

Potential paths for 1.2.3/1.2.5

Viable paths

Those for which it is conceivable that consensus could be reached

Scenario 0 Get some more data

We have the useful data from the w3c survey. We have a potential viable path to getting some high-level info on audio descriptions by including material in the WebAIM SR survey.

Result: 1) an ability to show progress on the issue without making a decision; 2) an ability to inform our direction and the direction of WCAG 3 through some 'end user' data; 3) perhaps motivation for us or someone else to gather more user data

Draft questions to provide to Jared for SR survey

Q1. How often does information that is only provided in videos prevent you from completing a task or understanding content?

1. Frequently (almost daily)
2. Often (weekly)
3. Sometimes (monthly)
4. Seldom (yearly)
5. Never

Q2. When it comes to understanding the content of videos, which do/would you prefer?
(Rank in order of preference):

1. Audio descriptions, added in available gaps in dialog
2. Audio descriptions added in available gaps in dialog, plus a text description of the important visual information not available from the soundtrack
3. Extended audio descriptions (When important visual descriptions cannot fit in gaps in the dialog, the video playback is automatically paused until each audio description is completed.)
4. A text description of important visual information not conveyed in the soundtrack
5. A text description of all important visual information (including any conveyed in the soundtrack)
6. A fully integrated transcript of all visual and audio information, correctly sequenced

Q3. Do you feel any of the same choices would be inadequate as alternatives for you?
(Check all that apply)

- ☐ Audio descriptions only
- ☐ Audio descriptions plus a text description of the important visual information
- ☐ Extended audio descriptions
- ☐ A text description of important visual information not described in the video

- ☐ A text description of all important visual information
- ☐ A full transcript of visual and audio information

Q4. Do your answers to the last two questions change depending on the nature of the video? For instance, do you prefer the same alternative for a feature-length movie compared to a TikTok or similar short, less produced video? Feel free to comment.

- Yes
- No

Comment: _____

Scenario 1 Clarify that videos with no audio descriptions fail

Leave normative as is, with the addition of some combination of a) a failure technique (as suggested in Mike's original draft response to the issue); and/or b) notes that say something like "A video that has provided audio descriptions in all available pauses has passed 1.2.5. However, audio descriptions must exist; a video without audio descriptions due to an absence of pauses does not have audio descriptions, and therefore does not pass; and c) provide rationale, citing changes in landscape since 2.0 as well as lack of clear language that reflects original intent of SC creators.

Result: 1) videos with important visual information and no audio descriptions are indicated as clearly failing 1.2.5; 2) Users have clarity that a video with minimal audio descriptions can pass 1.2.5; 3) the author of a video with no audio descriptions would need to provide a full media alternative to meet 1.2.3.

Scenario 2 Add a new nuance to 1.2.5 where videos with "no important *time-based* information" can pass 1.2.5

This involves modding 1.2.5 so that G203 can pass as it is written. It hinges on the idea that there is a kind of important visual information in a synchronized video that does not need to be provided in synch with the video in order to derive equivalent benefit. Can theoretically be done in combination with Scenario 1.

Note that this is not the same scenario as a video containing no important information (which already passes).

I suspect this is going to be hard to write WELL without causing some unintended knock-on effects.

Result: 1) A video that contains a manageable amount of important visual information and no audio descriptions can pass 1.2.5; 2) Potentially more difficulty deciding what is "important"

Scenario 3 Add language that videos with no pauses pass audio descriptions *and* modify 1.2.3 so that a video with no audio descriptions cannot pass level A

This scenario is incompatible with Scenario 1.

Every attempt I've made at this *increases* the requirement at 1.2.3 for the majority of videos that contain audio descriptions. I'm okay with that, but I do not see it easily making it through the working group.

The main problem I'm facing is the implication in WCAG 2.0 that if someone passes 1.2.5, they are done with 1.2.3. So, in practice currently, if you only have a few places to insert audio descriptions, you really only have to think about what the most important information is in the neighbourhood of these pauses. You don't have to worry about what you *cannot* insert. An update to 1.2.3 would almost certainly mean that an author must now determine what important visual information exists that is *not* covered by the audio descriptions. The effort gets bigger.

