

Making Images Accessible

For students that are using screen-reading software, adding an "ALT" (alternative) description for images can help them 'see' images and skip over unnecessary decorative images efficiently. Review the below resources for information on how to add alternative text in Canvas, in Word, in PowerPoint, and when converting documents to a PDF format.

Guidelines for alternative text

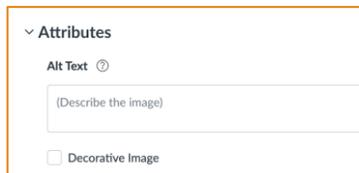
View this article for guidelines on how to write effective alternative text for images.

- <http://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

Canvas "ALT" description

When inserting an image into Canvas, there is an option within the editor that prompts for the text description each time an image is inserted. Follow these steps to add an ALT description within Canvas.

- Select the Embed Image button
- Browse and select the image (after you have inserted the image you can also click on the image and this button to see the same prompts)
- Type in Alt text as per alternative text guidelines, or select the option to mark the images as "Decorative"
- Click on Update



A screenshot of the Canvas image attributes panel. It shows a dropdown menu labeled "Attributes" with "Alt Text" selected. Below this is a text input field with the placeholder text "(Describe the image)". At the bottom of the panel, there is a checkbox labeled "Decorative Image" which is currently unchecked.

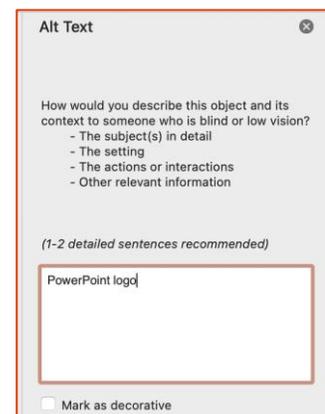
Microsoft Word or Powerpoint "ALT" description

Note: Instructions vary based on the version you use.

- Insert the image into the document (Word or PowerPoint)
- Right click on the image and select 'View Alt Text'
- Add an alternative text description into the Description field, do not use the Title field if it is present. Alternatively, mark the image as decorative using the checkbox.

When converting a Microsoft document to PDF.

- If you are on a PC computer, use the File->Save As PDF option to save the file into a PDF format (make sure the 'Tagged PDF' is check marked to retain accessibility).
- If you are on a Mac computer, the accessibility is not retained using the Save As option. Instead, consider uploading the file to Office 365 and saving it as a PDF, this will keep the image accessibility. The other option is to use Adobe Acrobat DC to read the image ALT text.



A screenshot of the Microsoft Word "Alt Text" dialog box. The title bar says "Alt Text". The main text asks "How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?" and lists four bullet points: "The subject(s) in detail", "The setting", "The actions or interactions", and "Other relevant information". Below this is a note: "(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)". There is a text input field containing "PowerPoint logj". At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled "Mark as decorative" which is currently unchecked.

Adobe Acrobat (PDF) “ALT” Description

Alternative text can be added to images using the full version of Adobe Acrobat (available to OSU employees through a campus license), this license is not free. A free 30-day trial can also often be obtained through the Adobe website.

- Open a PDF document
- Select the Tools sidebar and select the option to Edit Object (this option may be found in a different location on older versions of Adobe Acrobat)
- Right click on an image and select Properties
- Click on the Tag tab at the top
- Type in the appropriate alternative image text into the 'Alternative Text' box
- Click on Close

