Quick Reference: Testing Web Content for Accessibility

Test with WAVE
- WAVE (wave.webaim.org) is an accessibility evaluation tool that facilitates human evaluation by embedding inline accessibility feedback into your web content.
- Dynamic or protected content can be evaluated with the WAVE Chrome extension (wave.webaim.org/extension).
- Icons identify potential problems or features. Click an icon to highlight the corresponding element and get more information.
- Use the Details panel to review page issues. Click on an icon to find it in the page. Uncheck icons to hide them.
- No Styles view can be used to simplify the page view and to check reading order for screen readers.
- Click on the Code button at the bottom of the page to reveal a code inspector.

Images
- The image alt attribute value is displayed next to the image.
- Ensure alternative text conveys the content and function of the image. It should be succinct, accurate, and useful.
- Look for images of text where the same presentation can be accomplished using true text.

Headings
- View headings in the Outline tab in the sidebar.
- Ensure visual headings are marked up as true headings.
- The main heading should usually be an <h1>.
- Look for skipped heading levels (e.g., <h2> to <h4>).

Contrast
- Select the Contrast view.
  - WAVE flags WCAG AA contrast issues.
  - If links are not underlined, there must be 3:1 contrast between link text and body text and also an additional change (e.g., underlining) on mouse hover and keyboard focus.
- A standalone contrast checker is available at webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/.

HTML5 and ARIA
- Identified in WAVE with light purple icons.
- Ensure HTML5 regions or ARIA landmarks are correct.
- Check for appropriate use of ARIA Roles/States/Properties (presented in green).
- Ensure ARIA labels and descriptions are correct.

Forms
- Ensure forms controls have descriptive labels.
- Use the Code panel to ensure the <label> for and <input> id values match.
- If a label is not visible, check for a hidden label, aria-label, or title attribute.

Other common WAVE checks
- Page language is specified (e.g., <html lang="en">).
- If data tables are present, ensure table headers are present and have the correct scope.

Use a checklist
- WCAG 2.0: webaim.org/standards/wcag/checklist/.
- Section 508: webaim.org/standards/508/checklist/.
  - 508 is dated and should be used with WCAG 2.0.

Check keyboard accessibility
- To toggle Mac keyboard accessibility press Control + F7. Then in Safari, select Preferences > Advanced > Accessibility > Press Tab to highlight each item...
- Navigate the page using only the keyboard:
  - Tab: Navigate to links and form controls.
  - Shift + Tab: Navigate backwards.
  - Enter: Activate links and buttons.
  - Spacebar: Activate checkboxes and buttons.
  - Arrow keys: Radio buttons, select/dropdown menus, sliders, tab panels, autocomplete, tree menus, etc.
- Is anything mouse-only (e.g., rollover menus)?
- Is a “skip navigation” link available? Activate the skip link and hit Tab again to ensure it functions correctly.
- Is the navigation order logical and intuitive?
- Is a visible keyboard focus indicator/outline present?
- Test dialogs that 'pop' open. Can you navigate and close the dialog? Does focus return to a logical place?
  - Modal dialogs maintain focus until dismissed.
  - Non-modal dialogs close when focus is lost.
  - Esc should also close all dialogs.

Test content scaling
- Enlarge the font in your web browser to ~150%. Is the page content readable and usable? Is horizontal scrolling minimized?
  - Safari: View > Zoom Text Only
  - Firefox: View > Zoom > Zoom Text Only
  - Internet Explorer: View > Text size
- Zoom the web page in your browser (enlarge fonts and images) to at least 200%. Is text in images readable?

Test with a screen reader
- Focus on navigation, forms, and dynamic content.
- WebAIM tutorials: webaim.org/articles/jaws/, webaim.org/articles/nvda/, and webaim.org/articles/voiceover.
- Are ARIA roles/states/properties necessary, and do they convey correct information?
- If there are forms, submit empty to test error feedback.
- Are all dynamic changes and updates accessible?

Scan for other issues
- Check media for captions and transcripts.
- Ensure the page <title> is unique and descriptive.
- Look for links with ambiguous link text like “click here.”
- Make sure information does not depend on color, audio, shape, size, or location.
- Ensure that animating or updating content or media can be paused and stopped.
- Look for strobing content/video that could cause seizures.