



# DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY BY WECO

## WEB ACCESSIBILITY BASICS

### WeCo Accessibility Learning Takeaways

#### Introduction to Accessibility

In its most essential form, digital accessibility means that people living with disabilities can easily access the same information that users who do not live with disabilities can access. This includes people whose disabilities require them to use special assistive devices and/or software, such as screen readers, but it's important to note that not all users with disabilities use special devices. The same way someone in a wheelchair needs to be able to access buildings with stairs, someone who can't see text on a screen needs to be able to read a web page.

When you learn about how people living with disabilities use computers and access digital venues, you begin to consider different options. When an online venue is more accessible to people who live with disabilities, it becomes much easier for people who don't live with a disability to use as well. Everyone benefits from accessible digital design!



#### Basics of accessibility

##### POUR

[WebAIM defines POUR](#) as a set of guiding principles which encourage us to think of accessibility in terms of making life easier for people living with disabilities. The POUR principles describe four interlocking modalities which enable users to access digital resources. The four principles are: Perceivable, Operable, Understandable, and Robust.

- Users must be able to perceive content on a website for it to be considered accessible.

- Operability refers to the user's ability to operate the website. Most standard users prefer a mouse or other pointer. Many users living with disabilities prefer either a keyboard or other assistive technology which emulates the keyboard, rather than a pointer.
- Both the content and operation of your website should be understandable.
- A robust website supports a range of technologies users might employ. This might include different browsers, devices, and assistive technologies. It's important to identify which technologies you need to support so that you can provide a consistent, fully functional experience across all of them.

## Why POUR?

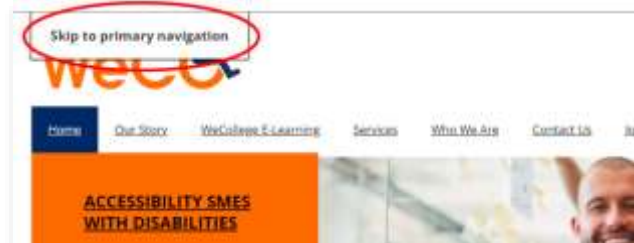
If you build your website to be perceivable, operable, understandable, and robust; users will have a much better experience. Keeping these principles in mind while you design will guide you towards better solutions which require less remediation later. Applying the POUR principles allows you to keep accessibility at the center of your project without restricting scope or functionality.

## Accessible Navigation and Consistency

One major theme throughout the accessibility discussion is navigation and consistency. You always want to make sure that users are able to find the information they need quickly and easily, without any confusion or frustration. One of the best ways to do this is to provide consistent and meaningful navigation options.

There are a variety of design features available to help you help your users:

- "Skip to" links
- Main navigation menus and submenus
- Consistent link text
- Consistent navigation menus
- Working links



## Accessible Content and Layout

### Accessible Content

Content refers to the text, images, and other media which make up the heart of a website or application. Clear, concise content is essential for individuals who live with a wide range of disabilities.

### Accessible Layout

Layout is the way the content is positioned within a web page. Content should be positioned in a layout that makes it easy for users to locate and digest information.

## Keys to Good Content and Layout

Let's take a closer look at a few key focus points: page titles, headings, instructions, and proper presentation of information.

- Page titles identify the purpose of a web page, as well as the user's current location within a website.
- Headings on pages are often navigation points for non-visual users' screen reader software.
- While instructions may include sensory characteristics, they should also provide information that is perceivable to users with sight and/or hearing disabilities.
- On top of ensuring you provide perceivable information for all disability types, you also need to make sure the information you provide is understandable.

## Accessible Images and Objects

### Images

Images are items such as photographs, illustrations, or short animations, which might be either decorative or nondecorative. Both decorative and nondecorative images require alternative text attributes to help assistive technology recognize and describe them properly.

### Alternative Text

Alternative text (or alt text) is read by screen readers in place of images. Alt text should describe the same information conveyed to visual users. For decorative images, alt text should be empty, `alt=""`, so that assistive technology ignores them.

### Complex Images

Complex images often require a different approach than simple images. You may need to provide a more comprehensive description in text near the image. This text should always be programmatically associated with any complex images via techniques such as implementing `<figure>` and `<figcaption>` elements.

## Accessible Audio and Video

Accessible audio and video have different requirements depending on the type and presentation of the media. Take a look at the following quick reference chart for more details:

Media	Captions	Audio Description	Transcript
Live audio-only	Yes	N/A	Yes, text
Live video-only	N/A	Yes	Yes, text
Live video and audio	Yes	Yes	N/A
Pre-recorded audio-only	N/A	N/A	Yes, text
Pre-recorded video-only	N/A	Yes	Yes, text
Pre-recorded video and audio	Yes	Yes	Yes, descriptive

## Accessible Forms

### Forms and Fields

Forms receive input from users, often to collect data or change settings. Any field used to receive input and any control used to activate a function or change a selection can benefit from good form accessibility practices.

### Making Forms Accessible

- Provide clear, visible, programmatically associated labels near each form field. Remember to use multiple indicators to mark fields as valid, invalid, and/or required.
- Fields should be associated with labels, use attributes to convey their data format, and convey their value (e.g. entered text, checked/unchecked, etc).
- Controls should be clearly labeled and describe what happens when they are activated.

### Additional Form Considerations

- Keyboard focus should progress through forms in a logical order, usually via the "Tab" key.
- A visible focus indicator should be present on all interactable elements in a form.
- Timeouts should be extendable, adjustable, or removable, where applicable.