

Accessible PDF

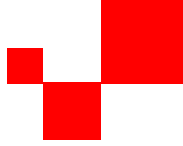
Summer 2026
Center for Learning Innovation
cli@illinoistech.edu

Why Create an Accessible PDF?

- Making materials usable by more learners — across technologies, abilities, and contexts.
- Access — not just compliance
 - **Equal access**
 - **Flexible use**
 - **Reliable reference**

Who Benefit from an Accessible PDF?

- **Screen-reader users**
- **Low-vision users**
- **Keyboard users**
- **All learners**



Download Adobe Acrobat

- Go to the [Illinois Tech Portal Dashboard](#)
- Search for "Adobe"

The screenshot shows the Adobe Acrobat web interface. The top navigation bar features icons for Adobe Home, Firefly, Express, Photoshop, Lightroom, Acrobat, Stock, and Fonts. Below this is a secondary navigation bar with links for Home, PDF Spaces, Documents, Edit, Convert, E-sign, and All tools. The 'Download Acrobat apps' dropdown menu is highlighted with a red box. A message at the bottom says 'Hi, Huilien' and 'Generate a quiz to test your knowledge'.

Adobe Acrobat Home PDF Spaces Documents Edit Convert E-sign All tools

Download Acrobat apps

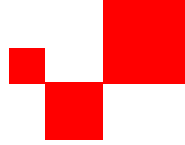
You can edit any Microsoft file right in Acrobat online with Office for the web. Upload an Office file to get started.

Hi, Huilien

Generate a quiz to test your knowledge

Upload textbooks, web links, and notes to generate a practice test with Student Spaces.

View examples Generate quiz



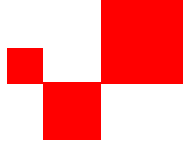
Recommended Steps

Workflow Overview

- Make the source file (Word/PPT) accessible
- Run OCR (if needed)
- Auto-tag the document
- Fix reading order
- Add alternative text
- Run Accessibility Checker

Accessible PDF Guidelines

- Start with an accessible source document (Word or PPT)
- Include:
 - Headings and structure
 - Lists and tables
 - Alternative text
 - Document title and language
- Export to PDF after accessibility is applied
- If no source file exists, apply tagging directly in the PDF



Run OCR (Optical Character Recognition)

Why OCR Matters

- Scanned PDFs are images, not readable text
- Screen readers cannot interpret image-based text

Solution

- Use OCR to convert images into searchable text

ocr_demo.pdf

Create

Try PDF Spaces | All tools | Read | Edit | Convert | E-Sign

Find text, tools, or help

All tools

Organize pages

Edit image NEW

Send for comments

Translate this PDF NEW

Scan & OCR

Protect a PDF

Redact a PDF

Compress a PDF

Prepare a form

Living with food allergies can make the world feel scary and small. My own son was diagnosed with food allergies at just a few months old after experiencing his first anaphylactic reaction to peanuts. I can still remember the overwhelming feelings of fear and uncertainty at how this would impact his life. Simple things like going to the movies, eating at a restaurant, attending a birthday party, or flying on a plane felt impossible. Finding inclusive spaces for children with food allergies continues to be a challenge. The older my son gets, the more challenges we face, so I was determined to find a way to make the world more accessible while still being mindful of his safety. This led to my research on canine odor detection work and how a service dog may benefit our family.

Maintaining a sense of normalcy can feel impossible at times, and we don't talk enough about the emotional and mental toll this takes on children, families, and caregivers (I see you and you are doing a GREAT job!). Living with a "hidden disease," it may be hard for some to understand the seriousness of this condition. My hope is that this book will encourage discussions that will lead to a better understanding of and more sensitivity to this important issue.

Try PDF Spaces | All tools | Read

Scan & OCR

MODIFY PAGE

ENHANCE FILE

RECOGNIZE TEXT

In this file

In multiple files

Correct recognized text

Bates numbering

Tagging

What Are Tags?

