describe an image intended for children (like an image from a storybook) differently than you would a Stephen King book cover.
2. Use present tense and action verbs.
3. Describe the physical characteristics of people in images.
4. If there is text within an image, write it in the alt text.
5. Descriptions should be objective and free from censorship. People who use screen readers should receive equal access to the information conveyed in images.
6. You do not need to describe decorative images (purely aesthetic images that do not convey any meaning), but we suggest you refrain from using decorative images in your posts.
7. When writing alt text, you do not need to include the phrase “This is an image/graphic of…” because screen readers will announce that it is a graphic.
8. Your alt text should not include information available in the surrounding text (e.g., do not use image captions as the alt text).
9. Do not use alt text to add extra information unrelated to the image, such as keywords for marketing.

Some things may be difficult to describe. The goal is to give the reader all the important information in an image.

### Related Alt Text Resources

* [Accessible Publishing's Guide to Image Descriptions](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessiblepublishing-ca-guide-to-image-descriptions/)
* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
* [Accessibility Information Toolkit for Libraries](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/ontario-council-of-university-libraries-ocul-accessibility-information-toolkit-for-libraries/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Recording](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/accessible-social-media-webinar-recording/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Slides](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/social-media-webinar/)

## Use Pascal Case Hashtags at the end of your social media posts.

Learn more about hashtags below…

### What are hashtags?

Hashtags are used to group content together by topic or category. A hashtag always begins with the number or pound symbol (#) and cannot have spaces, punctuation, or symbols (other than the number or pound symbol at the beginning). Hashtags can be one-word, multiple words, or phrases.

You can use hashtags to search for or browse social media posts.

### What is Pascal Case?

Hashtags and other phrases which combine multiple words should be written using Pascal Case (also popularly referred to as camel case). Pascal Case capitalizes the first letter of each word (e.g., #AccessibleSocialMedia).

When hashtags are in Pascal Case, screen readers will read each word individually. If you do not use Pascal Case, screen readers have difficulty pronouncing the hashtag, especially if the hashtag is in all lowercase letters or long.

The difference between Camel Case and Pascal Case is that Camel Case does not capitalize the very first letter (e.g., #accessibleSocialMedia)

### Hashtag tips and guidelines

1. Use Pascal Case in your hashtags.
2. Screen readers will read the word "hashtag" when encountering a hashtag, so having many scattered throughout a post can be frustrating and slows down the reader.
3. When hashtags are at the end of the text, they won’t interrupt your message.
4. If you only have 1 or 2 hashtags in your post, it is okay to include them within the sentence.

### Related Hashtag Resources

* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Recording](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/accessible-social-media-webinar-recording/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Slides](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/social-media-webinar/)

## Limit the number of Emojis in your posts.

Learn more about using emojis in your social media posts below…

### What are emojis?

Emojis are images or icons used in text to convey emotions or visually represent words in a sentence. Each emoji has a description assigned to it, which screen readers will read out. You can use Emojipedia to look up different emoji descriptions.

### How to add emojis accessibly?

Limit the number of emojis you use in your posts. Using multiple emojis in a row can be confusing and verbose, and the description may not match your intended meaning.

Using a few emojis in your post can be fun and inclusive! For example, if you use emojis to describe a book, people who use assistive technologies can guess the book title based on the emoji descriptions.

### Related Emoji Resources

* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Recording](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/accessible-social-media-webinar-recording/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Slides](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/social-media-webinar/)

## Include Captions in any media with audio.

Learn more about including captions in your social media videos below…

### What are captions?

Captions are a text version of the audio users need to understand the content. It includes speech (e.g., character dialogues and narration) and non-speech (e.g., descriptions of sounds like birds chirping).

### Media with audio must have captions.

Captions mean people who need them, and people in public spaces who don’t have headphones can understand your content.

We understand that captions can be difficult and time-consuming to create. We suggest hiring a stenographer or editing AI-generated captions (like on YouTube) before posting any media with audio. AI-generated captions are often grammatically incorrect and have difficulty picking up different accents and speedy talkers.

