

# Accessibility Checklist

Your guide to basic web accessibility compliance

*plural*<sup>®</sup>

People with disability make up about 18% of Australia's population. That's an audience of one in every six, or over 4.4 million people just in Australia that your communication may not reach.\*



\* [aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/people-with-disability/prevalence-of-disability](https://aihw.gov.au/reports/disability/people-with-disability-in-australia/contents/people-with-disability/prevalence-of-disability)

# Why is accessibility important?

## Inclusion is essential

Making things accessible translates to better opportunities, as it means more people can use them. Accessible digital experiences also remove barriers. This is incredibly important for things like employment, an area where disabled people have historically faced discrimination.

Web content can be difficult for users with disability to navigate and process. The Disability Discrimination Act 1992 ensures people with disability have the same access to information and services as others in the community. This extends to any customer portals, mobile applications, and any other ways your users and customers interact with your organisation via the Internet.

## What is WCAG?

WCAG, a.k.a. the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, are the technical guidelines created by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) for creating accessible web-based content and are globally accepted as best practice for web development.

There are three levels of WCAG conformance:

- Level A: the minimum level
- Level AA: the medium level
- Level AAA: the highest level

### ♥ Pro tip! What is A11y?

*A11y is an abbreviation for accessibility (which has 11 letters between “a” and “y”) commonly used as shorthand for digital accessibility.*

## Unexpected benefits

The most obvious benefit of web accessibility is that it helps people with disabilities enjoy your website’s content, products, and services. However, the advantages of web accessibility aren’t limited to their immediate impact for people with disabilities — and some of them may surprise you, including:

1. The ability to instantly reach and captivate a wider audience pays off commercially
2. Building a positive brand image by being willing to take a stand on issues that matter
3. Improving SEO, for example including closed captions, transcripts for site media
4. Improving the overall experience for all users by making your content easy to find
5. Writing higher-quality code to decrease unsustainable or long-term code debt.

# Testing for accessibility

The Australian and international standard for accessibility is WCAG 2.1 AA compliance and our checklist is based on that very standard. We categorise our accessibility testing in five major area of disabilities pictured below.

To ensure that your organisation's site and applications are accessible, you'll want to perform automated and manual accessibility testing against web accessibility standards or regulations.

The team at Plural has developed this accessibility checklist to help you get a head-start on 12 core accessibility requirements. These checks are a subset of WCAG 2.1 AA requirements, but does not replace the need for a complete WCAG 2.1 review by an expert. It does however empower your team to begin testing for these accessibility requirements right away to provide you with some big wins in a very short time frame.

## ♥ Pro tip!

### Is there a tool that can quickly measure compliance for my website?

*Automated tools can measure a website's compliance with certain guidelines. These include the WAVE toolbar and AChecker. Using these tools can help you find trouble areas on your site. But you must also do manual tests to be sure that your website is accessible. Some accessibility guidelines require a human's judgement in order to be measured.*

## The five major categories of disabilities are...



### Visual

Includes blind, low-vision, and colour blind



### Hearing

Includes deaf and hard of hearing



### Motor

Includes people who are not able to use a mouse



### Speech

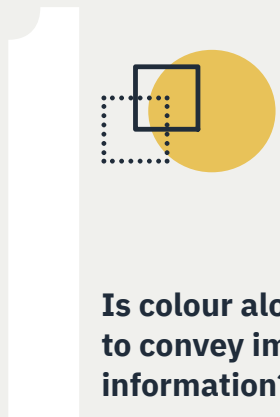
Includes people who are not able to speak



### Cognitive

Includes dyslexia, ADD, and epilepsy

# Top 12 accessibility checks

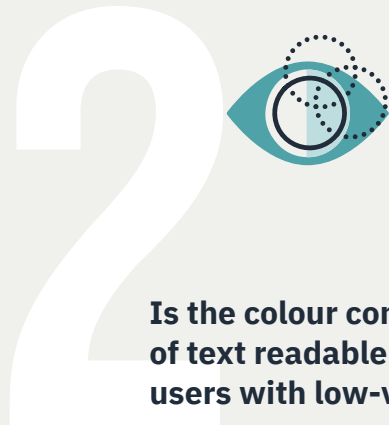


**Is colour alone used to convey important information?**

**How to check:** View the page in gray-scale. Can you still understand all the information and perform all page functions?

