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Guidance

# Doing a basic accessibility check if you cannot do a detailed one

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The first step towards meeting [the new accessibility requirements](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/accessibility-requirements-for-public-sector-websites-and-apps>) involves evaluating how accessible your website is.

This means checking whether or not it meets the [international WCAG 2.1 AA standard](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag) (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/helping-people-to-use-your-service/understanding-wcag>).

Checking this in detail requires a large amount of technical expertise and is best left to either:

- an accessibility expert within your organisation
- a third-party accessibility auditor

Some organisations will not have the expertise to do a detailed check themselves and paying a third party would place a 'disproportionate burden' on them. This means a burden or cost that is too much for the organisation to reasonably bear.

If this applies to your organisation, you'll have to do a basic check instead. This guide will help you to do that basic check.

The checks outlined in this guidance are probably best done by the person in your organisation with the best knowledge of websites. This will usually be the person responsible for updating the website (like a web officer).

If there's no one in your organisation with this knowledge, it's fine to ask a volunteer to do the checks - for example, if someone you know works with websites and can spare the time.

Before you start, [check whether it's reasonable for you to do a detailed accessibility check instead](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-your-website-or-app-accessible-and-publish-an-accessibility-statement#decide-how-to-check-your-website-or-app-for-accessibility-problems) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-your-website-or-app-accessible-and-publish-an-accessibility-statement#decide-how-to-check-your-website-or-app-for-accessibility-problems>). If it is, then just doing a basic check will not be enough for you to meet the requirements.

Once you've finished the checks, you'll need to make a plan to fix any accessibility problems you find.

## Preparing to do a basic accessibility check

You do not need to check every page of your website - just a sample. So start by working out what to include in your sample.

If you've got more than one website or app, you need to gather a sample from each website or app you have.

Your sample needs to include:

- your site's homepage
- content pages that are mostly text based
- images, video and audio content
- interactive tools and transactions, like forms
- pages including login functionality, if your website has them
- PDFs and other document types you have
- dynamic content like pop-up windows
- navigation pages, including your sitemap and pages with search functionality

You should also include in your sample any pages or websites containing information about accessibility, how to contact you, how to use your site, legal information (for examples terms and conditions pages, or things like your privacy policy) and any settings or preferences pages.

Once you've got your sample, work through the checks outlined in this guidance one by one.

It's likely the checks will take at least a few days, so make sure to give yourself enough time to work through them.

Some of the requirements might not apply to your website. For example, if you do not have any videos then you can ignore the tests relating to video content.

## 1. Text content

You'll need to start by checking the text-based content pages you included in your sample.

### Check you're using proper headings

It's important that any headings you're using are styled properly. This is because some users with visual impairments use tools called 'screen readers' that read out page content to them.

Screen reader users often jump through the list of headings in a document so they can skip to the content they're looking for.

If you're styling headings just using bold, or by using bigger font, then screen readers will not recognise them as headings. This will stop users from skipping straight to the content they need.

To check your headings are styled properly, open up the tool you use to edit your website (often known as a ‘content management system’) and check the headings on your sample pages. They’re styled correctly if something like one of the following applies:

- your headings are styled as things like ‘Heading level 2’, rather than ‘Normal text’
- you can see tags like **##** , **###** , **<H2>** or **<H3>**

## Check pages are usable when stylesheets are disabled

The way a page looks is controlled by something called a ‘stylesheet’. It defines things like the way a page is laid out and any font colours.

Your content should still be usable even if stylesheets are disabled, or are not loading properly. This means it’s still possible for users to complete any relevant tasks or find important information - for example, look for opening hours or contact details, or navigate their way to the form they need to fill out.

You’ll need to check your sample pages are still usable when stylesheets are disabled. Test this by copying a URL from your website and pasting it into the [WAVE tool \(http://wave.webaim.org/\)](http://wave.webaim.org/). Once you’ve done that, select ‘no styles’ from the panel on the left-hand side of the tool. This should give you a much more basic view of the page.