### Related Caption Resources

* [Audio Description Style Guide v 2.3](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/netflix-audio-description-style-guide-v2-3/)
* [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Quick Reference](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/web-content-accessibility-guidelines-wcag-quick-reference/)
* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
* [Accessibility Information Toolkit for Libraries](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/ontario-council-of-university-libraries-ocul-accessibility-information-toolkit-for-libraries/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Recording](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/accessible-social-media-webinar-recording/)
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## Add Audio Descriptions to videos if there are undescribed visual information users need to understand the content.

Learn more about adding audio descriptions to your social media videos below…

### What are audio descriptions?

Audio descriptions provide content to persons who are blind and have low vision. It describes any visual information needed to understand the content, including any text displayed in the video. It is also known as described video or video descriptions.

### How to add audio descriptions?

There are three different ways that audio descriptions can be added to videos:

1. Audio descriptions can be narration added (in post-production) in the space between characters speaking.
2. You can add them in YouDescribe by pausing the video and quickly describing the action of the previous scene.
3. You can integrate them into your video scripts by describing aloud what you're doing in the video when you record it.

### How to create good audio descriptions?

Always consider the video context to determine what is important to describe. You need to describe the important visual elements of the scene, information that cannot be understood solely through dialogue and sound effects (e.g., costumes, expressions, actions etc.).

### Audio descriptions tips and guidelines

1. Consider the volume and placement of your audio descriptions. The audio description track needs to be audible on top of the video but not overlap with the video’s dialogue.
2. Audio descriptions should be concise.
3. Aim to be objective, so only describe what you see in the video. Do not reveal key information (e.g., character names or actions) before they are shared with everyone else on the screen and only describe what is occurring.
4. Describe the physical characteristics of people in the video.
5. Do not censor your audio descriptions.

Also, consider adding transcripts for your video and audio media. This will be especially helpful if you need to add a detailed audio description.

### Related Audio Description Resources

* [Audio Description Style Guide v 2.3](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/netflix-audio-description-style-guide-v2-3/)
* [Social Story: Ready for Reading](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/toronto-public-library-social-story-ready-for-reading/)
* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
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## Consider the colour contrast of your social media posts.

Learn more about colour contrasts below…

### What is colour contrast?

Colour contrast is

Don’t use only colour to convey information in your post, as persons who are colour-blind may not be able to understand the information.

Use a high colour contrast between your text and background. Persons with low vision may not understand your content if you use colours with low contrast (e.g., gray text on a light blue background).

Consider how the text contrasts with the background of your post. For example, black text on a white background is accessible, but light grey text on a white background has low contrast and is difficult to read.

### Related Colour Contrast Resources

* [Color Contrast Checker](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/tpgi-color-contrast-checker/)
* [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) Quick Reference](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/web-content-accessibility-guidelines-wcag-quick-reference/)
* [Guidelines on Library and Information Services for People with Disabilities](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/cfla-guidelines-on-library-and-information-services-for-people-with-disabilities/)
* [Accessible Social](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/accessible-social/)
* [Inclusive Design for Social Media: Tips for Creating Accessible Channels](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/inclusive-design-for-social-media-tips-for-creating-accessible-channels/)
* [User Design, Illustration, and Typesetting](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/user-design-illustration-and-typesetting/)
* [Accessibility Information Toolkit for Libraries](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/access-resource/ontario-council-of-university-libraries-ocul-accessibility-information-toolkit-for-libraries/)
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## Consider the font attributes you use in your social media posts.

Learn more about font attributes below…

### What are font attributes?

Font attributes are added to the font or text of your document to change or style it (e.g., font size, colour, font face, line spacing, etc.). Font attributes can make your document inaccessible, so you must consider carefully how and where to apply them.

### What are accessible font attributes?

Accessible font attributes ensure that the text of your document is readable for persons with print disabilities.

### Font attributes tips and guidelines.

1. Use easily readable sans serif fonts like Arial, Verdana, Helvetica, and Calibri.
2. Use a larger font size when possible.
3. Limit or avoid the use of all caps.

### Related Font Attribute Resources

* [Summer Short Webinar: Font Attributes](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/summershort-font-attributes/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Recording](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/accessible-social-media-webinar-recording/)
* [Accessible Social Media Webinar Slides](https://accessiblelibraries.ca/training_resource/social-media-webinar/)