

WCAG Compliance

Ever wondered how to make your website accessible to everyone? WCAG compliance is the answer! WCAG stands for [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#), a set of international standards that ensure websites are usable by people with disabilities. By following WCAG, you create a more inclusive online experience for everyone, from those with visual impairments to users with motor limitations. It's a win-win for accessibility and user experience!

What is WCAG?

As mentioned, WCAG is an acronym for Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, which is a set of internationally recognized recommendations developed by the [World Wide Web Consortium](#) (W3C) to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities.

The purpose of WCAG is to help developers and content creators make websites usable by people with a wide range of disabilities, including visual, auditory, physical, cognitive, and neurological. While primarily focused on disabilities, WCAG also benefits the elderly and anyone using the web in non-ideal conditions (like on a slow internet connection or with a non-functioning mouse).

We will discuss WCAG compliance benefits more thoroughly, but for now let's just say that by ensuring everyone has equal access to information and functionality you promote inclusion, increase your pool of potential customers, improve SEO results, and protect yourself from hefty lawsuits based on non-discriminatory legislation (such as the [Americans with Disabilities Act](#)).

What is WCAG compliance?

The WCAG guidelines are essentially a global roadmap for making websites accessible to people with disabilities.

WCAG guidelines are not legally binding per se, but they are the benchmark for many accessibility-related regulations around the world. The Department of Justice (DoJ) for

example stipulates WCAG 2.0 as its reference for web accessibility standards for legal disputes that have reached the court.

Title III of the ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act) refers explicitly to the DOJ's updated guidance from 2003. It stipulates two resources that websites should adhere to:

1. [Section 508 Standards](#)
2. [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG)

Section 508 is an updated revision of 1973's Rehabilitation Act, defining and including web accessibility terms. The section stipulates the more comprehensive resource, the WCAG, developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C), as the standard to become ADA compliant.

Hence, essentially, complying with WCAG guidelines means ADA compliance, as well as many other regulations in countries other than the United States. Canada's AODA, Israel's IS 5568, Europe's EN 301549, Britain's Equality Act 2010, Australia's DDA, and many more, all refer to WCAG as the basic standard for web accessibility.

WCAG compliance principles

Okay okay, so we understand the importance of WCAG conformance, but what does it mean in practice?

WCAG accessibility is built on four core principles, remembered by the acronym POUR:

1. **Perceivable:** Information and user interface components must be presented in a way that users can perceive. This includes providing alternatives for non-text content (like images with captions) and ensuring content is presented in a way that can be seen, heard, or otherwise sensed.
2. **Operable:** User interface components and navigation must be operable. This means users can use various assistive technologies and input methods (like keyboards or screen readers) to interact with the website.
3. **Understandable:** Information and the operation of the user interface must be understandable. The language used should be clear and simple, and the layout and navigation should be logical and predictable.
4. **Robust:** Content must be robust enough to be compatible with current and future assistive technologies. This ensures that even as technology evolves, users with disabilities can still access and interact with the website.

By following these POUR principles, you're creating a website that's accessible and enjoyable for everyone, no matter their abilities. That's a pretty cool superpower for your website to have!

WCAG conformance levels

Have you ever climbed a mountain of information and realized there's no accessible path for everyone? That's where WCAG conformance levels come in! They're like handy staircases built alongside the mountain, making sure everyone can reach the summit of your website.

WCAG offers three main levels, each increasing accessibility:

- **Level A—The Stepping Stone:** This is the basic level, ensuring some key accessibility features are in place. Imagine it as the first few wide steps at the foot of the mountain. People with some visual impairments or who use screen readers can navigate a bit easier.
- **Level AA—The Friendly Climb:** This is the sweet spot for most websites. It tackles a broader range of accessibility needs, like adding captions to videos and ensuring clear color contrast for text. Think of it as a sturdy staircase with handrails, making the climb more comfortable for people with a wider range of disabilities.
- **Level AAA—The Peak Performance Path:** This is like the expert climber's route, with the most features for advanced accessibility. It includes things like providing audio descriptions for complex images and ensuring content can be magnified without distortion. While not always necessary, it's great for striving for peak accessibility!

