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How to fix common PowerPoint Errors

This handout will show you how to fix some of the most common errors that could pop up when you are both making PowerPoint Presentations, and running the accessibility checker to make sure the presentation is accessible to screen reader technology.

Stay within the layout structure provided within the slide

As you know, when you click on **new slide** PowerPoint gives you a variety of slide layout options to choose from.
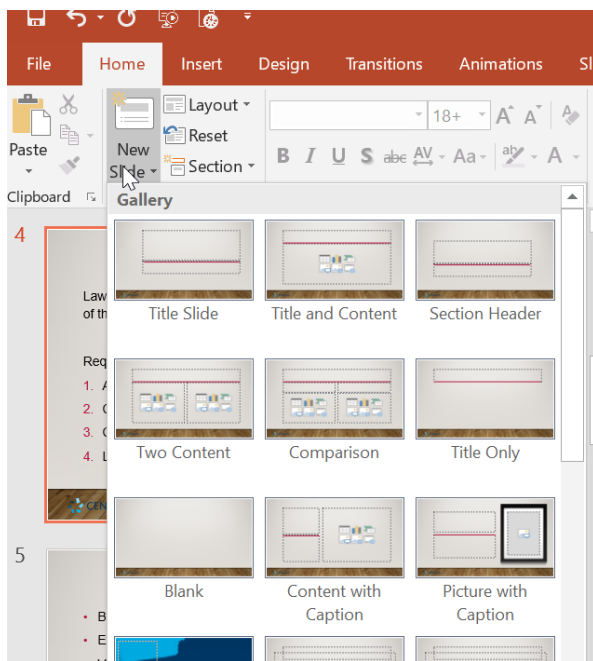
When adding information to slides, keep the information in the corresponding boxes provided for that slide. Doing so will reduce the number of reading order and accessibility errors that you will encounter when you run the accessibility checker.

Make sure each slide has its own unique title

You want to verify that each slide has its own unique title. If you have two slides that have the exact same wording for a title it will show up as an accessibility error. The reason for this is because individuals who use screen reader technology would have a challenge determining that you have moved on to a new slide if another slide has the exact same tile.

If you do have a slide that is a continuation of the last slide, you could say something like [insert title of first slide] continued.

Run the accessibility checker

In some versions of PowerPoint, you find the checker by clicking on the **File** tab in the upper left corner, then **Check for Issues**, then **Check Accessibility**. (The location of the accessibility checker can vary on your version of PowerPoint.)
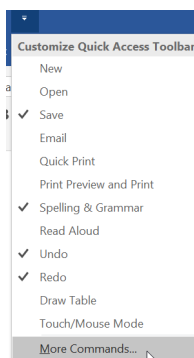

Pro Tip: You can add a short cut to the accessibility checker by following these steps (works for PowerPoint, Word and Excel):
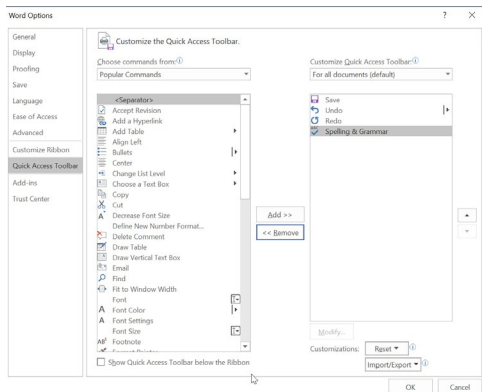
1. Select the drop-down menu on the top left Quick Access Toolbar.
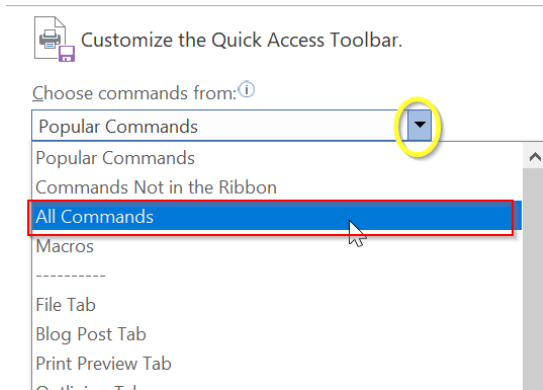

