

Social Media Accessibility Guidelines

This document is designed to assist individuals using social media to ensure that their content can be used by anyone, including people with disabilities. Some social media platforms may be more accessible than others. Always consider feedback that you receive from people with disabilities.

General Social Media Accessibility Tips

These tips apply to most social media platforms. For specifics on a given platform consult the relevant section. We did not explore Pinterest, Wechat, Snapchat, Workplace, LinkedIn, Spotify.

Font size

Most social media apps and web sites restrict what fonts and font sizes are used. When the writer has a choice in this matter (WordPress, other blog platforms, etc) 16px for body text is the smallest you should use.

Readability

See documentation [on readability](https://myumi.ch/dORV5) (myumi.ch/dORV5).

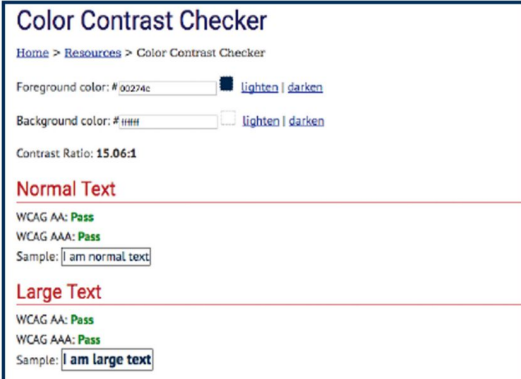
When possible write so that your text is readable by someone with a lower secondary education reading level. If this is unavoidable provide a version that does allow for this.

Images of text

When including images of text, be sure to check text color against background color. In general, try to use dark foreground text on a light background or light foreground text on a dark background. If deviating from this, be sure to use color contrast checkers. If the contrast seems poor to you it will represent problems for some users with low vision. If you want to ensure proper contrast, use [a color picker and contrast analyzer](https://myumi.ch/PI0QD) (myumi.ch/PI0QD). If you have the hex codes of the text and background, you can use [a web based analyzer](https://myumi.ch/0W0dO) (myumi.ch/0W0dO).

Use Plain Language to Spell Out Acronyms

It is good practice to spell out the words that comprise the acronym and then add the acronym in parentheses after (e.g., Literature Science and the Arts (LSA)). This is especially helpful for those who



The image shows a screenshot of a web-based 'Color Contrast Checker' tool. At the top, it says 'Color Contrast Checker' and 'Home > Resources > Color Contrast Checker'. Below that, there are two input fields: 'Foreground color: #00274c' and 'Background color: #f1f3f4'. To the right of each field are buttons for 'lighten' and 'darken'. Below the input fields, it displays 'Contrast Ratio: 15.06:1'. There are two sections for text samples. The first section is titled 'Normal Text' and shows 'WCAG AA: Pass', 'WCAG AAA: Pass', and 'Sample: | am normal text|'. The second section is titled 'Large Text' and shows 'WCAG AA: Pass', 'WCAG AAA: Pass', and 'Sample: | am large text|'. The tool is enclosed in a blue border.

use screen readers. After the name is heard and the acronym is spelled out, the user will be better able to associate the sound of the acronym with the full name.

Use Camel-Case in Hashtags

Capitalizing the first letters of compound words makes it easier for screen readers and users alike to pronounce the individual words. (e.g., use #SocialMedia instead of #socialmedia).

Add Alternative Text to Images

As its name implies, alternative text provides an alternative access method to non-text content when the image is integral to understanding the social media post. For more information on when to add alternative text and what constitutes good alternative text, please check out: <http://webaim.org/articles/gonewild/#alttext> (myumi.ch/xmOZz) and <http://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/> (myumi.ch/3qAyB).

Platform-Specific Accessibility Tips

Facebook Accessibility

Facebook provides several accessibility features and in general is a relatively accessible platform at current (October 2019). To learn more about Facebook's commitment to accessibility, and how to implement accessibility correctly in your Facebook posts, please consult with the below resources and [Facebook's Accessibility Help page](#) (myumi.ch/K40nE).

