

Webinar On

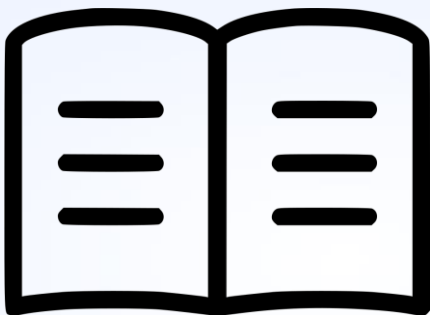
How to write inclusive documentation



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Speaker

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Senior Technical Writer
Zapier
Pronouns: She/hers

Overview



- Definition of inclusive documentation
- Why accessibility is important?
- Tips for inclusive documentation
- Case study
- Most common web content accessibility issues
- Final thoughts
- Q&A

What's inclusive documentation?

“Language is inclusive when it doesn't exclude anyone based on characteristics such as gender, physical or mental disability, or cultural background.”

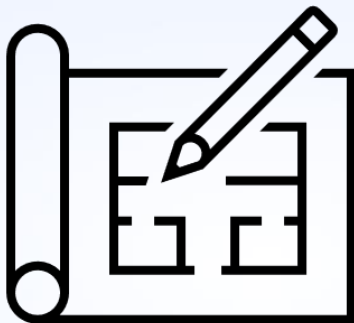
Why accessibility is important?

1 in 6 people have a disability

Permanent, temporary and situational impairments

Ability	Permanent, temporary, situational
Vision	blind, cataracts, eye irritation
Hearing	hearing impairment, ear infection, in a noisy cafe
Motor	Parkinson's disease, arm in plaster, on a moving train
Cognitive	memory issues, medicine side-effects, stressful situations

Tips for inclusive documentation



- Screenshots
- Slang, idioms or cultural references
- Ableist, biased or gendered language
- Don't assume on behalf of the reader
- Dates and times
- Writing for screen readers

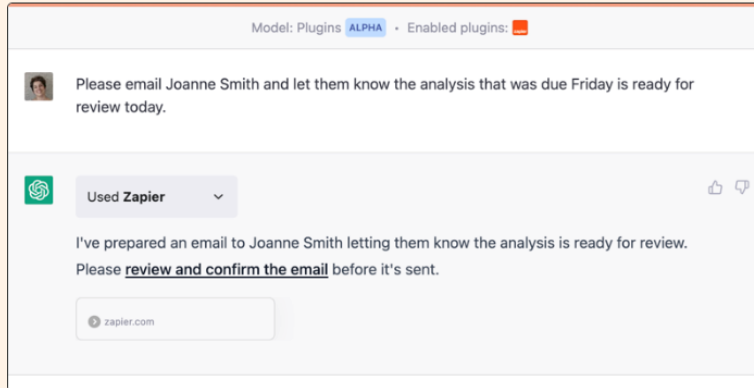
Screenshots

Example

You can use a Send email action in Gmail to ask ChatGPT to draft and send emails for you:

"Please email Joanne Smith and let them know the analysis that was due Friday is ready for review today."

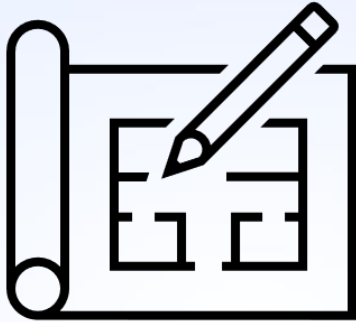
ChatGPT will search for the contact and compose an email using your connected accounts. You must review and confirm the email before ChatGPT sends it.



Example of ChatGPT response using Zapier plugin

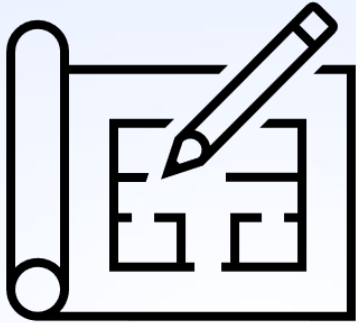
- Add alternative text
- Don't use screenshots as replacement for text
- Annotations aren't translated, use them sparingly.
- Avoid screenshots for text-heavy content.
- Contrast ratio of at least 4:5:1 except for
 - a. Large text: 3:1;
 - b. Incidental: No contrast requirement
 - c. Logotypes: No contrast requirement.