- Define structure and reading order
- Identify elements (headings, paragraphs, images, tables)

Why It Matters

- Enables screen readers to interpret content correctly

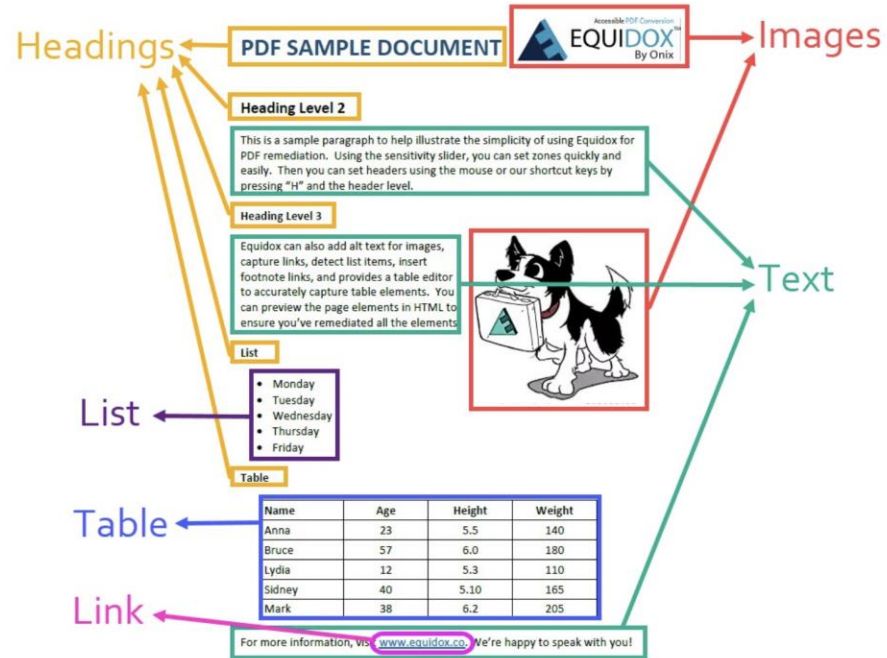
Tool

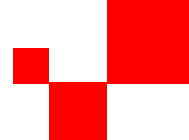
- Use “Automatically Tag PDF” in Adobe Acrobat

Example of Auto-tag

How to Auto-Tag

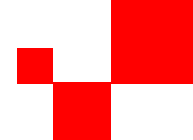
- Go to "All Tools" and then select "Prepare for Accessibility"
- Select "Automatically Tag PDF"





Common Tag Types

- `<P>` — Paragraph
- `<H1>`, `<H2>`, `<H3>` — Headings
- `<L>` / `<LI>` — Lists and list items
- `<Table>` — Tables
- `<Figure>` — Images (with alt text)



Adding the Accessibility tool in Adobe Acrobat

- Go to “All Tools” on top menu
- Select **Prepare for Accessibility**
- Select **Automatically tag PDF**