Alternative Text/Image Descriptions on Facebook

Add image descriptions to every image/gif that is integral to the meaning of the post and when uploading an album. The descriptions don't need to be very long, they just need to describe what the image is conveying.

Generally, if the image has text in it, your alternative text should mirror the text in the image. A good way to write alternative text is to consider how you might describe an image over the phone to a person. Context is important, for example, if your logo includes a globe, however, if you are using it to show population density, you would want to include information in the image description which describes the visual argument or narrative. A good test is to have your image description read. Very important: if the image is decorative, do not include alternative text.

Example: (Pictured: Girl with a notebook and pencil standing in Diag next to the Block M.)



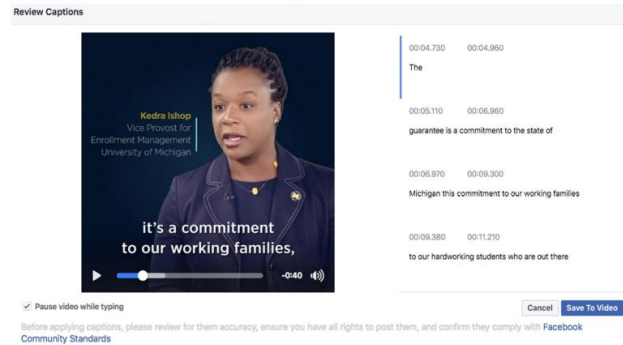
Automatic Alt Text

Facebook has started automatically providing alternative text for images using object recognition technology. For very important posts, make sure that you spot-check the automatically provided alternative text. To learn more about alt text in Facebook: consult with Facebook's [How Does Automatic Alt Text Work? Help page](https://myumi.ch/Nx0qB) (myumi.ch/Nx0qB).

Facebook Video Accessibility

When uploading a video, make sure to attach a [SubRip caption \(SRT\) file](https://myumi.ch/R502E) (myumi.ch/R502E). This can be done by

1. hovering over the uploaded video
2. select Edit
3. Select Subtitles and Captions
4. clicking on upload SRT file



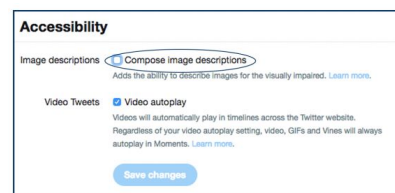
For more information on captioning in Facebook, consult with Facebook's "How do I add or Remove Captions on My Video?" Help page (myumi.ch/bvW8l). If you do not upload a transcript, Facebook will automatically generate transcript captions for uploaded videos, which you should then review and edit.

Twitter Accessibility

Twitter has some accessibility features, some of which may only be able to be accessed in certain modes, though there are beta features which may be available to some users. General accessibility practices apply here (as can be seen in articles on Twitter accessibility, such as myumi.ch/v2eOm).

Enabling Image Accessibility for Twitter

1. Select Settings and Privacy (Located by clicking on your Twitter icon at the top right.)
2. Select Accessibility.
3. Enable "Compose image descriptions" by activating either the check box or the slider beside the option.



Adding Image Descriptions on Twitter

1. Click the tweet icon to compose tweet, then attach photo.
2. App: On the image, tap Add Description to insert descriptive text.

 **University of Michigan** @UMich · 42m
A team of UM-led researchers found unexpectedly large natural gas emissions over major east coast cities such as New York, Boston, and Washington DC, with leaky pipes and inefficient appliances appearing to be major culprits.
myumi.ch/Jy9Q5



3. Web: Click the thumbnail to open the thumbnail preview dialogue.
4. Type the image description and select Apply. You can tap the description again to edit it prior to posting the tweet.

Things to note:

- the limit for a description is 420 characters.
- descriptive text cannot be added to GIFs or videos so it's a good practice to add a description in your tweet if you're posting a GIF or video.
- consider providing an indication that a link in a tweet is a photo, video, or an audio file (e.g. [PIC], [VIDEO], [AUDIO], [GIF]).

This allows people using screen readers to know what to expect before opening any link Use uppercase letters only for further clarity to sighted users.