Remember, each level builds on the one before it. So, conquering Level AA automatically means you've nailed Level A as well. The best level for your website depends on your goals and target audience. But no matter which level you choose, WCAG conformance helps you build a website that's inclusive and welcoming to everyone, making your information accessible to all like a well-maintained mountain path!

At EqualWeb, our minimum remediation level is Level AA, so you can be safely assured that your website is compliant with the law and accessible to as many users as possible.

How do I make my website WCAG compliant?

Making your website WCAG compliant can be tackled in steps! Here's a roadmap to get you started:

1. **Self-Evaluation:** Start by assessing your current website. There are online tools and browser extensions that can help you identify potential WCAG issues.
2. **Prioritize and Plan:** Not everything needs to be fixed immediately. Focus on high-impact areas like clear headings, alternative text for images, and proper keyboard navigation.
3. **Get Educated:** The W3C has a wealth of resources on WCAG, including tutorials, checklists, and specific guidelines for each level of conformance. There are also many online articles and courses available.
4. **Content is King (and Queen):** WCAG compliance goes beyond technical fixes. Ensure your content itself is clear, concise, and uses easy-to-understand language.
5. **Test, Test, Test!:** Accessibility testing is crucial. Use assistive technologies yourself or involve people with disabilities in the testing process. There are also professional accessibility testing services available.
6. **Continuous Climb:** WCAG compliance is an ongoing process. As your website evolves, stay updated on the latest WCAG guidelines and keep accessibility in mind when adding new features.

Remember, WCAG compliance is a journey, not a destination. By taking these steps, you're well on your way to creating a website that's inclusive and user-friendly for everyone!

Test your website for WCAG compliance with EqualWeb

What kinda tools can you utilize for testing your website for WCAG compliance? EqualWeb has a toolbox full of nifty gadgets to help! Here's the rundown:

- **Free [Web Accessibility Checker](#):** Think of it as a magnifying glass for your website's accessibility. It's a free Chrome extension that scans a single page at a time, pointing out any areas that might need a tweak to be WCAG compliant.
- **[Web Accessibility Monitor](#):** This tool is more like a smoke detector for accessibility. Instead of just one page, you can monitor a bunch of important

ones (usually with a paid plan) and get regular reports to see if they're still WCAG pals.

- **AI-powered Accessibility Widget:** Imagine a tiny accessibility superhero living on your website! EqualWeb's [Auto AI Accessibility Widget](#) is always on the lookout for WCAG issues and can even suggest fixes on the spot.
- **Manual [Accessibility Audits](#):** For those who want the ultimate check-up, EqualWeb offers a service where a team of accessibility experts review and overlook your website for WCAG violations. They'll make sure everything is WCAG compliant, just like a doctor giving your website a clean bill of health!

So, whether you need a quick check-up or a deep dive, EqualWeb has the tools to help you make your website accessible and welcoming to everyone!

Consultation for WCAG compliance

EqualWeb's [consultation service](#) is here to be your friendly guide and partner in creating a website that's accessible to everyone. EqualWeb experts will take you on the whole WCAG journey, from start to finish.

Remember, no mountain is climbed without a plan! EqualWeb's consultants work with you to understand your website's goals and target audience. They'll then help you choose the right WCAG conformance level (think Mount Everest vs. a scenic hike) and create a customized strategy.

They can also work with your development team to implement the necessary changes to make your website WCAG compliant. This includes things like adding alt text to images, ensuring clear color contrast, and making sure your website works well with assistive technologies.

Moreover, EqualWeb can be there to test the path as you build it. They'll use a variety of tools and techniques to identify and fix any accessibility issues that might pop up along the way.