What to avoid



- Idioms
- Slang
- Cultural references

Don't use



- Ableist language
- Biased language
- Gendered language

Don't use ableist language

Don't use ✘	Refers to	Consider using ✔
Dumb	Refers to d/Deaf or hard of hearing people, people with speech-related disabilities, or people with linguistic or communication disorders or disabilities.	<i>dense, ignorant, lacks understanding, impulsive, risk-taker, uninformed, silly, foolish (to replace metaphor); nonspeaking, nonverbal, person with a speech impairment, person with a cognitive disability, Deaf person, hard of hearing person (to refer to a Deaf or disabled person)</i>
Crazy or Insane	Refers to people with mental or psychiatric disabilities.	<i>wild, confusing, unpredictable, impulsive, reckless, fearless, lives on the edge, thrill-seeker, risk-taker, out of control</i>
Nuts	Refers to people with mental or psychiatric disabilities.	<i>Uninformed, reckless, impulsive, ignorant, risk-taking, risky and dangerous.</i>

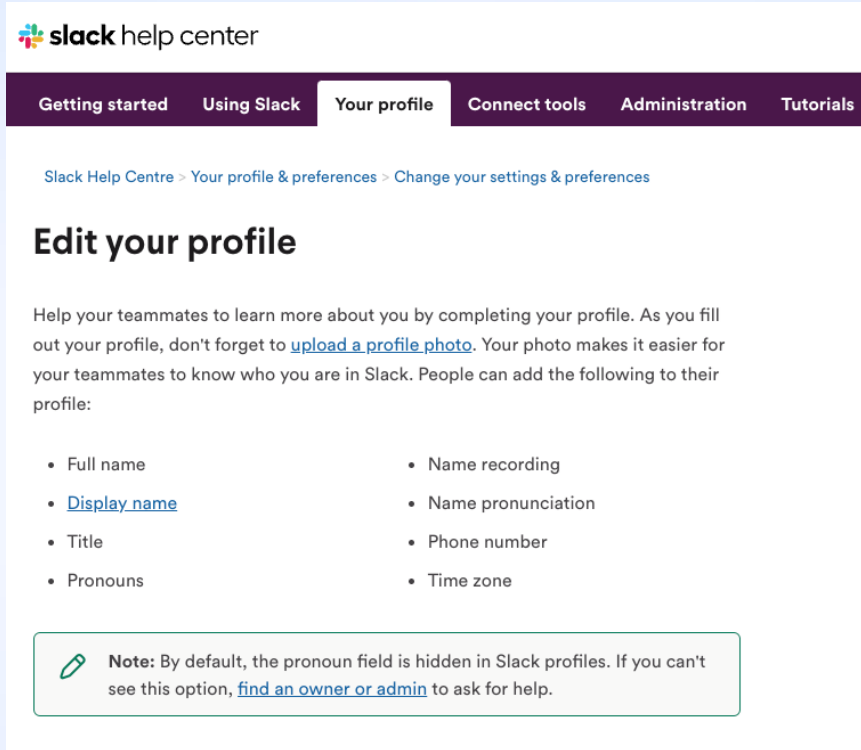
Don't use biased language

Don't use ✘	Type of biased language	Instead ✔
“Blacklist” “Whitelist”	Racial bias	“Denylist” or “Blocklist” “Allowlist”
“Sanity Check”	Mental health bias	“Quick check” or “Confidence check”
“Man hours”	Gender bias	“Staff hours” or “people hours”

Don't use gendered language

Tips	Examples
Bypass the use of gender where possible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ✗ The user chooses a password, and then he types it into the text box.<li>● ✓ User user chooses a password and then they type it in the text box.
Use plural nouns and plural pronouns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ✗ Each user has his own login name and password<li>● ✓ Each user has their own login name and password
Avoid pronouns where you can. Instead use "A" or "The"	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● ✗ You're writing it for him.<li>● ✓ You're writing it for the reader.

Don't assume on behalf of the reader



The screenshot shows the Slack Help Center interface. At the top left is the Slack logo and the text 'slack help center'. Below this is a dark purple navigation bar with white text for 'Getting started', 'Using Slack', 'Your profile', 'Connect tools', 'Administration', and 'Tutorials'. Underneath the navigation bar is a breadcrumb trail: 'Slack Help Centre > Your profile & preferences > Change your settings & preferences'. The main heading is 'Edit your profile'. The text below reads: 'Help your teammates to learn more about you by completing your profile. As you fill out your profile, don't forget to [upload a profile photo](#). Your photo makes it easier for your teammates to know who you are in Slack. People can add the following to their profile:'. A list of profile fields follows: Full name, Display name, Title, Pronouns, Name recording, Name pronunciation, Phone number, and Time zone. At the bottom, a note box with a pencil icon states: 'Note: By default, the pronoun field is hidden in Slack profiles. If you can't see this option, [find an owner or admin](#) to ask for help.'

- Simply click [button]
- It's super easy
- It's not as hard as it seems.

Date and time

✗ Last updated on **02/03/2023**

3 February 2023?

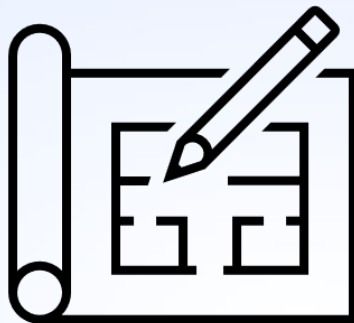
2 March 2023?