YouTube Accessibility

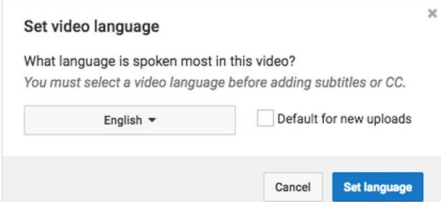
Ensure all videos have closed captions and audio descriptions as well (when there is information being portrayed solely through visual means that is required for understanding). A full transcript (of captions and audio description) is also useful for people who have both hearing and visual impairments, including those who are deaf-blind. A [useful primer on audio description](https://myumi.ch/E3pW5) (myumi.ch/E3pW5) is provided by the National Federation for the Blind

YouTube has a feature that will automatically caption videos shorter than 10 minutes in length. To increase accuracy in these auto-captions, it's best if the video's dialogue is clearly spoken and you have very little background noise. Since YouTube's automatic captioning function is still in Beta and can be very inaccurate, we recommend preparing your accurate transcript to upload your videos whenever possible. Descriptive language needs to be used in video captioning to denote audio and visual elements to users who may have visual or hearing disabilities. Make sure to use easily understood language in your descriptions.

Creating & Editing Auto-Captions

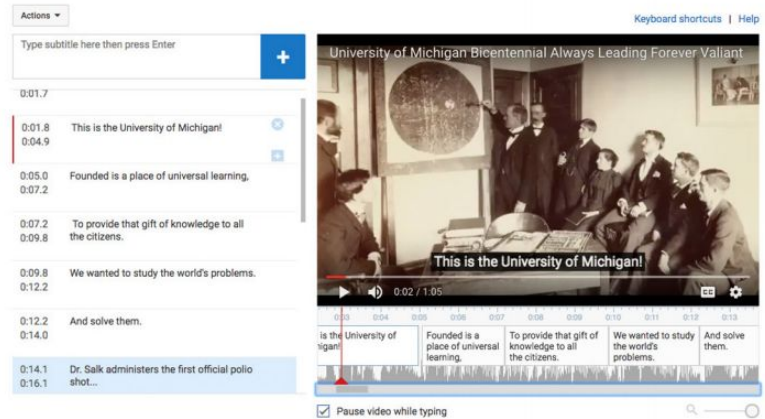
[See YouTube documentation](https://myumi.ch/zxNXx) (myumi.ch/zxNXx).

1. Upload your video by clicking on the Upload icon located in the upper-righthand corner.
2. Once the video is done processing, either view it in your channel's Video Manager or follow the link to view the video.
3. In either Video Manager or on your video, select Edit Video.
4. Select Subtitles/CC from the navigation bar.
5. A 'Set video language' pop-up will automatically appear. Select language preference.



The screenshot shows a dialog box titled "Set video language" with a close button (X) in the top right corner. The text inside the dialog asks, "What language is spoken most in this video?" and includes a note: "You must select a video language before adding subtitles or CC." Below the text is a dropdown menu currently set to "English" and a checkbox labeled "Default for new uploads" which is unchecked. At the bottom of the dialog are two buttons: "Cancel" and "Set language".

6. To the right of the video, the auto-generated captions should be listed as 'English (Automatic)', (If the captions aren't listed yet, allow your video to process longer)
7. Click the auto-generated captions. You'll load into the captions editor where you'll be able to edit each caption in the timecode.
8. Click Edit in the upper-righthand corner.
9. Click on the line you wish to edit and adjust the captions to correct it.
10. Make sure you denote any music cues or sound effects/natural sounds as they will not be picked up in auto-captions.
11. When you have finished editing the captions, click 'Publish Edits' in the upper-righthand corner to save the new version of the captions.