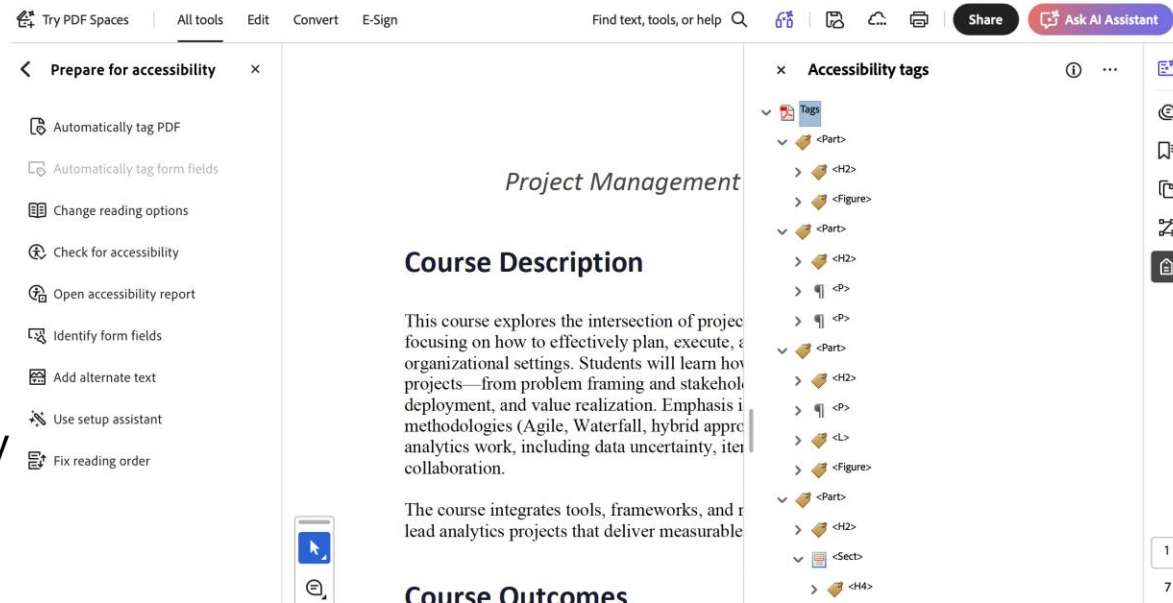
Accessibility Tags Panel

Access Tags Panel

- View → Show/Hide → Navigation Panes → Tags

Key Functions

- Navigate tag structure
- Expand/collapse hierarchy
- Select tags to highlight content



Reading Order

Check Reading Order

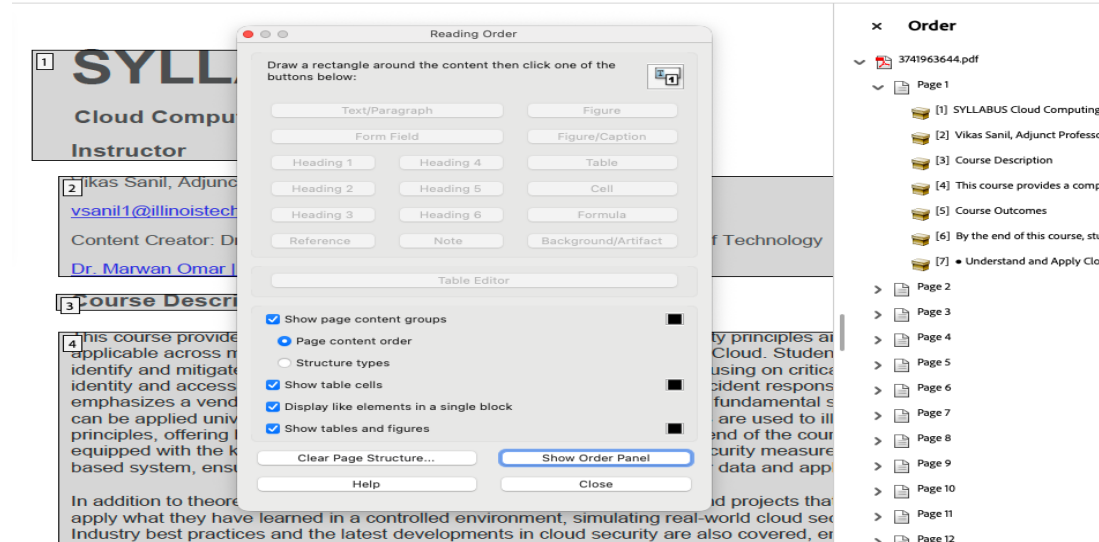
- Go to “All Tools” on top menu
- Select **Prepare for Accessibility**
- Select **Fix reading order**

Adjust Reading Order

- Click on "Show Order Panel"
- Drag and drop items to correct sequence

Best Practice

- Tag decorative elements as artifacts (exclude from reading order)



Edit Tags Manually

Manual Tag Editing

- Open Reading Order pane
- Select **item** on the pane & Right-click
- Change tag type if needed

