



Creating Alternative Descriptive Text – Adobe Acrobat Pro

Alternative Descriptive Text, often called Alt-Text, is an accessibility tool used to provide persons who are blind, have low vision, or have visual processing difficulties the ability to interpret the information presented in a picture, table, graph, or other image. Alt-Text provides this access through the creation of text for photos and figures. This text must be filled with rich adjectives and free from popular expression. The following steps explain how to place Alt-Text on a photo in Adobe Acrobat Pro and provides some guidance to the content of the text.

Adding Alt Text

- 1) *Open* the document in **Adobe Acrobat**.
- 2) *Click* **Edit PDF** on the right-hand side of the screen.
 - a. This will prompt a review of the file by Optical Character Recognition Software, which will identify text, tables, and images in the document.
 - b. Once this operation is complete, review and correct the document to ensure full accessibility of the text.
- 3) *Click* **Tools** in the upper-left corner.
- 4) *Click* the **Accessibility** option at the bottom of the menu; this will bring up an additional menu on the right side of your document.
- 5) *Click* **Auto-tag Document** in the **Accessibility Menu** to identify all images.
- 6) *Click* **Set Alternative Text**; this will open an additional window with the title ‘Set Alternative Text’.
- 7) *Type* the Alternative Descriptive Text in the small window that appears on the screen (see Tips for Writing Alt-Text at the bottom).
 - a. Note: If the picture is decorative, or fulfills no purpose check, the box labeled ‘Decorative Image. This will prevent the image from being read by screen readers.
- 8) *Click* on the **right arrow** to move to the next image in the document.
- 9) *Click* the **Save & Close** button once all images have been given alternative text.

You have now completed adding Alt-Text to a photo.

Tips for Writing Alt-Text

- 1) Consider the purpose of the image and be sure to explain it concisely.
- 2) Be as specific as possible.
 - a. Don’t just say, “The Beatles.” Instead say, “The rock group The Beatles.”
- 3) Describe/explain only the most essential elements of the image.
 - a. The Alt-Text is only there to identify the image. Conceptual information (e.g. the symbolism in a painting) should always be explained in text outside of the photo.
- 4) Avoid figurative language, idioms, colloquialisms, and subjective adjectives (e.g. beautiful).

Additional Resources:

1. To check if your PDF is accessible, reference the guide titled *Document Accessibility Check and Review – Adobe Pro*.
2. For more information on making your PDFs accessible, reference the guide titled, *Creating an Accessible PDF Document – Adobe Pro*
3. For more information on creating Alt-Text in other programs, reference the guide titled *Creating Alternative Descriptive Text – Microsoft Office Suite*