Checklist: PDF accessibility

# Introduction

We want to make accessible or low-barrier PDF documents accessible to as many user groups as possible. As a rule, PDF is not a format in which content is created but made available. Formatting and settings must therefore already be made in the document to be exported. This tabular PDF checklist shows you what you need to pay attention to in terms of accessibility.

Guidelines for using the checklist

There is space in the first column so that you can tick off the aspect. The second column contains the aspect to be considered. Finally, the third column indicates the needs for which this aspect is particularly helpful. Take your time to go through the individual points and tick them off if they are fulfilled in your document.

Please bear in mind: In any case, the list of requirements is exemplary, but not exhaustive! All points are important for the comprehensive accessibility of your teaching and the documents used!

It is also important to know that the steps described here are a good and important start towards greater accessibility, but do not fulfil the legal requirements for a PDF document. These stipulate a so-called "UA-compliant" PDF document, which can currently only be produced using an additional, chargeable tool (e.g. [axes4](https://www.axes4.com/de/produkte-services/axespdf), [CommonLook](https://commonlook.com/accessibility-software/)). For further information and a more detailed procedure for UA-compliant PDFs, there are additional checklists, e.g. from [Barrierefreies Webdesign (2006)](https://www.barrierefreies-webdesign.de/knowhow/pdf-checkliste/%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//www.barrierefreies-webdesign.de/knowhow/pdf-checkliste/).

# Authorship and licence

Authors: Jule Günter and Christin Stormer. The project [SHUFFLE – Hochschulinitiative digitale Barrierefreiheit für Alle](https://www.shuffle-projekt.de/%22%20%5Co%20%22http%3A//www.shuffle-projekt.de) is financially supported by the foundation [Innovation in der Hochschullehre](https://stiftung-hochschullehre.de/%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//stiftung-hochschullehre.de/). This document is released under [CC BY 4.0 licence](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/%22%20%5Co%20%22https%3A//creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/).

# Checklist

| Check? | The created PDF... | **Particularly** helpful in digital teaching for staff, people who... |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | ... does not consist of an image file.(🡪 otherwise convert to PDF using OCR technology! Attention: this means a lot of work. The PDF should not be an image or scan from the outset). | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... contains headings that were previously created as such using style sheets. | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... only contains lists, tables and other forms of content if they are labelled as such using style sheets.  | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... contains tags(🡪 Tags are markings of elements in the document. These tags are usually created automatically if the previous document was correctly designed and saved). | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... only contains images if they have an alternative text or are labelled as decorative. (Marking as decorative is optional, but should be avoided if possible; images should ideally have an alternative text within the PDF). | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... has a title and an author. These are in the metadata of the PDF. | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... has no frame around text elements. This applies in particular when creating PDFs with PowerPoint, as text with a frame is converted into an image when it is converted into a PDF. | ... use a voice output. |
|  | ... has been checked for accessibility.(🡪 Adobe Acrobat Pro, PAC 3) | All |