

Remodeling News

LBM Digital Platforms

A Basic Guide to Web Accessibility



People with Disabilities on the Web

Though estimates vary, most studies find that about one fifth (20%) of the population has some kind of disability. Not all of these people have disabilities that make it difficult for them to access the internet, but it is still a significant portion of the population. Businesses would be unwise to purposely exclude 20, 10, or even 5 percent of their potential customers from their web sites. For schools, universities, and government entities it would not only be unwise, but in many cases, it would also violate the law.

Important

The major categories of disability types are:



Visual

Blindness, low vision, color-blindness



Hearing

Deafness and hard-of-hearing



Motor

Inability to use a mouse, slow response time, limited fine motor control



Cognitive

Learning disabilities, distractibility, inability to remember or focus on large amounts of information.

Each of the major categories of disabilities requires certain types of adaptations in the design of web content. Most of the time, these adaptations benefit nearly everyone, not just people with disabilities. Almost everyone benefits from helpful illustrations, properly-organized content, and clear navigation. Similarly, while captions are a necessity for deaf users, they can be helpful to others, including anyone who views a video without audio

Laws and standards

If you live in the United States, applicable laws include [The Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) and the [Rehabilitation Act](#) of 1973 (Sections 504 and [Section 508](#)). Many [international laws](#) also address accessibility.

The [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#) provide an international set of guidelines. They are developed by the Worldwide Web Consortium (W3C), the governing body of the web. These guidelines are the basis of most web accessibility law in the world. Version 2.0 of these guidelines, published in December 2008, are based on four principles:

- [Perceivable](#): Available to the senses (vision and hearing primarily) either through the browser or through assistive technologies (e.g. screen readers, screen enlargers, etc.)
- [Operable](#): Users can interact with all controls and interactive elements using either the mouse, keyboard, or an assistive device.
- [Understandable](#): Content is clear and limits confusion and ambiguity.

- **Robust:** A wide range of technologies (including old and new user agents and assistive technologies) can access the content.

Resources:

<http://webaim.org> Utah State web Accessibility site. “Wave” tool.

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/gettingstarted/Overview.html> Getting Started. Accessibility Basics. The World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) is an international community that develops open standards to ensure the long-term growth of the Web.

<http://www.ncdae.org/resources/cheatsheets/accessibility.php> Video on identifying accessibility issues.

<http://www.ncdae.org/resources/cheatsheets/acrobat-xi.php> Video Creating accessible PDF's

<https://dequeuniversity.com> Deque University on line and off web accessibility training.

<https://www.w3.org/WAI/ER/tools> Web accessibility evaluation tools

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