

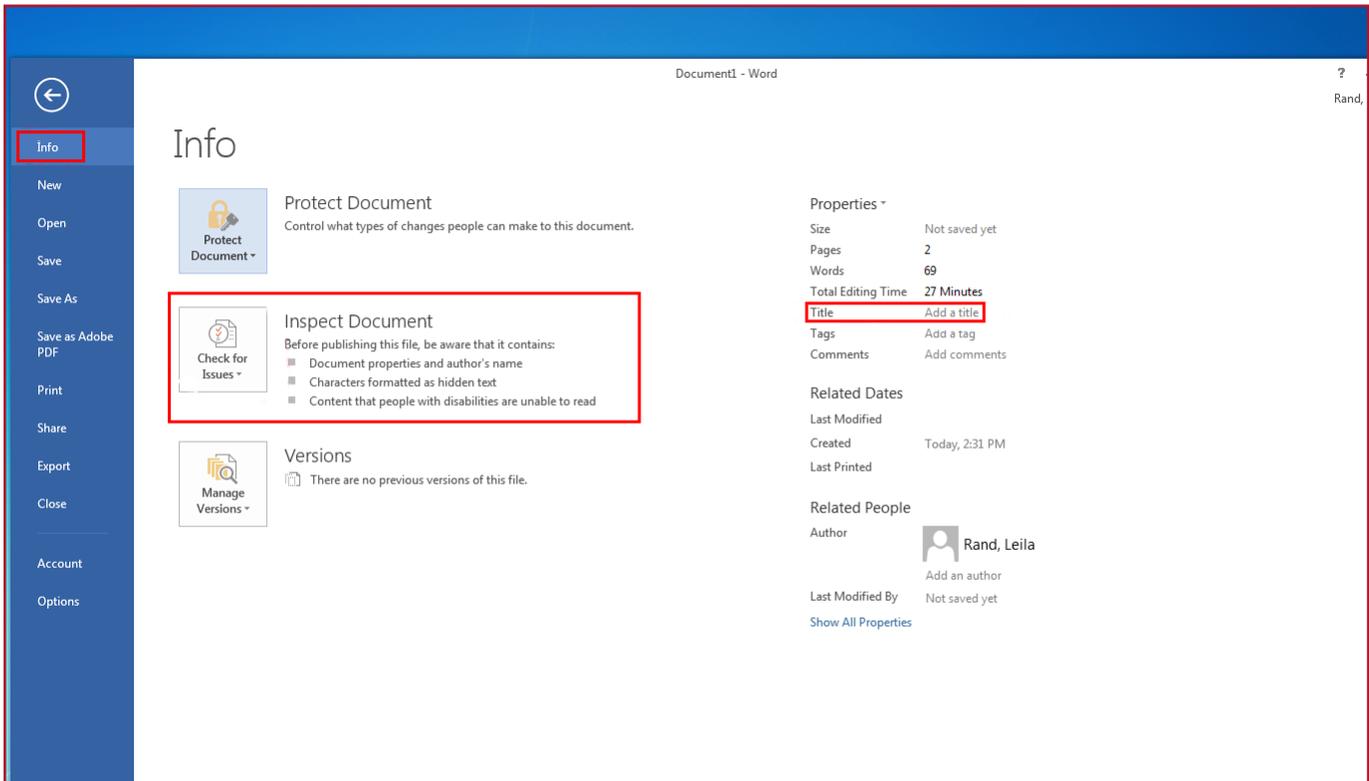
Creating an Accessible Word Document



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Title the Document:

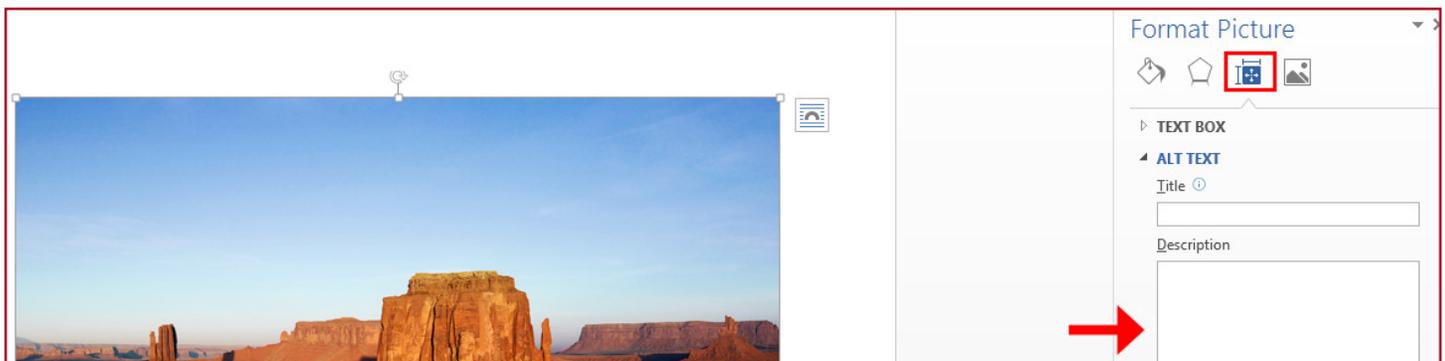
Add an official title to the document in File>Info. The title field is on the right side of the page under “Properties”.



Images:

Screen reader users won't get any information about an image unless you use alternative text.

Insert your picture, then right-click on it and choose "Format Picture". Choose the "Layout & Properties" tab and type in your descriptive text in the Description box. If the picture has text in it, make sure to put that text in. Do not type anything into the Title field, as it will interfere with the Description being read.

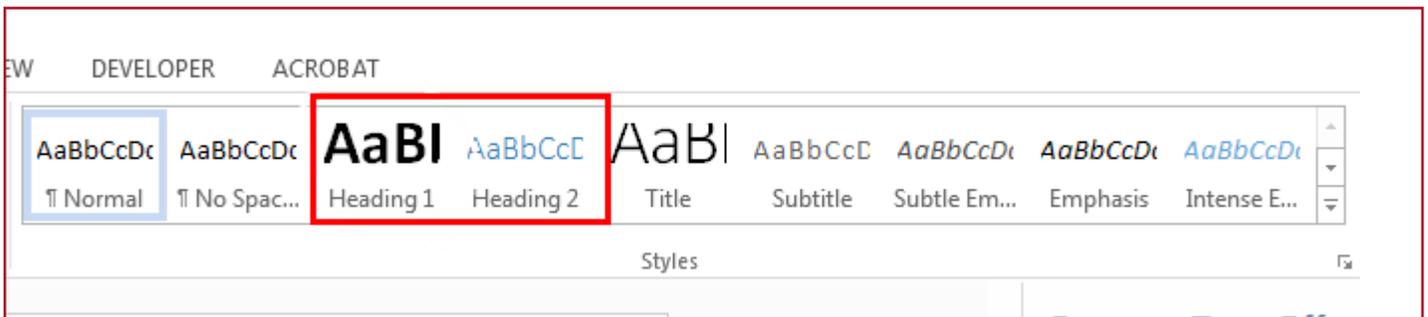


Headings:

Headings are very important for document accessibility - they allow screen readers to scan a page or jump to content. Do not simulate headings by just adding bold to text. Use true styles in Word, such as Heading 1, Heading 2, Heading 3, etc.