Check whether you can still use the content to complete any relevant tasks.

## Check that instructions are styled properly

You need to make sure you’re not conveying instructions in a way that relies on a user’s ability to see the page.

For example, only sighted users will understand instructions like:

- ‘click the round button’
- ‘click the big button below’
- ‘click the red button’

Users who cannot see the page will not know what you’re referring to, because instructions like that rely on visual descriptions.

So check your sample of pages and look out for these types of instructions.

## Check that links make sense

Check any links on your sample content pages to check that the link text you're using clearly explains where any links will take the user.

This is important because screen reader users often scan through lists of links in isolation. This means they do not have the surrounding context to help them understand what the link is for.

You can check your links by looking at your sample pages and just reading the link text - without paying attention to the surrounding content. If the link text still makes sense in isolation and clearly explains where the link goes, it's likely the text you're using is accessible.

If you're using link text like 'click here' or 'more information' then you're probably not meeting this requirement, as link text like that does not describe where the link will go or what it's for.

There's [guidance explaining what good link text looks like](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/links#writing-link-text) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/links#writing-link-text>) if you're not sure.

## Check that pages have good titles

You need to check your pages are titled properly. If they're not, users will not understand what they're for and will struggle to find what they need using search.

Your page title should appear in the page tab at the top of your browser. For instance, if you go to [the GOV.UK homepage](https://www.gov.uk/) (<https://www.gov.uk/>) you'll see the text in the tab near the top of the browser is 'Welcome to GOV.UK'. This is the page title.

Look at the equivalent text for your sample pages. You can hover over the tab to see the full text if it's too long to fit on the tab itself.

Check whether your titles are descriptive. Ask yourself whether they clearly state - in simple language - what the pages are about and the tasks they'd help users complete.

For example, 'Apply for a blue badge - Danbury Council' is a much more descriptive title than just 'Blue badges'.

Also check that none of the titles are duplicated: if 2 pages have the same title, how is the user supposed to know which one to use?

There's [guidance on writing good page titles](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/writing-for-gov-uk) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/writing-for-gov-uk>) if you need help.

## 2. Images, video and audio content

There are a few things you'll need to do to check that your sample of images and video content is accessible.

## Check any images have a description

You'll need to check that any non-decorative images (including charts or diagrams) have an accompanying text description. That way, users can still access the relevant information even if they cannot see the image.

Take your sample pages and check that any images either:

- have appropriate [alternative \(or 'alt'\) text](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/image-copyright-standards-for-gov-uk) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/image-copyright-standards-for-gov-uk>) that explains the information the image conveys - you can usually check this in the content management system you use to update your website
- are described in any surrounding body text

You do not need to check decorative images - these do not need an accompanying description.

## Check any video or audio content is properly described

As you did with your images, you'll need to check that any videos or audio content are clearly described so that users who cannot hear them can still access the information.

This firstly means checking that videos have captions explaining any sound effects and dialogue. You should also check your sample videos (maybe 2 or 3) to assess the quality of those captions.

Once you've done that, you'll need to check there are transcripts for any audio content you've got.

## Audio descriptions for video and audio content

When you check through the videos on your website, you might come across things that are covered in the video but not described in the audio track - something like the contents of a chart or graph, for example.

If you were only following the audio, you'd miss this information. To make sure users can access the information they need, you'd need to provide an extra audio description to describe anything not covered in the main audio track.

Check your sample of videos to see if an extra audio track is required and whether you're providing one.



## Check for images containing text

You'll need to check whether any of your sample images contain text. This is because screen readers will not be able to read the text within the image. The information should be published as normal page text instead.

This does not include logos and brand names - it's okay for those to contain text.

## 3. Interactive tools and transactions

Once you've finished checking your images, video and audio content, you'll need to check the forms, tools or transactions you included in your sample.

### Check form fields are marked up appropriately

You need to make sure any form fields are marked up correctly. If they're not marked up properly, screen readers will not be able to tell what a form field is for, or what information the user should enter into it.

