Creating Accessible Page Structure with Titles, Headings, and Lists

Page titles

What to do
A page should have a short title that describes its topic and sufficiently distinguishes it from other pages.

Why it matters
Descriptive titles allow users to determine what page they are on.

Examples

- **Better page titles**
  - Center for Academic Excellence | Appalachian State University
  - About | Center for Academic Excellence

- **Poor page titles**
  - Welcome to home page of Center for Academic Excellence
  - Center for Academic Excellence | About Us

Headings

What to do
Sections should be identified with headings. Headings should be formatted with heading elements, as opposed to using font size or styles. Headings should not be used for formatting alone. Headings should be properly nested (i.e., don’t jump from heading 1 to heading 3).

Why it matters
Headings allow assistive technologies to navigate page structure and more quickly find the content of interest, similar to the way a person without a visual disability scans the page to look for large, bold text.

Examples
Better headings

Section 1 (formatted with Heading 1 markup)

Section level 2a (formatted with Heading 2 markup)

Section level 3a (formatted with Heading 3 markup)

Section level 3b (formatted with Heading 3 markup)

Section level 2b (formatted with Heading 2 markup)

Poor headings

Section level 1 (formatted with a bold font instead of Heading 1 markup)

Section level 3 (formatted with Heading 3 markup, level 1 and 2 skipped)

Paragraph text.

Paragraph text. (formatted with Heading 2 markup only to make text bigger)

- Easy Checks - Headings
- Use headings to convey meaning and structure

Lists

What to do

List content should be formatted as numbered or bulleted with list elements, as opposed to manually entering numbers or asterisks.

Why it matters

Assistive technologies can allow users to navigate from list to list or item to item.

Examples
Content references

What to do

Content should not only be referenced by shape, size, sound, or location.

Why it matters

Assistive technologies can be used to locate content that is specified by label, as opposed to content that is only referenced by its appearance or location.

Examples

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