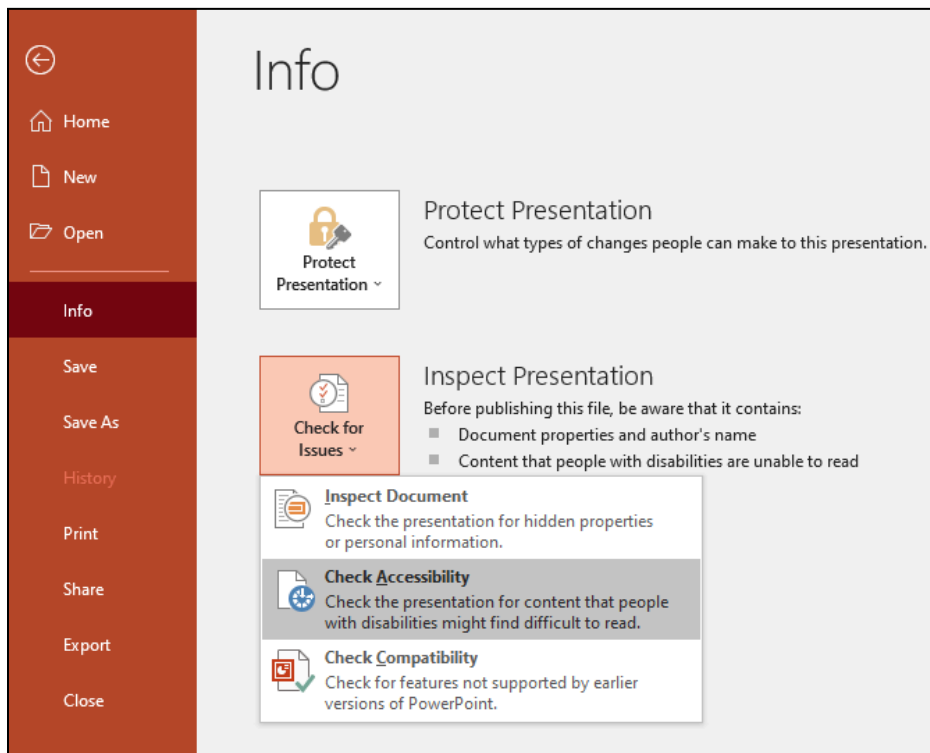


Create an Accessible Presentation

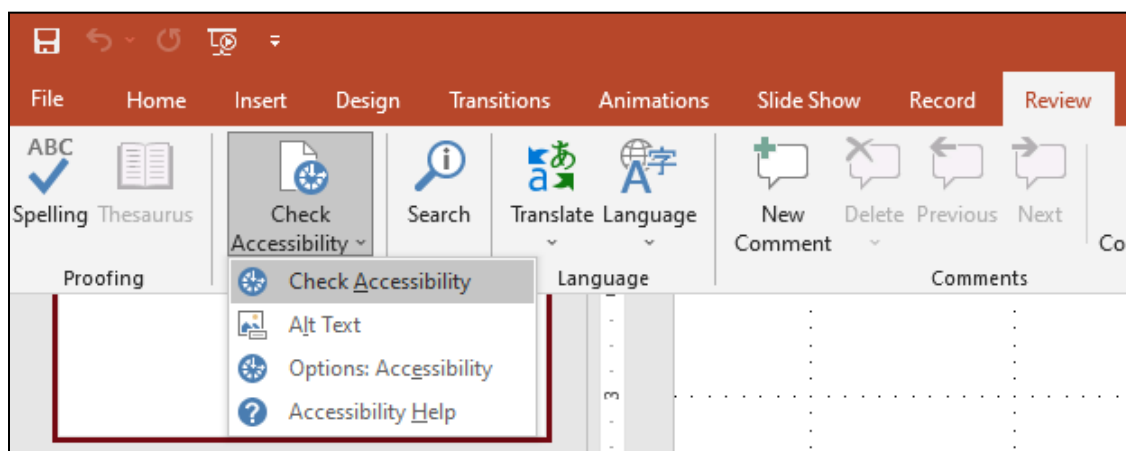
Run an Accessibility Check

An accessibility check is similar to a spelling and grammar check, but it focuses on correcting common accessibility barriers in PowerPoint documents. In addition to highlighting any errors, this checker will describe why said errors need to be addressed, and provide a step-by-step guide on how to fix them. You can access the accessibility checker by navigating to:

File, then Info, then Check for Issues, then Check for Accessibility



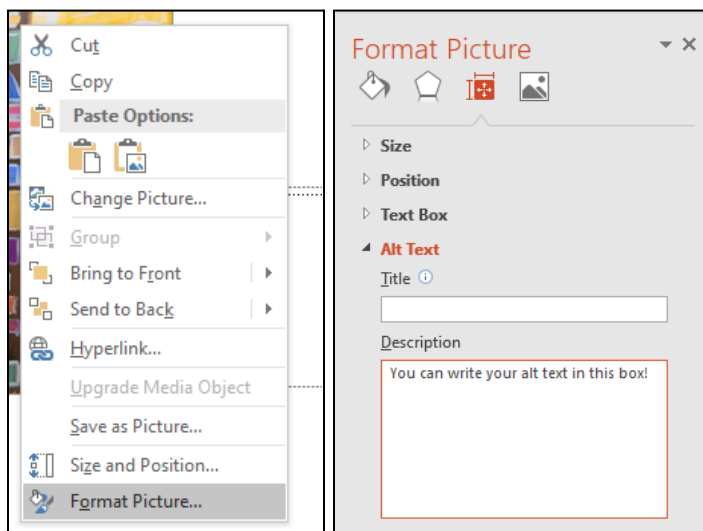
OR Review, then Check for Accessibility, then Check for Accessibility



Add Alternative (alt) Text

Alt text is a textual description of a visual component that is encoded into your presentation. When a screen reader is used, these image descriptions are read aloud. This allows readers to access and understand visual elements that they may not be able to see. Without alt text, a person using a screen reader will not be able to gather any information from the visual components you have used, including pictures or diagrams as well as some charts and graphs.

To add alt text to a graphic element, **right click the element and select Format (Chart, Image, etc.), then Layout & Properties, then Alt Text.** Later versions of PowerPoint will allow you to access this menu by simply right clicking and selecting “view alt text”. From there, you can leave the title section blank and write a description for your visual element in the description field. If an image is purely decorative and conveys no important information, you can mark it as such within PowerPoint allowing screen readers to skip over the image entirely by entering a pair of quotation marks (“”) in the description box. Later versions of PowerPoint have a checkbox beneath the description field allowing you to mark the image as decorative.



Writing good alt text

You do not need to begin your alt text with “a picture of...” or “a screenshot of...”. Screen readers will make the user aware that they are reading the content of an image before your description is read.

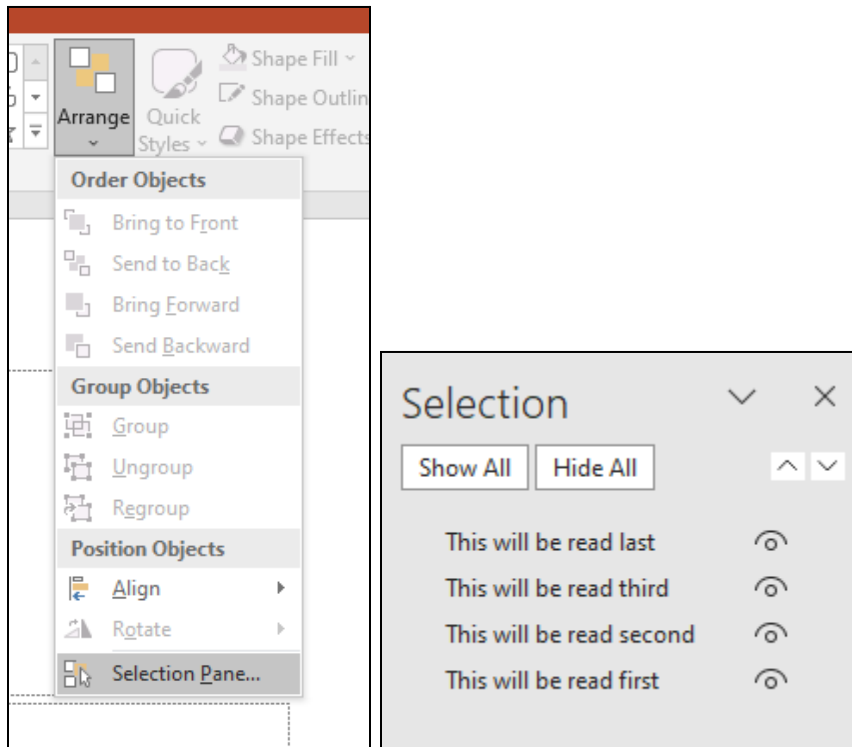
Aim to keep your alt text at 125 characters or less.

Try to write descriptively, providing context to the image. Good examples of alt text are available through the [University of South Carolina’s Digital Accessibility webpage](#).

