

## Section 508 Checklist

# SAMHSA 508 Checklist for Developers and Contractors

### Purpose

This checklist was created to allow designers, developers, and other personnel to evaluate all websites and web-based applications for compliance with *Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, §1194.22*, which requires all Federal website to be equally as accessible to people with disabilities as they are to people without disabilities.

This checklist follows the most common best practices for Section 508 validation, based on the commonly-used model from WebAIM ([www.webAIM.org](http://www.webAIM.org)), a highly-rated website about accessibility issues in website design and development.

### Checklist

<b>Website / App. Name:</b>	
<b>URL:</b>	
<b>Date Tested:</b>	

Section 508 Rule	To Pass	To Fail	P/F?
<b>(a) A text equivalent for every non-text element shall be provided (e.g., via "alt", "longdesc", or in element content). [See Note 1]</b>	Every image, Java applet, Flash file, video file, audio file, plug-in, etc. has an <i>alt</i> description.	A non-text element has no <i>alt</i> description.	
	Complex graphics (graphs, charts, etc.) are accompanied by detailed text descriptions.	Complex graphics have no alternative text, or the alternative does not fully convey the meaning of the graphic.	
	The <i>alt</i> descriptions succinctly describe the <i>purpose</i> of the objects, without being too verbose (for simple objects) or too vague (for complex objects).	<i>Alt</i> descriptions are verbose, vague, misleading, inaccurate or redundant to the context (e.g. the alt text is the same as the text immediately preceding or following it in the document).	
	<i>Alt</i> descriptions for images used as links are descriptive of the link destination.	<i>Alt</i> descriptions for images used as links are not descriptive of the link destination.	
	Decorative graphics with no other function have <i>empty alt</i> descriptions (alt= ""), but they never have <i>missing alt</i> descriptions.	Purely decorative graphics have <i>alt</i> descriptions that say "spacer", "decorative graphic," or other titles that only increase the time that it takes to listen to a page when using a	

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		screen reader.	
<b>(b) Equivalent alternatives for any multimedia presentation shall be synchronized with the presentation.</b>	Multimedia files have <i>synchronized</i> captions.	Multimedia files do not have captions, or captions which are not synchronized.	
<b>(c) Web pages shall be designed so that all information conveyed with color is also available without color, for example from context or markup.</b>	If color is used to convey important information, an alternative indicator is used, such as an asterisk (*) or other symbol.	The use of a color monitor is required.	
	Contrast is good.	Contrast is poor.	
<b>(d) Documents shall be organized so they are readable without requiring an associated style sheet.</b>	Style sheets may be used for color, indentation and other presentation effects, but the document is still understandable (even if less visually appealing) when the style sheet is turned off.	The document is confusing or information is missing when the style sheet is turned off.	
<b>(e) Redundant text links shall be provided for each active region of a server-side image map.</b>	Separate text links are provided outside of the server-side image map to access the same content that the image map hot spots access.	The only way to access the links of a server-side image map is through the image map hot spots, which usually means that a mouse is required and that the links are unavailable to assistive technologies.	
<b>(f) Client-side image maps shall be provided instead of server-side image maps except where the regions cannot be defined with an available geometric shape.</b>	Standard HTML client-side image maps are used, and appropriate alt text is provided for the image as well as the hot spots.	Server-side image maps are used when a client-side image map would suffice.	
<b>(g) Row and column headers shall be identified for data tables.</b>	Data tables have the column and row headers appropriately identified (using the <th> tag)	Data tables have no header rows or columns.	

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	Tables used strictly for <u>layout purposes</u> do NOT have header rows or columns.	Tables used for layout use the header attribute when there is no true header.	
<b>(h) Markup shall be used to associate data cells and header cells for data tables that have two or more logical levels of row or column headers.</b>	Table cells are associated with the appropriate headers (e.g. with the <i>id</i> , <i>headers</i> , <i>scope</i> and/or <i>axis</i> HTML attributes).	Columns and rows are not associated with column and row headers, or they are associated incorrectly.	
<b>(i) Frames shall be titled with text that facilitates frame identification and navigation.</b>	Each frame is given a title that helps the user understand the frame's purpose.	Frames have no titles, or titles that are not descriptive of the frame's purpose.	
<b>(j) Pages shall be designed to avoid causing the screen to flicker with a frequency greater than 2 Hz and lower than 55 Hz.</b>	No elements on the page flicker at a rate of 2 to 55 cycles per second, thus reducing the risk of optically-induced seizures.	One or more elements on the page flicker at a rate of 2 to 55 cycles per second, increasing the risk of optically-induced seizures.	
<b>(k) A text-only page, with equivalent information or functionality, shall be provided to make a web site comply with the provisions of this part, when compliance cannot be accomplished in any other way. The content of the text-only page shall be updated whenever the primary page changes. <a href="#">[See Note 2]</a></b>	A text-only version is created only when there is no other way to make the content accessible, or when it offers significant advantages over the "main" version for certain disability types.	A text-only version is provided only as an excuse not to make the "main" version fully accessible.	
	The text-only version is up-to-date with the "main" version.	The text-only version is not up-to-date with the "main" version.	
	The text-only version provides the functionality equivalent to that of the "main" version.	The text-only version is an unequal, lesser version of the "main" version.	
	An alternative is provided for components (e.g. plug-ins, scripts) that are not directly accessible.	No alternative is provided for components that are not directly accessible.	
<b>(l) When pages utilize scripting languages to display content, or to create interface elements, the information provided by the script shall be</b>	Information within the scripts is text-based, or a text alternative is provided within the script itself, in accordance with (a) in these standards.	Scripts include graphics-as-text with no true text alternative.	