Result: 1) some videos with no audio descriptions pass 1.2.5; 2) videos with no audio descriptions and no text alternative for the important visual information fail 1.2.3; 3) potentially more difficulty deciding what is "important".

Unviable

Scenario 4 Add clarifying language that videos with no pauses in dialogue pass 1.2.5 and 1.2.3

Provide the rationale stated by the original authors of the SC. Whether this is a normative change or a non-normative note, I do not see a majority of working group members supporting it, which is why I'm listing it as unviable. I don't believe something can reach consensus where the majority votes -1 (or even 0)?

Beyond my previously expressed concerns with optics, effect on users, *and* logical consistency, I also see an increase in the challenge of determining what an 'insufficient' pause is.

Result: 1) someone can claim they have passed 1.2.5 because they cannot fit in any audio descriptions 2) someone can claim the same video passes 1.2.3 because they cannot fit in any audio descriptions

Scenario 5 Add language clarifying that a video with no audio descriptions fails 1.2.5 *and* modify 1.2.3 so that a video missing descriptions of important visual information cannot pass level A

This is basically scenario 1 plus the second half of scenario 3. I'm listing this as non-viable because I think it is likely too much of a change to have any success of passing, although I personally think it is what likely best-serves the target users.

Result: 1) all videos require an equivalent for all important visual information to pass; 2) a video passes AA when it provides at least one audio description and leaves no useful pauses when important visual information is undescribed; 3) a video passes A when it provides an alternative for all the important visual info it couldn't address in synchronized content

Scenario 6 Add no clarification

One option is to do 'nothing'. That is, there is no additional guidance added in understanding docs, techniques, notes, or normative changes.

Is there a 'make no changes, but discuss in the Understanding doc' path? A 'seeking more information' response *in the issue* might help us provide an indication that we're continuing to tackle this problem (which we are!!).

I am listing this under the unviable category because I think it is insufficient action on our part for our user base. However, it is a path available to us (and is the default path if nothing else succeeds).

Result: 1) No one needs to change anything in how they currently assess 1.2.3/1.2.5; 2) videos are assessed and pages are reported inconsistently; 3) the TF/WG continues to try to resolve OR kicks it down the road to WCAG 3

Appendices

Existing research

WCAG 2

[recently closed WG survey](#)

[other past materials on 1.2?]

WCAG 3 material

<https://www.w3.org/TR/saur/#video-description-synchronization>

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Hjp8lzf54h7dCsFQP5xqj0pZgWBSQJuOIK_FV36zIb0/edit?tab=t.0#heading=h.1hj8qq55shkm

Response from Google AI

Just out of curiosity, I did a google search for “what percentage of videos lack audio descriptions”. The AI Overview provided some unsourced stats and hinted at some studies, which may bear investigating for background research.



what percentage of videos lack audio descriptions

✦ AI Overview

A vast majority of videos lack audio descriptions. While precise, universal statistics are difficult to ascertain due to the sheer volume of online video content, existing data from specific sectors highlights a significant gap: [🔗](#)

- **Online Videos:** The general consensus is that the vast majority of online videos do not have audio descriptions. Community platforms like YouDescribe allow volunteers to add descriptions, but the volume of user-generated content uploaded every minute means most videos remain undescribed.
- **Television Programming:** In the European Union, only between **4% and 11%** of programming contains audio description. In countries with quotas, like the UK and Canada, the required amount is often around **10%**, which is considered low by critics.
- **Advertisements:** A 2024 study on TV ads found that only **1%** included audio descriptions.
- **Educational Videos:** A survey of educators revealed that only **23%** are adding audio descriptions to the majority of their videos.
- **Streaming Services:** According to the American Council of the Blind, out of 75 million titles on Amazon Prime Video, only about 1,843 (or **0.0025%**) had audio descriptions. [🔗](#)

Overall, the percentage of videos with audio descriptions is very small, meaning that **over 90% of videos lack this accessibility feature** across most platforms and categories. [🔗](#)