

Quick Reference - 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

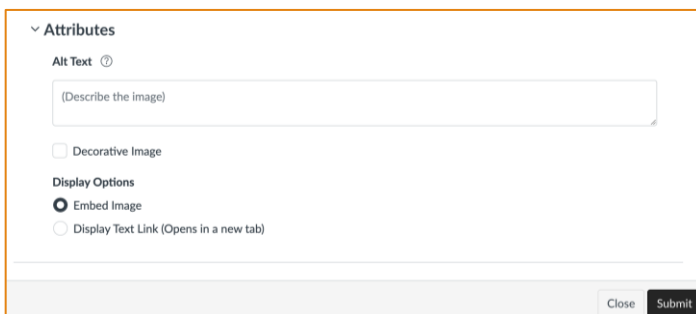
View this article for guidelines on how to write effective alternative text for images.

- [Web AIM](#)

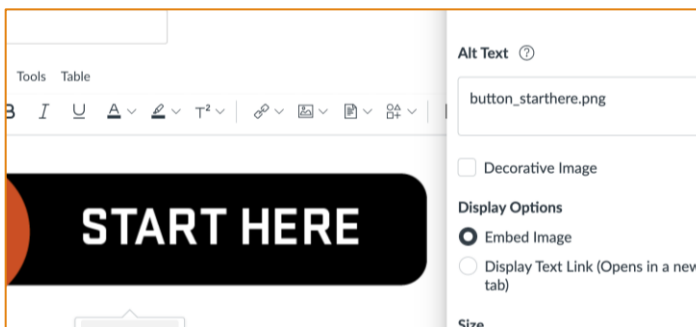
Canvas “ALT” description

In Canvas, you can add ALT text or mark an image as Decorative in two ways.

- When you upload a new image, there is an option to add Alt Text or to mark the image as Decorative in the Attributes section at the bottom of the Upload Image page.

A screenshot of the 'Attributes' section in Canvas. It features a text input field labeled 'Alt Text' with a placeholder '(Describe the image)'. Below this is a checkbox for 'Decorative Image'. Under 'Display Options', there are three radio buttons: 'Embed Image' (which is selected), 'Display Text Link (Opens in a new tab)', and 'Display Text Link (Opens in a new tab)'. At the bottom right are 'Close' and 'Submit' buttons.

- To add ALT text to an image that is already within Canvas, click on top of the image and then select the Image Options menu. Then use the slide out menu to enter in Alt Text or to mark the image as Decorative.

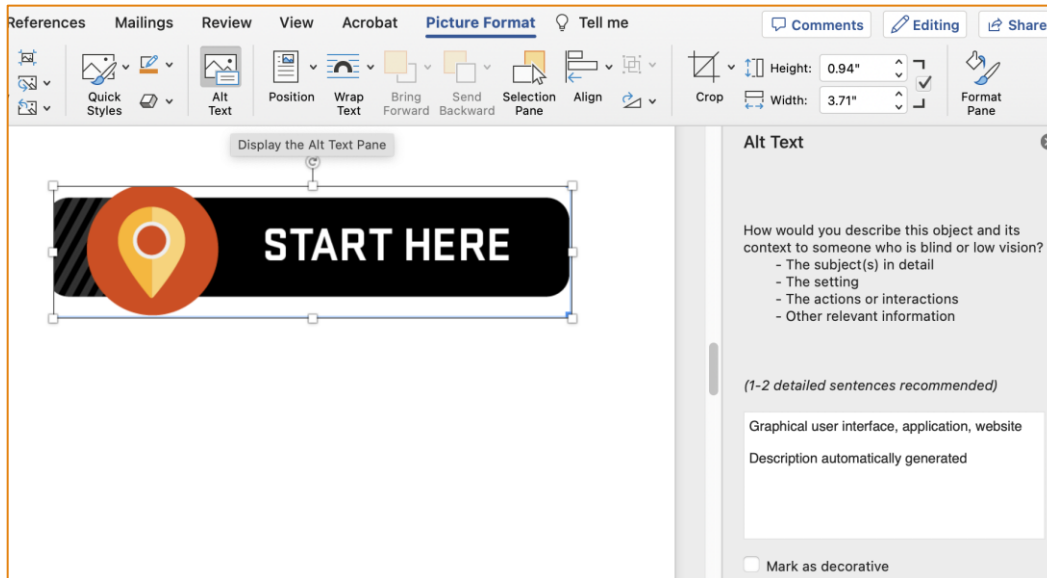
A screenshot showing a 'START HERE' button in a Canvas interface. A slide-out menu is open over the button, titled 'Alt Text'. It contains a text input field with the filename 'button_starthere.png'. Below this is a checkbox for 'Decorative Image'. Under 'Display Options', there are three radio buttons: 'Embed Image' (selected), 'Display Text Link (Opens in a new tab)', and 'Display Text Link (Opens in a new tab)'. At the bottom is a 'Size' label.

Microsoft Word or PowerPoint “ALT” description

In Microsoft Word or Microsoft PowerPoint, you can also add ALT text or mark images as Decorative. It is often most efficient to add in this accessibility while inserting each image but you can also use the [Check Accessibility](#) tool in Microsoft to check for missing image ALTs at any time.

To review and update the image ALT text in Word or PowerPoint:

- Insert the image into the document (Word or PowerPoint).
- Select the image, and then access the Picture Format tab.
- Toggle on the Alt Text option.



Adobe Acrobat (PDF) “ALT” Description

If you are using a PC computer, you can save the ALT text from your Word and PowerPoint files by ensuring Accessibility is enabled when you save, make sure the 'Tagged PDF' is check marked to retain accessibility. If you use a Mac computer or have a PDF that was not generated from a Word document, then alternative text can be added to images using the full version of Adobe Acrobat.

Resources

- More detailed guidelines and tutorials about ALT text can found on the [OSU Web Accessibility](#) site.
- The [Ally](#) and [UDOIT Accessibility Check](#) tools in Canvas can also be used to find and update ALT text.