You can check your form fields are marked up properly by going to a form and clicking on a field label (the text above, below or next to the field that explains what it's for). If the field is marked up correctly, clicking the field label should cause your cursor to appear inside the corresponding field.

You can see what this looks like using the [GOV.UK contact form](https://www.gov.uk/contact/govuk#do-you-want-a-reply) (<https://www.gov.uk/contact/govuk#do-you-want-a-reply>). If you click on the 'Your name' field label towards the bottom of the page, you'll see the focus of your cursor switches to the field itself.

Do this test on a few of your forms to check whether the fields respond as they should.

### Check it's clear what information users need to provide

As you go through your sample forms, you'll need to check you're using field labels in a way that makes clear what information the user needs to enter.

As a general rule, these labels should be specific. Look at your forms and make an assessment as to whether they're clear. Common mistakes include not labelling fields at all, or using vague labels like 'Name' which do not make clear whose name the user needs to enter (for example, it could be a partner or child's name, rather than the user's own name).

### Check form elements are consistent across your website

When you're checking through your forms, you'll need to check that form labels are used consistently. These are the labels that describe the information a user needs to enter into a particular field.

Check your sample to see how you're labelling the navigational elements. For instance, are you using 'Submit' on one form and then using 'Go' or 'Complete' on another?

Are you asking for users' names and addresses in a consistent manner, or does it vary from form to form?

## **Check users get a warning before they're timed out**

Some websites time users out after a period of inactivity. This usually results in form data being lost, or the user being automatically logged out of an account.

You need to make sure to warn users if you're going to time them out after a period of inactivity. You'll also need to give them the chance to interact with the page to prevent the time out from happening.

Test whether you're doing this by going to one of the forms on your website and remaining inactive for around 20 minutes. If you get timed out with no warning, then you're not meeting the requirements.

If, after a while, you were given a timeout warning and a chance to prevent the timeout by interacting with the page, you're likely meeting the requirements.

## **Check that any error messages are helpful**

When a user provides incorrect information in a form, you need to let them know they've made a mistake and help them correct that mistake.

You can check how well your website is doing this by going to your sample forms and entering some intentionally incorrect or invalid information.

For example, you could enter a future date into a date of birth field or a postcode with too few characters and try submitting the form. This should generate an error message.

Assess whether the error messages make clear what you need to do to correct the mistakes. Messages like 'invalid date' or 'invalid postcode' are not very helpful: they indicate that the user has made a mistake, but do not explain why the information was wrong and how to correct the error.

Something like 'You cannot enter a date in the future - please enter a past date' is much more helpful.

Play around with a few form fields to see how helpful the error messages are.

## Check users can review their answers before submitting a form

Users need to be able to check their answers before submitting certain types of form, to confirm they've entered the correct information. This only applies to forms where there would be serious consequences to them making a mistake - for example, financial transactions or something that enters them into a legal contract.

You can test this by going to any of your sample forms that meet these criteria and working your way through them. See if you're presented with [a page that lets you check your answers](https://design-system.service.gov.uk/patterns/check-answers/) (<https://design-system.service.gov.uk/patterns/check-answers/>) before submitting the form.

## Check that form elements behave as expected

When you were working your way through some of your sample forms, you should have noticed whether interacting with any of the elements caused anything unexpected to happen.

This includes things like a dropdown menu or radio button (an element that lets you select just one of a few options) causing a new page to open when you click on it.

## 4. PDFs and other documents

Next, you'll need to check your sample of PDFs and other documents (for example, Word documents, spreadsheets and presentations). Your sample should include:

- documents that are essential to users accessing one of your services, no matter when they were published
- non-essential documents (such as leaflets) that were published on or after 23 September 2018

## Check the documents have meaningful titles

First, check the documents have descriptive titles that explain what they're for.

An example of a good title is something like "Blue badge application form", as it makes clear what the document is and what a user would use it for.

Something like "Accounts - '18" is not as good, because it's vague and does not explain in enough detail what the document is.