**Key Beneficiary:** Colorblind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.4.1

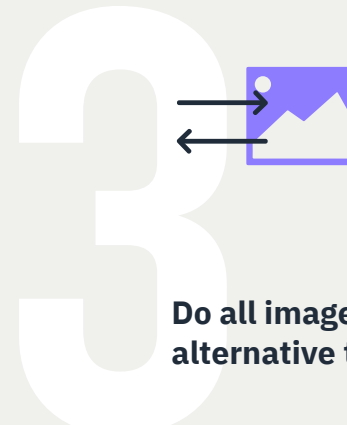


**Is the colour contrast of text readable for users with low-vision?**

**How to check:** aXe should not detect any issues related to colour contrast.

**Key Beneficiary:** Low-Vision

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.4.3

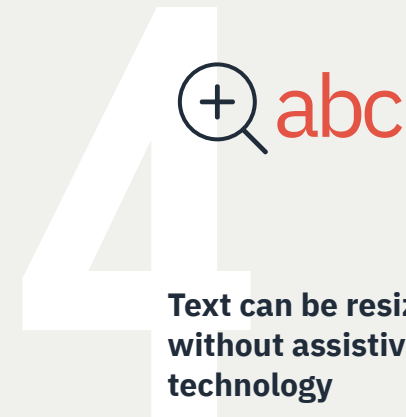


**Do all images have alternative text?**

**How to check:** If you replaced every image with the alternative text, would you still have access to all meaningful information in those images? Does the alternative text make sense?

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.1.1



**Text can be resized without assistive technology**

**How to check:** Except for captions and images of text, validate that text can be resized up to 200% and remain legible. Test this in Chrome: View > Zoom In > to increase the font size on your screen.

**Key Beneficiary:** Low-Vision

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.1.1

# Top 12 accessibility checks



**If the image is a link, does the alternative text clearly identify the link destination?**

**How to check:** If you replaced the active image with the alternative text, would you still understand the purpose of that link? Are any images used to present text? (See WCAG 2.1 SC 1.4.5 for exceptions.)

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.1



**Are all CSS background images either pure decoration or have alternative text?**

**How to check:** If you hide all background images, do you still have access to all information and functionality? Right-click on an image to view source, and if there is no `<img alt="" />` tag, then it is probably a CSS background image.

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.1.1

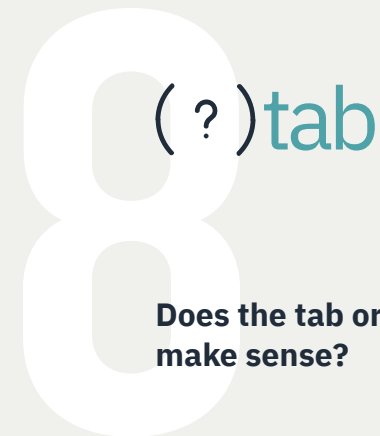


**Is there a mechanism to skip navigation and other page elements?**

**How to check:** Validate that a link is provided to skip navigation and other page elements that are repeated across web pages, or that a page has proper heading structure.

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 2.4.1  
Keyboard



**Does the tab order make sense?**

**How to check:** If you tab through the page using only your keyboard, is the navigation order logical and intuitive?

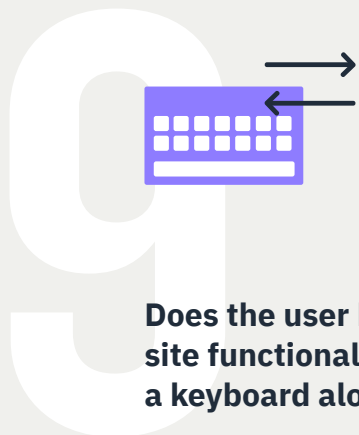
**Key Beneficiary:** Keyboard users (typically people with visual and/or motor disabilities)

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 2.4.3

# Top 12 accessibility checks

## ♥ Pro tip! Enabling screen readers on your computer

Screen readers are an important tool for performing manual accessibility testing. If you're a Windows user, we recommend downloading the free [NVDA screen reader](#) build by NV Access. If you're on a Mac, you've already got a screen reader called [Voice Over](#) installed on your machine. You can access it through the Accessibility menu in System Preferences.

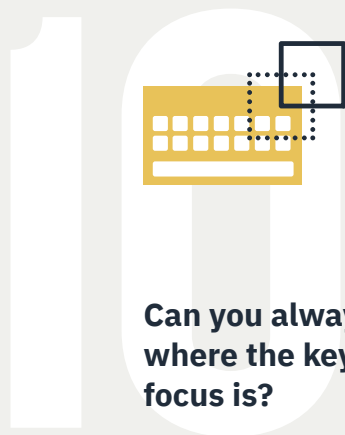


**Does the user have full site functionality using a keyboard alone?**

**How to check:** Can you fully interact with every interactive aspect of a web page using your keyboard alone (no mouse)? Is all information or functionality that would typically be triggered with a mouse accessible and operable with your keyboard?

**Key Beneficiary:** Keyboard users

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 2.1.1

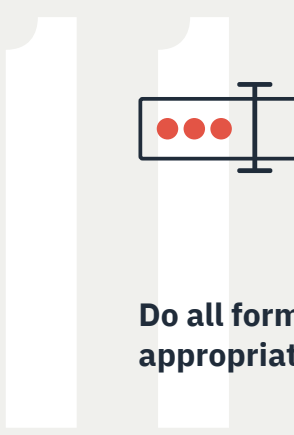


**Can you always see where the keyboard focus is?**

**How to check:** As you tab through the page using keyboard alone, can you always see which element on the page has focus? Validate that there are no keyboard traps (interactions you can get into with your keyboard, but can't get out of).