2. Select "**More Commands**".

3. The "Word/Excel Options" menu will open and the Quick Access Toolbar commands display by default.
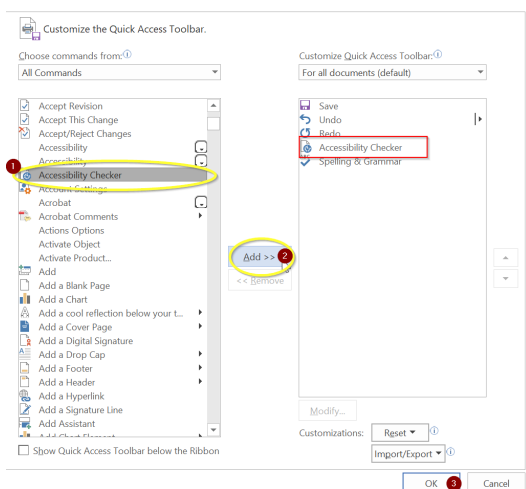

4. From the "Choose command from:" drop-down menu, select "**All Commands**".

5. Scroll down and select "**Accessibility Checker**".

Select the "Add>>" button between the boxes, which will add the "Accessibility Checker" icon to the "Customize Quick Access Toolbar" box on the right.

6. Select "**OK**".

7. The Accessibility Checker Icon will now permanently be in your quick access toolbar for easy access in the future.


<mark>Pro tip</mark>: While there is an accessibility checker feature in the online version of Office 365, that version will not allow you to fix as many issues as the desktop version. **So, try to run the accessibility checker via your desktop whenever possible.**

What to do if the accessibly checker will not run

Sometimes when you run the accessibility checker you will get an error stating that the checker cannot be ran. If that happens, resave a second copy of the document. Example if the title of the document was xx click **save as** and resave as xx2. Open up that second document (xx2) and click the accessibility checker icon. The accessibility checker should now work.

Reading the Accessibility Report

Once you run the Accessibility Checker, a pane will open on the right side of your screen with the report results. You have to learn how to read the results and repair any errors identified therein - you will see what Microsoft has identified as an Error, Warning, or Tip.
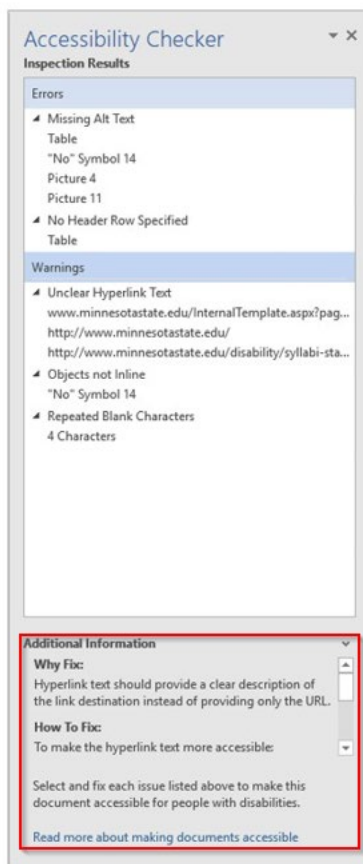
- **Error:** Content that makes the document difficult or impossible to read and understand for people with disabilities.

- **Warning:** Content that in most (but not all) cases makes the document difficult to understand for people with disabilities.

- **Tip:** Content that people with disabilities can understand but that could be presented in a different way to improve the user's experience.

Repairing the identified issues becomes easier with patience and practice. If you get stuck, the Accessibility Checker provides tips directly within the results for each identified issue on **Why Fix** it and **How to Fix** it.

Helpful Note: If you get a warning that says "**Object not in line with text**" you can *disregard that warning. That warning does not need to be fixed.*

Missing alterative text error

Alterative text (commonly referred to as "alt text") can be read by screen readers, and helps people who are blind or who have low vision understand what images and other objects are in a document. Without alt text an image on a page will simply read as "image."