## Check for headings

For this test, you'll need to open a few of the documents in a document editor. You could use something like Google Docs or Microsoft Word for this if you do not have PDF editing software.

The first thing to check is that the document is broken up into sections - and that those sections all have descriptive headings. This will allow people using screen readers to scan the document and jump to the section that's relevant to them.

You'll also need to check that the headings are tagged properly - for instance, they've been created using the [styles gallery in Microsoft Word \(https://support.office.com/en-us/article/add-a-heading-3eb8b917-56dc-4a17-891a-a026b2c790f2\)](https://support.office.com/en-us/article/add-a-heading-3eb8b917-56dc-4a17-891a-a026b2c790f2) or something similar. That way, a screen reader will recognise them as headings and will let users scan through them to find the content they need.

If the headings are just styled using bold, the screen reader will not know they're headings.

## Check the documents convey instructions in an accessible way

You need to make sure you're not conveying instructions in a way that relies on a user's ability to see the document.

For example, only sighted users will understand instructions like:

- 'click the round button'
- 'click the big button below'
- 'click the red button'

Users who cannot see the page will not know what you're referring to, because you need to be able to see the page to identify a button as 'big', 'red' or 'round'.

So check your document sample and look out for these types of instructions.

## Check that any link text makes sense

Next, check that any link text you're using clearly explains where the link will take the user.

This is important because screen reader users often scan through lists of links in isolation. This means they do not have the surrounding context to help them understand what the link is for.

You can check your links by looking at your sample pages and just reading the link text - without paying attention to the surrounding content. If the links still make sense even in isolation and clearly explain where the links go, it's likely the text you're using is accessible.

If you're using link text like 'click here' or 'more information' then you're probably not meeting this requirement, as link text like that does not describe where the link will go or what it's for.

There's [guidance explaining what good link text looks like](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/links#writing-link-text) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/content-design/links#writing-link-text>) if you're not sure.

## Check that images, charts and tables have a description

You'll need to check that any visual way of conveying data like a table, chart or image is described in the surrounding text. That way, users who cannot see the images can still access the information the image conveys.

## 5. Technology

You'll need to check that users can interact with your website in the way they need to. This means checking for technological or frontend issues.

### Tests using a mobile or tablet device

You'll need to start by doing some checks using a mobile or tablet device to check that your website is usable on these types of device.

#### Check the page orientation

You'll need to take a few of your sample pages and check they respond properly when you try to change the page orientation.

You can do this by loading up a page on a mobile or tablet device and turning the screen from portrait to landscape a few times. The page should respond to fit that view, rather than staying locked in place.

#### Check you can navigate using just one finger

Some users have limited dexterity or range of movement, which means it's important that they do not have to use complex gestures that involve more than one finger to navigate your website on their mobile or tablet device. There needs to be a simple alternative that they can use that only requires one finger.

Go through your sample content pages and check whether it's possible to navigate using just one finger. Try things like double-tapping to zoom in and out of the page and holding or hovering your finger over an element to highlight it.

It's worth trying to complete a couple of forms using these techniques, too.

### **Check you're not relying on complex motions**

Some more interactive websites or apps require users to do things like shake or tilt their device to complete an action.

This will not apply to most websites, but if it applies to yours then you need to make sure there's an alternative for users who cannot move their device in these ways.

Check that none of your sample pages require any of these types of interactions - and if they do, that there's another way of completing that task.

## **Navigating just using a keyboard**

Some of your users need to navigate without a mouse, just using a keyboard. You'll need to do some checks to see how easy it is for them to do that.

The main keys you'll be using to navigate are the space bar, 'Tab', 'Enter' and 'Esc' keys. 'Tab' is the key that lets you jump between page elements, while 'Enter' and 'Esc' let you interact with and dismiss those page elements. The space bar activates buttons, checkboxes and radio buttons.

You might need to [enable the tabbing function if you're using Safari](https://a11yproject.com/posts/safari-keyboard-navigation/) (<https://a11yproject.com/posts/safari-keyboard-navigation/>).