**Key Beneficiary:** Keyboard users

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 2.4.7



**Do all form fields have appropriate labels?**

**How to check:** Validate that form elements that require a specific format, value, or length provide this information within the element's label. Validate that form validation errors are presented in an efficient, intuitive, and accessible manner.

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.3.1

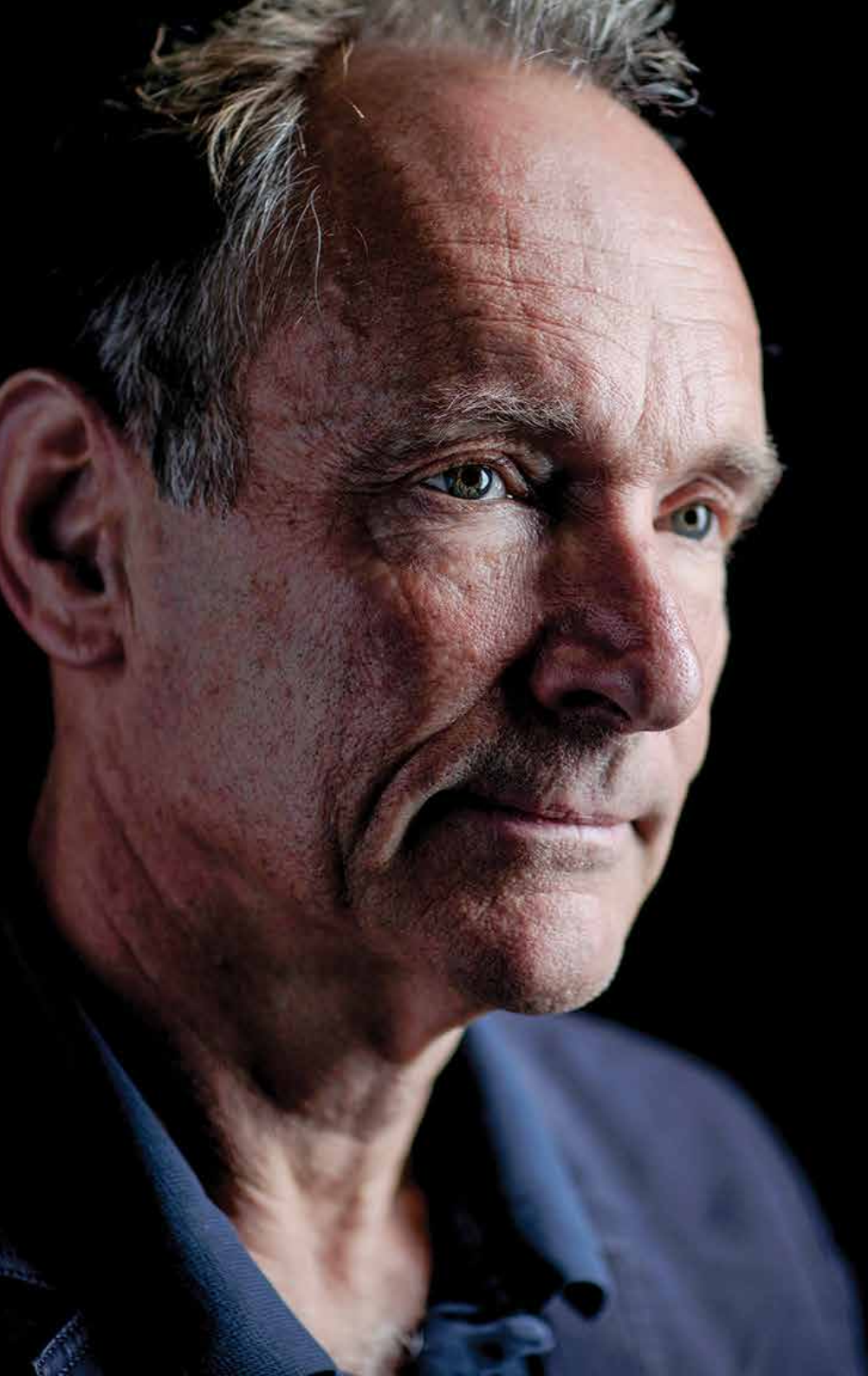


**Is all content and functionality available to a screen reader?**

**How to check:** When using a screen reader (with your eyes closed) do you have access to all information and features on the page, and can you complete all tasks independently?

**Key Beneficiary:** Blind

**Reference:** WCAG 2.2 SC 1.3.1



“The power of the web is in its universality. Access by everyone regardless of disability is an essential aspect.”

**Tim Berners-Lee** — English computer scientist

♥ (Best known as the inventor of the World Wide Web)



Let's Talk. We are happy to work with clients at any stage in the accessibility process.

Visit: [pluralagency.com.au](https://pluralagency.com.au)

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