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<p><b>identified with functional text that can be read by assistive technology.</b> <a href="#">[See Note 3]</a></p>	<p>All scripts (e.g. Javascript pop-up menus) are either directly accessible to assistive technologies (keyboard accessibility is a good measure of this), or an alternative method of accessing equivalent functionality is provided (e.g. a standard HTML link).</p>	<p>Scripts only work with a mouse, and there is no keyboard-accessible alternative either within or outside of the script.</p>	
<p><b>(m) When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with §1194.21(a) through (l).</b> <a href="#">[See Notes 4, 5, and 6]</a></p>	<p>A link is provided to a disability-accessible page where the plug-in can be downloaded.</p>	<p>No link is provided to a page where the plug-in can be downloaded and/or the download page is not disability-accessible.</p>	
	<p>All Java applets, scripts and plug-ins (including Acrobat PDF files and PowerPoint files, etc.) and the content within them are accessible to assistive technologies, or else an alternative means of accessing equivalent content is provided.</p>	<p>Plugins, scripts and other elements are used indiscriminately, without alternatives for those who cannot access them.</p>	
<p><b>(n) When electronic forms are designed to be completed on-line, the form shall allow people using assistive technology to access the information, field elements, and functionality required for completion and submission of the form, including all directions and cues.</b></p>	<p>All form controls have text labels adjacent to them.</p>	<p>Form controls have no labels, or the labels are not adjacent to the controls.</p>	
	<p>Form elements have labels associated with them in the markup (i.e. the <i>id</i> and <i>for</i>, HTML elements).</p>	<p>There is no linking of the form element and its label in the HTML.</p>	
	<p>Dynamic HTML scripting of the form does not interfere with assistive technologies.</p>	<p>Dynamic HTML scripting makes parts of the form unavailable to assistive technologies.</p>	
<p><b>(o) A method shall be provided that permits users to skip repetitive navigation links.</b></p>	<p>A link is provided to skip over lists of navigational menus or other lengthy lists of links.</p>	<p>There is no way to skip over lists of links.</p>	

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<b>(p) When a timed response is required, the user shall be alerted and given sufficient time to indicate more time is required.</b>	The user has control over the timing of content changes.	The user is required to react quickly, within limited time restraints.	

(See Notes Below)

### Notes

**Note 1:** Until the *longdesc* tag is better supported, it is impractical to use.

**Note 2:** "Text-only" and "accessible" are NOT synonymous. Text-only sites may help people with certain types of visual disabilities, but are not always helpful to those with cognitive, motor or hearing disabilities.

**Note 3:** At this time, many elements of Dynamic HTML (client-side scripted HTML, which is usually accomplished with Javascript) cannot be made directly accessible to assistive technologies and keyboards, especially when the onmouseover command is used. If an onmouseover (or similar) element does not contain any important information (e.g. the script causes a button to "glow"), then there is no consequence for accessibility. If this scripted event reveals important information, then a keyboard-accessible alternative is required.

**Note 4:** When embedded into web pages, few plug-ins are currently directly accessible. Some of them e.g. RealPlayer) are more accessible as standalone products. It may be better to invoke the whole program rather than embed movies into pages at this point, although this may change in the future.

**Note 5:** Acrobat Reader 5.0 allows screen readers to access PDF documents. However, not all users have this version installed, and not all PDF documents are text-based (some are scanned in as graphics), which renders them useless to many assistive technologies. It is recommended that an accessible HTML version be made available as an alternative to PDF.

**Note 6:** PowerPoint files are currently not directly accessible unless the user has a full version of the PowerPoint program on the client computer (and not just the PowerPoint viewer). It is recommended that an accessible HTML version be provided as well.