### **Check you can tell where you are on the page**

When you navigate just using a keyboard, you do not have the mouse cursor to let you know where the focus is on the page. You need to make sure there's another way for users to orientate themselves and understand which page element they're focusing on.

For example, if you tab through the [GOV.UK homepage](https://www.gov.uk/) (<https://www.gov.uk/>) you'll notice that the page element in focus is highlighted very clearly with a prominent orange block.

Spend a few minutes tabbing through a few of the sample pages you selected. Ask yourself whether it's clear where on the page you're focused - if it takes you a while to notice which element is in focus then you're probably not meeting this requirement.

### **Check the order makes sense when tabbing**

While you were tabbing through the page elements, you should have noticed whether the tabbing moved in a logical order. For instance, if you tab on to a navigation bar, you'd expect to be able to tab through the entire bar without the focus jumping off elsewhere on the page.

Spend a few minutes testing this on a few of your sample pages, to check you can tab in a logical order.

### **Check nothing unexpected happens when tabbing through a page**

When you were tabbing through your sample pages, you should have noticed whether anything unexpected happened. For example, if tabbing onto an element triggered anything like:

- a new web page to open
- a navigation menu to open

Another thing to look out for is whether you can interact with all the page elements you'd expect to.

For example, some websites like the Service Manual feature expandable, [hide and reveal style navigation](https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/user-research) (<https://www.gov.uk/service-manual/user-research>). If these navigational elements are marked up properly, you can expand and close them with a keyboard as you would with a mouse.

But if they're marked up incorrectly, you'll likely tab straight past them using just a keyboard. Look out for things like this.

### **Check you do not get stuck when navigating through content**

While you're tabbing through your sample pages, note down any places where you get stuck.

Getting stuck means ending up somewhere you cannot navigate away from using just your keyboard. For instance, you might activate a pop-up or interactive element that you cannot skip away from just by using the 'Esc' key.

People not using a mouse would not be able to move away from a page element like this, which could prove very frustrating.

If you find you get stuck, you're probably not meeting this requirement.

### **Check forms are still usable without a mouse**

Take your sample of forms and see if you can complete them without using a mouse. This means using 'Tab' to jump between the form elements and 'Enter' to interact with any navigation elements, like 'next' or 'submit' buttons.



If there are form elements you cannot get through using just your keyboard, then your website is not meeting this requirement.

### **Check users can skip to the main content on a page**

Lots of websites contain several links and navigational elements in the header at the top of the page. Users need to be able to skip past these links straight to the main page content if they want to, so they're not forced to tab through each item individually every time they open a new page.

Some websites give users the chance to skip these header blocks. For instance, if you hit 'Tab' when you arrive at the [GOV.UK home page \(https://www.gov.uk/\)](https://www.gov.uk/), you'll see the option to 'Skip to main content'. If you hit 'Enter', the page will refocus past the header block down to where the actual page content begins.

See if the same thing happens when you hit 'Tab' after refreshing a page on your website.

## **Checking content is usable when zoomed in or magnified**

Some users with visual impairments use screen magnification tools that zoom into the page content, or increase the size of the text. You'll need to check your content is usable for people using these tools.

### **Checking content is usable when you enlarge the text**

Take a couple of the forms and content pages from your sample and see what happens if you increase the font size.

You can usually do this by changing the settings in your browser. For example, in Chrome you do this by choosing "Settings", and changing the "Font size" from "medium" to "very large".

Once you've increased the font size, try to complete a few tasks using your sample pages. If the page resizes or restructures properly, it should not obscure any of the important information or buttons you'd need to progress through a form.

### **Checking how the page behaves when users zoom in**

You'll need to check what happens to your pages when you adjust the page zoom in your browser. You can do this either through your browser's settings or by using a keyboard shortcut - usually 'Cmd' or 'Ctrl' plus the '+' key.