Creating & Editing Time Captions

See [YouTube documentation](https://myumi.ch/gj9or) (myumi.ch/gj9or)

1. Upload your video by clicking on the Upload icon located in the upper-righthand corner of YouTube.
2. Once the video is done processing, either view it in your channel's Video Manager or follow the link to view the video.
3. In either Video Manager or on your video, select 'Edit Video'
4. Select 'Subtitles/CC' from the navigation bar.
5. On the right hand side, select the 'Add new subtitles or CC' and select the video's language.
6. If you have a transcript file, select 'Upload a file'. We suggest using an SRT file.
7. If you don't have a transcript file, select 'Create New Subtitles or CC'
8. Type any spoken dialogue, music cues, and sound effects (the latter two being denoted in brackets: [Music Fades In] or [Door Slams]) and ensure it aligns with the proper timing in your video using the timeline along the bottom of the editor.
9. Once you're satisfied with your captions click 'Publish' in the upper-righthand corner of the screen.

Instagram Accessibility

Adding alternative text to Instagram images is simple and necessary for visually impaired users to connect with your content. There are two ways you can add alt text to your photos. The best way is to add alt text to your

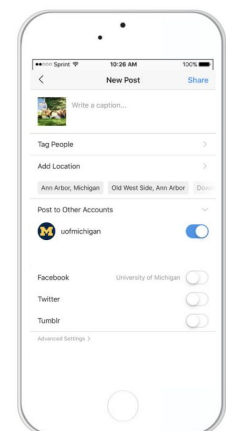


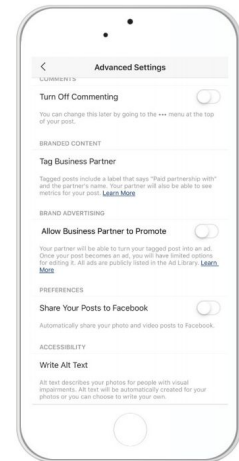
photo when you post. Instagram also gives you the option to add alternative text after the photo is already posted.

Begin by drafting a new post like you would typically do.

To find access to alt text, click the “Advanced Settings” tab at the bottom of the screen.

Once the advanced settings tab is open, scroll to the bottom and you will see “Write Alt Text.” If your photo has already been posted click on the three dots at the upper right hand corner of your Instagram post to open the edit menu.

Open the alt text tab and describe your image. A good alt text is usually no longer than 100 characters. Click “edit” which will give you an option to edit alt text to your image. Open “Edit Alt Text” and add a description to your image in fewer than 100 characters.



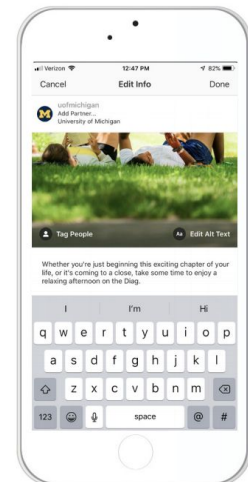
Published Instagram photos

If your photo has already been posted click on the three dots at the upper right hand corner of your Instagram post to open the edit menu.

Click “edit” which will give you an option to edit alt text to your image.

Open “Edit Alt Text” and add a description to your image in fewer than 100 characters.

Example: Female and male students laying in the grass on the Diag reading books.



Email Accessibility

See the documentation for [accessibility from MailChimp](https://myumi.ch/kxRPO) (myumi.ch/kxRPO). [UM Libraries provides some guidance on email accessibility](https://myumi.ch/YykA2) as well (myumi.ch/YykA2). All of the observations in [General Social Media Accessibility Tips](https://myumi.ch/ovKPN) (myumi.ch/ovKPN) are relevant in the email medium.

Sources

Here are accessible social media resources that seemed like good starting points for us (basically the first couple of Google hits that were from places that were trustworthy):

- <https://siteimprove.com/en-us/blog/how-to-be-more-accessible-on-social-media/>
- <https://accessibility.princeton.edu/Policy-and-Guidelines/digital-accessibility-guidelines/social-media-accessibility-guidelines>
- <https://digital.gov/resources/federal-social-media-accessibility-toolkit-hackpad/>
- <https://accessibility.umn.edu/tutorials/accessible-social-media>
- <https://www.shondaland.com/act/a26294966/make-your-social-media-more-accessible/>

Beyond standards which may be referenced by regulators or courts, it may make sense to consider that writing can impact other constituent groups: "[A web of anxiety: accessibility for people with anxiety and panic disorders.](#)" You may also consider [readability](#).