1. Within the Accessibility Checker List if an image says it is missing alt text, choose that item in the list. This should jump you the slide that has the error. Then click the down arrow next to it and choose Add a description.
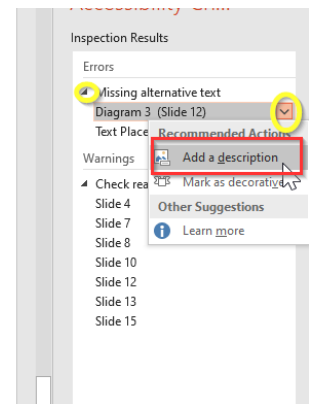
2. An alt text box will show on the side where you need to type in an image description. You want to keep your description as short and concise as possible. The image description should have the essential information that you want a student to be aware of, such as the example below:

 You will notice when you start typing in the alt text for the image that the error on the accessibility checker will disappear.

## Some images can be marked as decorative

If you have an **image that is simply decorative and does not have any essential information within it, then mark it as decorative**. This will cause the screen reader technology to skip/ignore the image when navigating though the document.


Check reading order warning

Double checking to make sure the reading order is correct in a PowerPoint is important to help insure that information is being read in the order that you intended for it to be explained in.

1. Click on the slide it is asking you to check the reading order on, and choose **Verify object order**
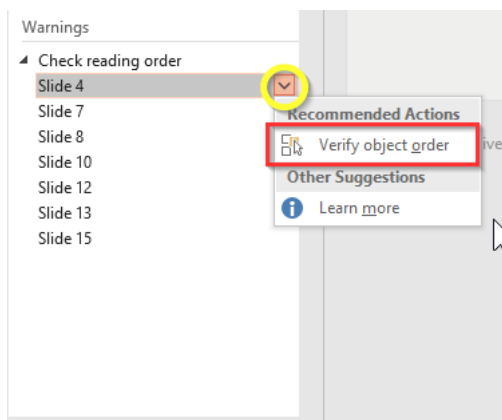
2. A new window will pop up where you should be able to verify the reading order, and you can change the reading order by using the up and down arrows
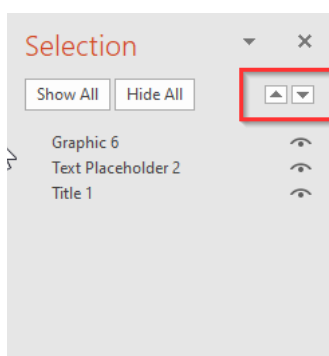
Helpful note: If an image is decorative and you want screen reader technology to skip it click the little icon on the right side of the image. It will change to a – icon which means that it will be skipped by screen reader technology.
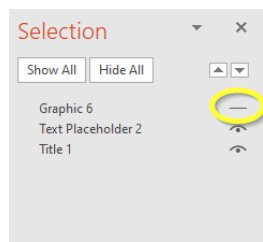
Very important note about reading order

Reading orders go from a ***bottom to top*** order **if you are using version 2019**. So, the title of the slide should always be at the very bottom and the last thing you want described should be at the top. (See below picture for example)
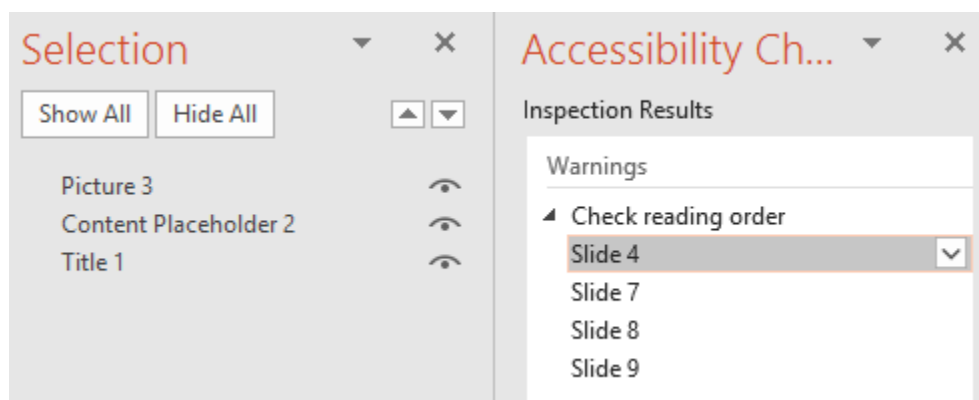
➢ If you have a different version of PowerPoint where each item is numbered, then the reading order should go from a top-down order starting with 1.