Slide Reading Order

By default, a screen reader will read the slide title first, followed by other content in elements defined by the slide layout. It will then read any remaining content in the order it was added to the slide. You can check and adjust the reading order of your slides by navigating to:

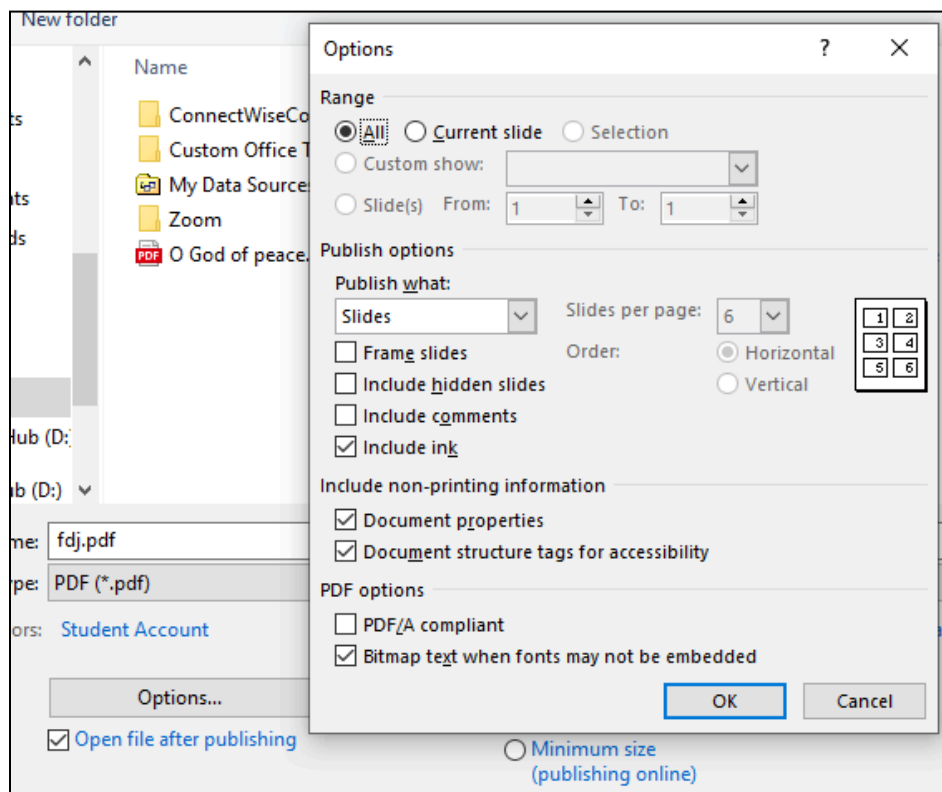
Home, then Arrange, then Selection Pane.



Counterintuitively, the reading order will be displayed **from bottom to the top**. The first item to be read by a screen reader will be at the bottom on the list, with the next item appearing immediately above it and the final item to be read at the top

Convert your Document to an Accessible PDF

PDFs generally have smaller file sizes than PowerPoints. Providing a PDF copy of your presentation will allow broader use. When converting your presentation to a .pdf, you need to ensure that the document's structure tags are properly encoded. Structure tags identify different document components, telling assistive technology whether the text it is reading is a heading, a paragraph, a chart, etc. When you are saving your document as a .pdf, select open the **Options** menu. From there, make sure that the **Document structure tags for accessibility checkbox is checked**, then hit okay. From there, you are good to save your converted pdf.



Design with Accessibility in Mind - General Tips

Start with an accessible template. Most standard templates have been designed with accessibility in the forefront. You can ensure that your template starts off well by selecting a template and then running an accessibility check as described earlier.

Use a minimum font size of 24 for all slide text. Adjust the size of your text depending on the platform you will use to present.

Keep your layouts, transitions, and animations simple.

Give all of your slides unique titles.

Split information on crowded slides across multiple slides.

Utilize the notes field for all spoken points. You can also use it to expand on important points, or summarize visual material.

Rather than pasting a web address as it appears in your browser, create hyperlinks with text descriptions through the insert hyperlink function. This provides context to a reader utilizing a screen reader.

If your presentation includes a video, make sure that your video has closed captioning. If your presentation includes audio content, include a transcript of your audio.

Emphasize thoughtfully. Aim to use italicized, all-caps, and bolded text sparingly. Do not use color alone to indicate important text. Underlined text should be avoided if the included text is not a hyperlink.

Tables can be a challenge for screen readers which will read them from top to bottom and from left to right. Prefer the use of headings, subheadings and bullet points over tables when possible. When using tables, always include a table header and keep the structure of your table simple. Avoid splitting cells, merging cells, or using nested tables.

Utilize bulleted and/or numbered lists rather than manually creating them.

If you have vital information in a header or footer, consider moving it or repeating it elsewhere in your presentation as headers and footers are not read by all screen readers.