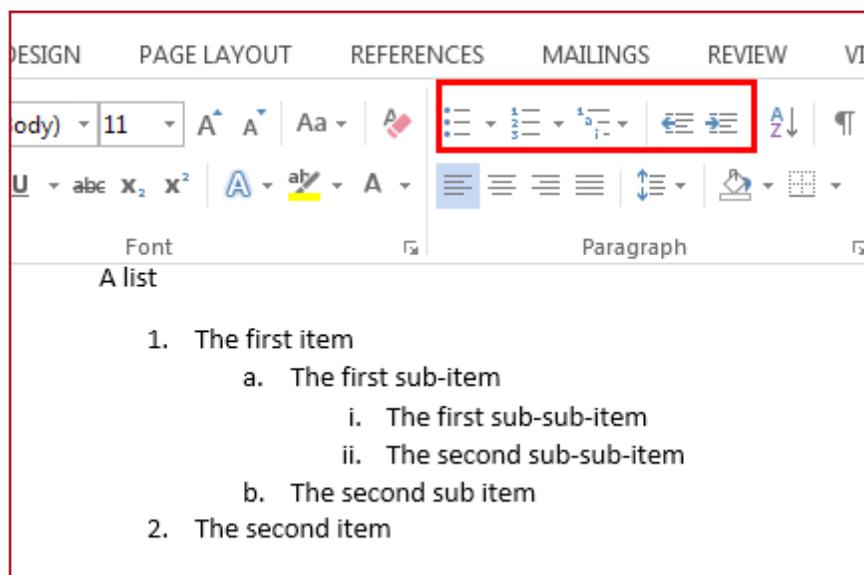
Create your heading text first, then you can set it as a heading in two ways:

- If you want to use custom styling, style the text the way you want, then right click on Heading 1 or Heading 2 up in the Home ribbon. Click “update heading to match selection”
- If the heading style is already set the way you like, select the text and hit control-alt-1 for Heading 1, control-alt-2 for Heading 2, etc.
- If Heading 3, Heading 4, etc. are not showing in the ribbon, they will show up after you assign the heading tag that precedes them in the hierarchy. In other words, once you tag something as an H2, H3 will appear in the ribbon, when you assign an H3 H4 will appear, and so on.



Lists:

Make sure to use the list functions in the Paragraph ribbon under Home - ordered, bulleted or multilevel. Don't use spaces, tabs or shapes to create lists. Be sure to use the Increase or Decrease Indents icons to change the level of a list item.