Achieve WCAG compliance with EqualWeb's AI-powered widget

EqualWeb has developed the most advanced and effective automatic overlay to elevate your website to the highest WCAG conformance levels. Utilizing the latest artificial intelligence technology, the EqualWeb AI-powered widget is a real-time remediation tool that checks WCAG issues and fixes them across the entire website without interfering with its original code.

The [Auto AI Accessibility Widget](#) tool is applicable to all websites and organizations, regardless of size or platform, and is by far the fastest route to web accessibility. This makes it the most popular web accessibility solution for businesses that choose it for [ADA compliance](#) and [WCAG 2.2 conformance](#) purposes.

The widget is an automated tool that works on top of the code of the website, offering 32 accessibility functions, an “accessibility profiles” function, more than 40 languages, an Accessibility Statement (a requirement by law) and a Send Feedback option (also required by law). The AI-powered widget is fully customizable and functions smoothly, simply, and is intuitive for use.

The accessibility functions can be divided into three main adjustments categories: Navigation Adjustment; Color Adjustment; and Content Adjustment. Each Adjustment has a dropdown menu of multiple accessibility functions that cater to a wide range of impairment issues. For a full recap of the functions, [click here](#).

The widget comes with many extra features, such as a generator for Alt Text, automated captions for video and audio, and others to make a website WCAG-compliant.

Manual remediation for WCAG compliance

Although an automated solution is super popular and very effective, it cannot fix all accessibility problems according to the WCAG guidelines. No matter how advanced the technology is, some human labor is necessary to achieve comprehensive WCAG conformance.

If you're starting with WCAG compliance or have a simple website, the AI-powered widget is a great first step. It's cost-effective and offers a good layer of automated accessibility checks. However, for complex websites, stricter compliance requirements, or the peace of mind of a human audit, EqualWeb's [ADA Managed Compliance](#) plan is the more robust option. It combines the AI features with human expertise, providing the clients on its subscription plan with a team of experts who audit, review, issue

evaluation reports, manually fix remaining issues, and conduct periodic scans of the website to ensure accessibility all year round.

Ultimately, the best choice depends on your specific needs and budget. EqualWeb offers a [consultation service](#) (free of charge) to help you determine the best approach for your website's accessibility journey.

Maintaining WCAG compliance in the long term

EqualWeb's [website monitoring solution](#) offers a comprehensive approach to ensuring long-term WCAG compliance. It goes beyond one-time scans by providing ongoing oversight of your website's accessibility health. This is crucial because websites can change over time, and new content or features might introduce accessibility issues unintentionally.

Here's how EqualWeb's monitoring solution works:

1. **Continuous Scanning:** Unlike a one-time accessibility scan, EqualWeb's monitor keeps a watchful eye on your website. You can choose the specific number of pages to be monitored (typically included in paid plans), ensuring important areas are constantly checked for WCAG violations.
2. **Detailed Reporting:** Regular reports are generated, detailing any accessibility issues identified during the monitoring process. These reports not only pinpoint problems but also provide clear explanations and potential remediation steps. This allows you to prioritize fixes and maintain a clear roadmap for achieving WCAG compliance.
3. **Peace of Mind:** With EqualWeb's monitoring solution in place, you can rest assured that potential accessibility roadblocks are identified and addressed promptly. This proactive approach helps to minimize the risk of legal issues arising from non-compliance and ensures a consistently accessible user experience for everyone who visits your website.

Become WCAG-compliant today

As you may have well understood, WCAG compliance cannot be achieved in a day. It is more a journey than a destination.

You may step out into the road with an evaluation of your website's accessibility using online tools or browser extensions. Once you identify areas for improvement, prioritize high-impact fixes and educate yourself on WCAG best practices. Remember that clear content and user-friendly design are key. Thorough testing with assistive technologies or real people with disabilities is crucial. Automated tools that remediate website in real-time are great, but for more complex websites we recommend “going hybrid” with a solution that combines the automated features with web accessibility experts who can fix all remaining errors and maintain a WCAG-compliant website.

[Schedule a meeting now](#)