The screenshot displays a document editor interface. On the left, a document is open with a table and text. The table has columns for 'Table', 'Yes', '1 per course', '1 hour', and '10%'. Below it, another table has columns for 'Table', 'Description', 'Points', and 'Percentage'. A context menu is open on the right, showing options for tag editing. The menu includes options like 'Show reading order panel', 'Increase font size', 'Show page content groups', 'Display like elements in a single box', 'Show table cells', 'Show tables and figures', 'Cut', 'Delete Selected Item Structure', 'Clear page structure', 'Tag as text/paragraph', 'Tag as background/artifact', 'Tag as figure', 'Tag as figure/caption', 'Tag as table', 'Tag as cell', 'Tag as form field', 'Tag as formula', 'Tag as heading 1', 'Tag as heading 2', 'Tag as heading 3', 'Tag as heading 4', 'Tag as heading 5', 'Tag as heading 6', 'Tag as reference', and 'Tag as note'. The 'Tag as background/artifact' option is highlighted.

Table	Yes	1 per course	1 hour	10%
Assignments (manually graded)	Yes	2 per course	1 hour	20%
Summative Module Assessments	Yes	1 per module	.5 hour	30%
Summative Course Assessments	Yes	1-2 per course	1-3 hours	40%

Table	Description	Points	Percentage
A	Excellent	4.00	90-100
B	Above Average	3.00	80-89.99
C	Average	2.00	70-79.99

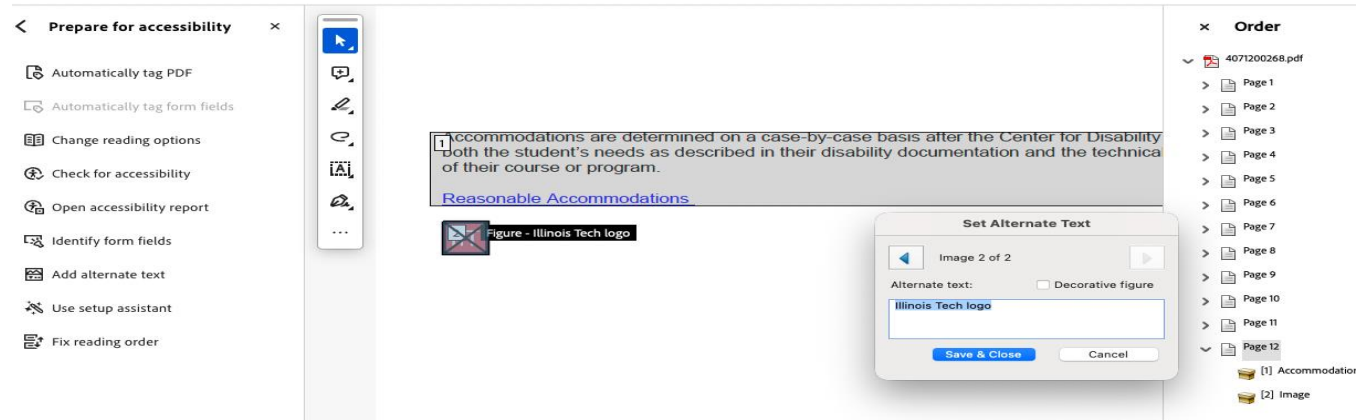
Adding Alternative Text

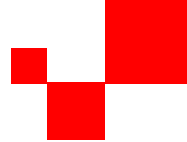
Add Alt Text

- Select image tag → Properties
- Enter description in Alternative Text field

Alternative Method

- Use “Add Alternate Text” tool for guided workflow

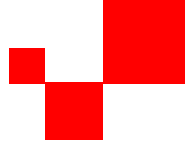




Document Properties

Set Required Metadata

- File → Properties → Description
 - Add clear title
 - Update author (if needed)
- Advanced tab
 - Set document language (e.g., English)



Run Accessibility Checker

Steps

- Select “Check for Accessibility”
- Choose options → Start Checking

Output

- Issues displayed in right panel
- Review and fix each item

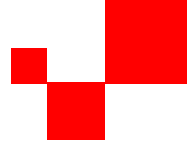
Accessibility Checker Results

Status Types

- Passed — Meets requirements
- Skipped — Not evaluated
- Needs Manual Check — Requires review
- Failed — Must be fixed

Tip

- Open full report for detailed diagnostics



Thank you!

Center for Learning Innovation
cli@illinoistech.edu