Use the same sample of pages you used when tweaking the size of the text. For each page, see what happens when you zoom progressively further in.



If your website is handling this in an accessible way, then you should be able to navigate without using horizontal scroll: the content should reformat in a way that means you only need to use vertical scrolling.

## Colour contrast

Some users with visual impairments will not be able to interact with your website if the colour contrast is set incorrectly.

So check the colour contrast on your sample pages, including any PDFs or other document types.

### Check for text contrast

You'll need to check that the contrast ratio between text and the background colour of your website is at least 4.5:1.

You can use the [WAVE tool to check colour contrast \(http://wave.webaim.org/\)](http://wave.webaim.org/).

This involves copying one of your sample URLs and pasting it into the [WAVE tool \(http://wave.webaim.org/\)](http://wave.webaim.org/). Once you've done that, select 'contrast' from the panel on the left-hand side of the tool. This should show you the colour contrast information for the page in question.

### Check any buttons and navigational elements

Like you did for the text on your website, you'll need to check that the colour contrast between any buttons or navigational elements (like 'next' or 'continue' buttons in forms) and the background of your website is set appropriately.

The contrast ratio needs to be at least 3:1 in these cases. Again, use the WAVE tool to check this.

## Pop-ups and interactive or flashing content

Pop-ups or flashing images can be very distracting. Users need to be able to disable or dismiss these elements easily.

### Check that users can disable animated or moving content

Things like scrolling carousels or blinking images can be very distracting for people with cognitive disabilities.

If your website contains these sorts of elements, you need to check whether users can disable them.

Go to any of your sample pages containing these items and see if there's a way to stop them. Try clicking on them, or interacting with the surrounding content. Check to see if there's a button to stop or pause the item.

## **Check for content that plays automatically**

Some websites play audio or video content automatically when a user refreshes or opens a page.

If this applies to your website - and the content plays for more than 3 seconds - you'll need to check users can either change the volume or stop it altogether. There's likely to be a video or audio box somewhere on the page that you can interact with to do these things.

## **Check whether there's an alternative for people who cannot see maps**

Some websites contain interactive maps.

It's very hard to make a map itself accessible to people who have visual impairments using some sorts of assistive technology. At the least, you should provide an alternative for users who cannot use the map.

The Pension Wise website does this well. For instance, when you [search for your nearest contact centre](https://www.pensionwise.gov.uk/en/book-face-to-face) (<https://www.pensionwise.gov.uk/en/book-face-to-face>), you're presented not only with a map you could use to navigate, but also with a text address any user could access.

Check any maps on your website to see whether you're providing alternative routes for users who cannot use the map.

## **Search and other forms of navigation**

You'll need to do some checks to see how accessible your website's navigation is. Navigation includes things like search, [site maps](https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/156184?hl=en) (<https://support.google.com/webmasters/answer/156184?hl=en>) and navigation categories.

## **Check there are multiple ways to navigate your website**

Different users have different preferences, which means you need to provide more than one way of accessing content.

The most common ways of doing this include:

- offering a search bar
- publishing a [site map](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Site_map) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Site\\_map](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Site_map))
- offering navigation categories that break up the content by theme

Check that you're offering more than one of these options.

### **Check your navigation behaves consistently**

Things like search bars and breadcrumb trails (the list of links that appear at the top of the page to show where in your website's navigation you currently are) should behave in the same way wherever they appear on your website.

You can check for this by going to a few of your sample pages and checking whether the navigational elements are presented consistently. If things like search boxes or navigation menus appear in different places across the pages, you're probably not meeting this requirement.

### **Check links do not trigger on the down-press of a mouse**

To open a link, a user has to click their mouse (known as a 'down event') and release it (known as an 'up event').

You need to check that this is how your links behave. Check a sample of your content pages and interact with some of the links - specifically to see whether the links are opened on the down click of the mouse, or whether they only open once you release the mouse button.

If they're triggered on the down event, you're likely not meeting this requirement.