✓ Last updated on **March 2, 2023**

✓ Last updated on **2 March 2023**

✓ Last updated on **Thursday 2 March 2023**

Writing for screen readers



- Use clear and concise language
- Use proper headers
- Include descriptive alt text for images
- Label links meaningfully
- Use lists properly
- Use a table makeup for data tables
- Indicate language changes
- Avoid repetitive content

Case study: The language of health

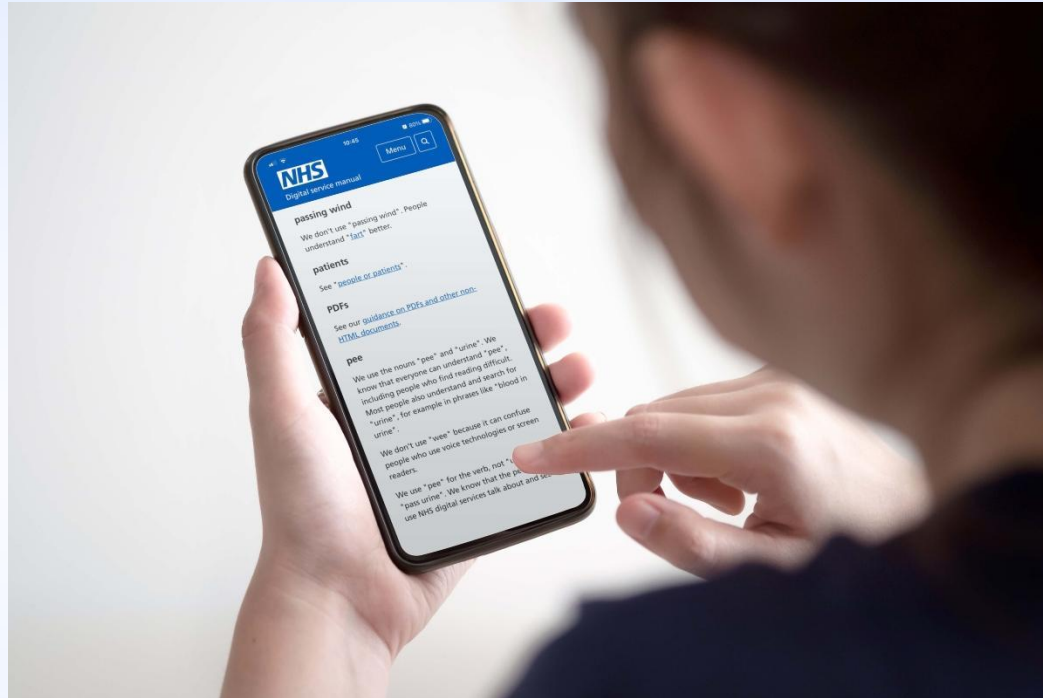
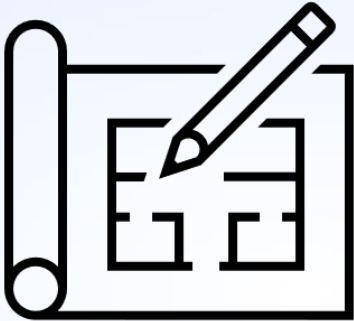


Image source: [Digital NHS UK](https://www.digital.nhs.uk)

Case study takeaways: The language of health



- Clarity in writing
- Writing directly to your users
- Choosing widely understood words
- Pitch at the right level

Web content accessibility trends 2022

WCAG failure type	% of home pages in 2022
Low contrast text	83.9%
Missing alternative text for images	55.4%
Empty links	50.1%
Missing form input labels	46.1%
Empty buttons	27.2%
Missing document language	22.3%

Final thoughts

- Inclusive documentation doesn't exclude or harm others
- Inclusivity is a guiding framework for writing
- Inclusive documentation can help expand user's comprehension of your product or service
- Keep learning and expect to be challenged

Resources

- Conscious style guideline: <https://consciousstyleguide.com/>
- Web content accessibility guidelines (WCAG) 2.1: <https://www.w3.org/TR/WCAG21/>
- Plainlanguage.gov: <https://www.plainlanguage.gov/about/definitions/>
- WAVE browser extension: <https://wave.webaim.org/extension/>
- Hemingway app: <https://hemingwayapp.com/>
- NHS case study: <https://digital.nhs.uk/blog/transformation-blog/2019/pee-and-poo-and-the-language-of-health>
- Tips writing for screen readers: <https://www.w3.org/WAI/tips/writing/>
- The WebAIM Million report 2022: <https://webaim.org/projects/million/>

Questions

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Thank You!

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