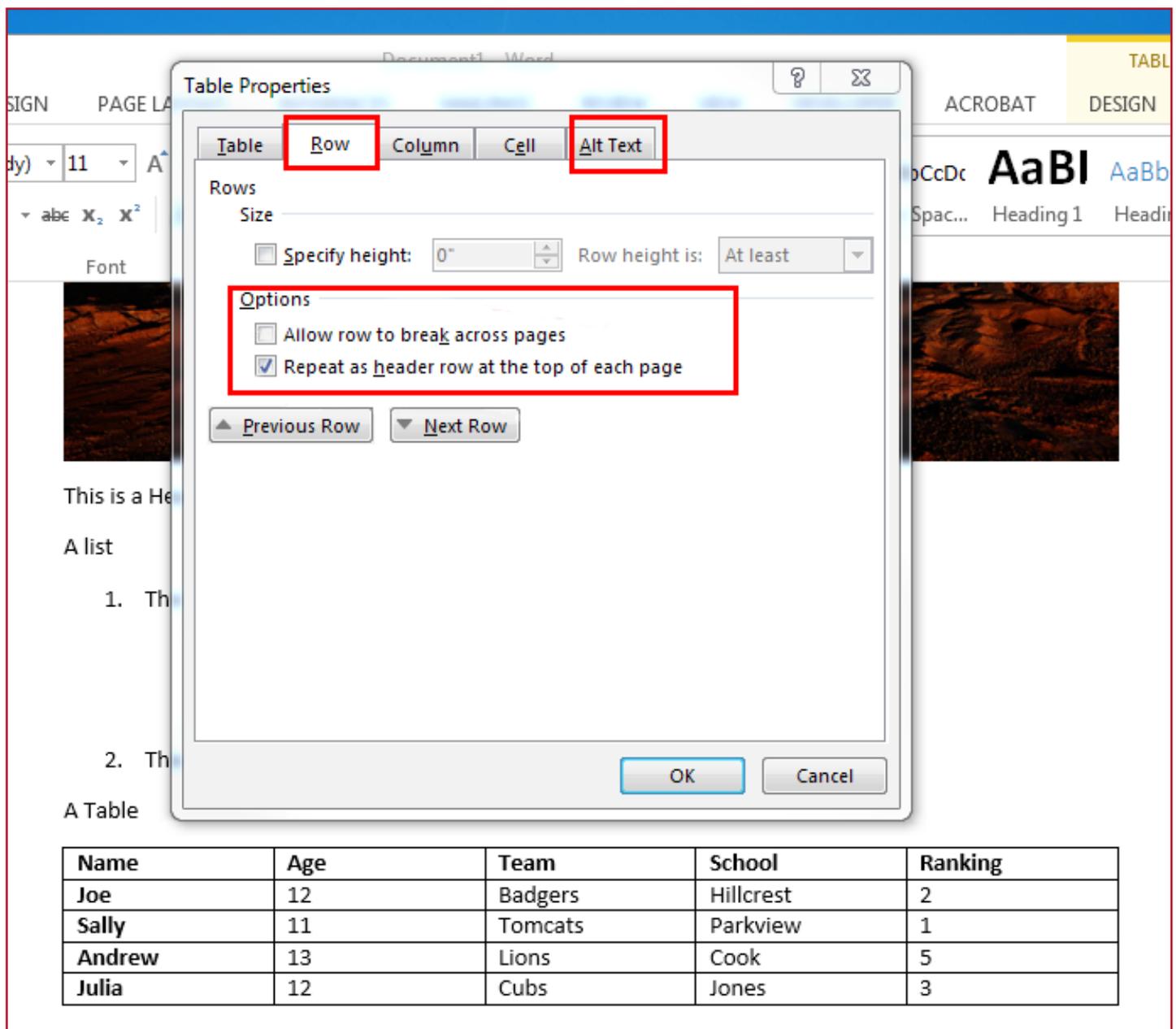


Tables:

Use tables for data, not for layout. Avoid using tabs or spaces; if the content is data, a table is better. To set columns, use the column tool. Simple tables are best. Don't nest tables. Avoid using text boxes directly above or below your table, as its content will get read as part of the table.

To make a simple table accessible,;

1. Right click on the table and choose "Table Properties". Click on the "Row" tab. Check the box "Repeat as header row at the top of each page."
2. Choose the "Alt Text" tab and add a title for the table.

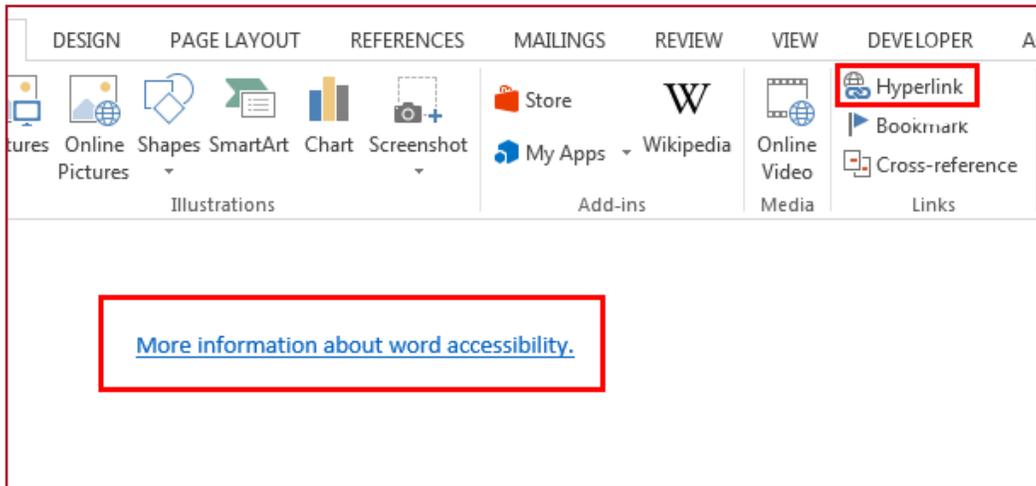


The screenshot shows the 'Table Properties' dialog box in Microsoft Word. The 'Row' tab is selected, and the 'Repeat as header row at the top of each page' checkbox is checked. Below the dialog, a table is displayed with the following data:

Name	Age	Team	School	Ranking
Joe	12	Badgers	Hillcrest	2
Sally	11	Tomcats	Parkview	1
Andrew	13	Lions	Cook	5
Julia	12	Cubs	Jones	3

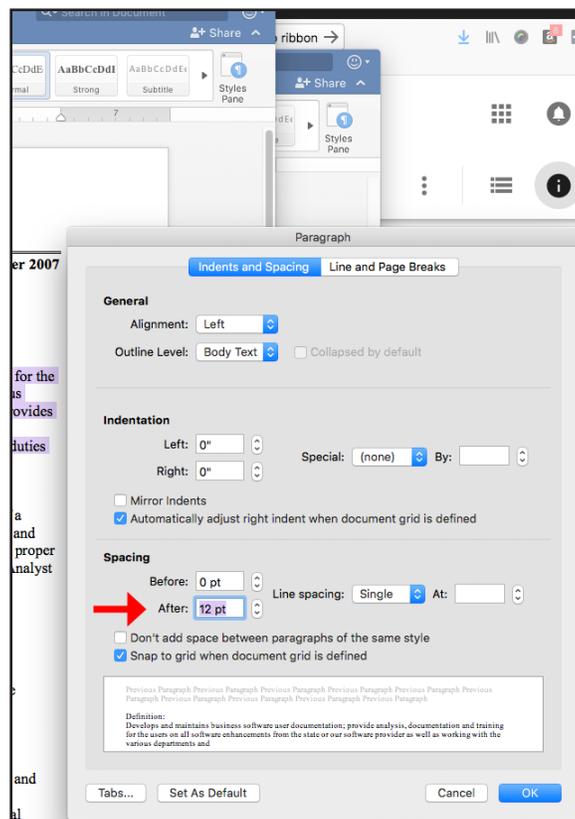
Links:

Use clear, unique text for links. Avoid generic language like “click here” which is confusing to screen readers. Avoid URLs.



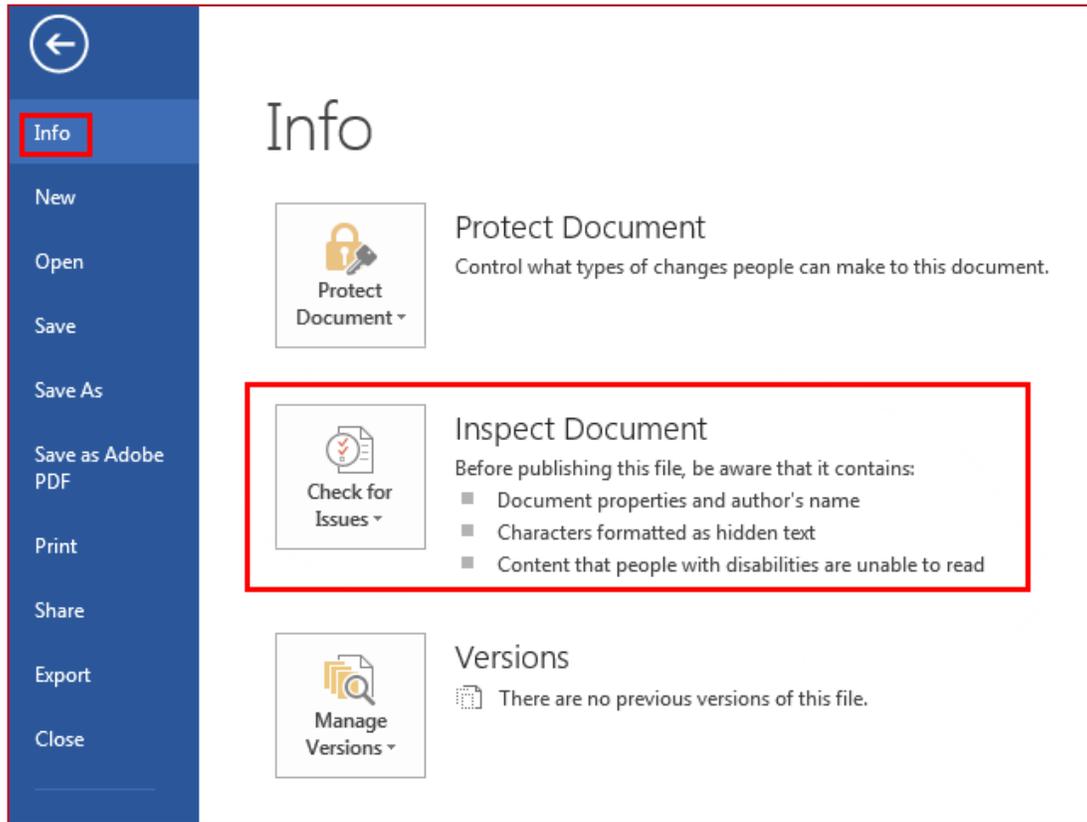
Don't Make Empty Paragraphs:

Don't hit return to create space between paragraphs or elements on the page. Screen readers will read these empty spaces out loud. Right click on a paragraph or element, choose “paragraph” and add space before or after the element.



Word Accessibility Checker:

1. File>Info> Inspect Document
2. Choose "Check for Issues"
3. Choose "Check Accessibility"
4. Fix the issues per the Inspection Results

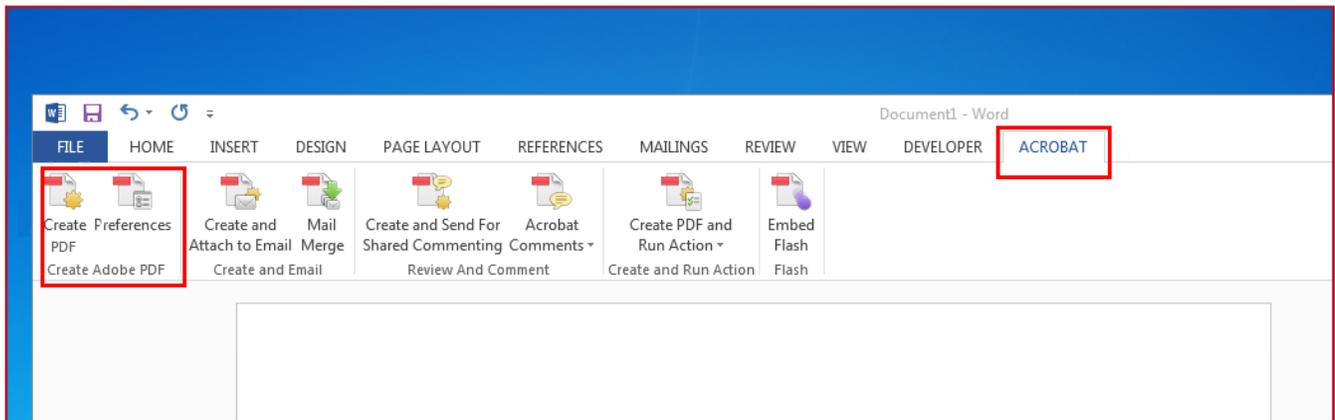


Export as PDF:

It's best to use the Acrobat tab in your ribbon, if it is there.

If it's not, try using this method to add it (it only works some of the time in my experience):

1. Click File > Options > Add-ins > Manage: COM Add-ins (at the bottom) > Go.
2. If the check box for Adobe PDF is clear, select it, and click OK.
3. If the check box for Adobe PDF is already selected, clear it, close the program, and then re-open it. Follow the path in step one, and then select the check box for Adobe PDF. Click OK.



If the Acrobat tab is not in your ribbon, use File>Info>Export and choose Create Adobe PDF.

DO NOT "SAVE AS PDF". Many of your accessibility fixes will not output properly.

When saving, select Options and be sure that "Document structure tags for accessibility" is checked.