## **6. HTML checks**

There are a few checks that require you to look at your website's HTML (the language that website pages are written in). This is slightly more difficult than the other checks outlined in this guidance, but is not as intimidating as it sounds.

The instructions below tell you how to navigate to the HTML you need to check, and the subsections explain what you'll need to look out for when checking each of the page elements you need to check.

This means you do not really need to understand the things you're looking at, what HTML is or what it does.

The way you view your page's HTML depends on which browser you're using. If you're using:

- Google Chrome, right-click the page element you want to check and select 'inspect'
- Safari, right-click the page element you want to check and select 'inspect element' - you might need to [enable Safari developer tools](https://developer.apple.com/library/archive/documentation/NetworkingInternetWeb/Concept) (<https://developer.apple.com/library/archive/documentation/NetworkingInternetWeb/Concept>

[ual/Web\\_Inspector\\_Tutorial/EnableWebInspector/EnableWebInspector.html](#)) first

- Edge, press 'F12', then hold 'Ctrl' and 'B' - once you've done that, left-click the page element you want to check
- Firefox, right-click the element you want to check and select 'inspect element' - you might need to [enable Firefox web developer \(https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Tools/Page\\_Inspector/How\\_to/Open\\_the\\_Inspector\)](https://developer.mozilla.org/en-US/docs/Tools/Page_Inspector/How_to/Open_the_Inspector) first

This should open up a panel somewhere on your screen showing the HTML for the page.

## Checking tables and bullet lists are styled properly

Start by checking that any tables and bullet lists have been styled properly. If they are not styled properly, screen reader software will not recognise what they are and will not convey the information in a way that makes sense to users.

Follow the instructions above and check a few tables and bullet lists from your sample pages. Once you've opened up the source code, look out for the following sorts of tags:

- for tables, look out for `<td>` , `<th>` and `<tr>`
- for bullet lists, look out for `<ul>` and `<li>`

If you can see these tags, it's likely the elements have been styled properly.

## Check the language the content is written in

A screen reader needs to know what language a page is written in so it uses the correct speech libraries for accent and pronunciation. It only knows this if the language is specified in the page HTML.

You'll need to check the HTML of your sample content pages to see whether your website does this. To inspect the page HTML, use the same method you used when checking whether your content was marked up appropriately.

Once you've opened the HTML, scroll to the top of the panel. You should see a `<!doctype html>` tag. Directly under that you should see an `<html lang="` tag. This is where the screen reader finds out the page language.

If the page is written in English, the tag should read `<html lang="en"` or `<html lang="en-gb"` . If it's empty, the screen reader cannot tell what language the page is in.

If any of your sample pages contain content written in other languages, you'll need to check that's marked up properly too, using the [country code for the relevant language](https://www.sitepoint.com/iso-2-letter-language-codes/) (<https://www.sitepoint.com/iso-2-letter-language-codes/>).

## Check any video players are accessible

You need to check that any video players are accessible. This means checking that the buttons you need to use to interact with the video player are marked up in a way that a screen reader would recognise.

You'll need to inspect the page HTML to check whether you're meeting this requirement. Bring up the page HTML using the same method you used to check whether your text content was marked up properly.

Once you've done that, right-click (or left-click if you're using Edge) one of the video player buttons and select 'inspect' or 'inspect element', depending on the browser you're using.

Check whether the button's been given a name like 'Play' or 'Pause' - if it has, the name will likely appear as part of a 'title' or 'aria label' tag.

If there's no text indicating what the button does then it's probably not been marked up properly. This means a screen reader will not know what the button's for and that users need to be able to see and understand the button icon to work it out for themselves.

## Once you've finished the checks

Once you've finished these checks, you must start [making a plan to fix any accessibility problems you found](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-your-website-or-app-accessible-and-publish-an-accessibility-statement#make-a-plan-to-fix-any-accessibility-problems-you-find) (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/make-your-website-or-app-accessible-and-publish-an-accessibility-statement#make-a-plan-to-fix-any-accessibility-problems-you-find>).

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