**U.S. Department of Justice**

Civil Rights Division

*Disability Rights Section*
*P.O. Box 66738*
*Washington, DC 20035-6738*

# Software Accessibility Checklist[1]

This Checklist should serve as a tool for evaluating the extent to which software applications are accessible to most people with disabilities. This document is based on the U.S. Department of Education's "Requirements for Accessible Software Design," including the technical guidance that appears as *Appendix A* to the "Requirements." The "Requirements" document and the appendix are available at:

> http://ocfo.ed.gov/coninfo/clibrary/software.htm

More specific recommendations for how to design accessible software can be obtained from Joe Tozzi or others on the Assistive Technology Team in the Department of Education's Office of the Chief Information Officer Technology Center, (202) 708-7298 (voice), (202) 401-8510 (TTY), Internet: Joe_Tozzi@ed.gov.

Although the Department of Education's guidelines may differ from the legally-enforceable standards that the Access Board will promulgate by February 7, 2000, they are among the most helpful references currently available to assist your agency in determining the extent to which your software applications are accessible to and useable by persons with disabilities.

When evaluating your software applications, be sure to test them under the same circumstances under which employees or members of the public with disabilities would be using them. For instance, if you use off-the-shelf software on a network environment, test the software on the same network, not in a stand-alone environment.
NOTE: In addition to filling out this "Software Accessibility Checklist," you must also test each

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[1]For persons with disabilities, additional copies of this document are available on computer disk and in alternate formats including large print, Braille, and audio cassette, by calling the U.S. Department of Justice at the following numbers:

Section 508 Coordinators:  **1-202-305-8304** (voice)
                           **1-202-353-8944** (TTY)

ADA Information Line:  **1-800-514-0301** (voice)
                       **1-800-514-0383** (TTY)

Alternate format copies for persons with disabilities may also be requested via e-mail to:
**sec508.questions@usdoj.gov**

This document is available on the Section 508 Home Page of the Civil Rights Division, U.S. Department of Justice:

**http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/508**

application by running it with assistive technologies commonly used by persons with disabilities, including, at a minimum, screen readers, and, if possible, alternate input devices, screen enlargement software, and voice recognition software and devices.  Make a note of any problems encountered during this exercise in the space provided on page 5.

**Person filling out this Checklist:**
Component/Agency: _____
Name: _____
Title: _____
Telephone: _____
Fax number: _____
E-mail address: _____

**Software application under review:**

Title/Version: _____

Developer (give full name, no acronyms): _____

Customization:  choose the most appropriate description:
- (a)  commercial off-the-shelf software (used "as is")
- (b)  commercial software, but modified for agency use
- (c)  custom software developed under contract
- (d)  custom software developed in-house

Description:  choose the most appropriate:
- (a)  word processor
- (b)  spreadsheet
- (c)  database
- (d)  groupware
- (e)  e-mail
- (f)  Internet browser
- (g)  other Internet access
- (h)  online database access
- (i)  other (describe): _____

Used by approximately \_\_\_\_ members of the public and \_\_\_\_\_ Federal employees on a weekly basis.

| Category | Question | Y | N | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Keyboard Access | 1. Does the software provide keyboard equivalents for all mouse actions, including buttons, scroll windows, text entry fields, and pop-up windows? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 2. Does the program provide clear and precise instructions for use of all keyboard functions as part of the user documentation? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 3. Are instructions regarding keyboard use widely available for all users in your component? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 4. Does the software have a logical tabbing order among fields, text boxes, and focal points? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 5. When navigating screens and dialog boxes using the keyboard, does the focus follow a logical tabbing order? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 6. Is there a well-defined focal point that moves with keyboard navigation? (e.g., can you use the arrow keys to navigate through a list followed by pressing the ENTER key or space bar to select the desired item)? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 7. Are shortcut keys provided for all pull-down menus? | | | |
| Keyboard Access | 8. Does the software support existing accessibility features built into the operating system (e.g., sticky keys, slow keys, repeat keys in Apple Macintosh OS or Microsoft Windows 95)? | | | |
| Timing | 9. If timed responses are present, does the software allow the user to modify the timing parameters of any required timed responses? | | | |
| Screen Elements | 10. Are all descriptions or labels for fields positioned immediately to the left or directly above the control, and do they end in a colon, so that it is easy for screen reading software to associate the labels with the corresponding fields? | | | |
| Screen Elements | 11. Does every window, object, and control have a clearly named label? | | | |

**Any "no" answer may indicate a problem with accessibility.**

**Software Accessibility Checklist**

| Category | Question | Y | N | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Screen Elements | 12. Does the software application use standard controls rather than owner-drawn or custom controls? | | | |
| Icons | 13. Does the software have a user selectable option to display text on icons, <u>i.e.</u>, text only icons or bubble help? | | | |
| Icons | 14. Is the use of icons consistent throughout the application? | | | |
| Icons | 15. Are menus with text equivalents provided for all icon functions or icon selections on menu, tool, and format bars? | | | |
| Sounds | 16. If there are audio alerts, are visual cues also provided? Note: Most operating systems handle this issue in the client/server environment; the question is most relevant in a dumb terminal environment. | | | |
| Sounds | 17. Does the software support the "show sounds" feature where it is built into the operating system? | | | |
| Sounds | 18. Can the user disable or adjust sound volume? | | | |
| Sounds | 19. If information is provided in an audio format, is it also capable of being displayed by the user in a visual format? | | | |
| Display | 20. Is the software application free of patterned backgrounds used behind text or important graphics? | | | |
| Display | 21. Can a user override default fonts for printing and text displays? | | | |
| Display | 22. Can a user adjust or disable flashing, rotating, or moving displays? | | | |
| Color | 23. Does the software ensure that color-coding is never used as the only means of conveying information or indicating an action? | | | |
| Color | 24. Does the application support user-defined color settings system-wide? | | | |

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**Software Accessibility Checklist**

| Category | Question | Y | N | N/A |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Color | 25. Is highlighting also viewable with inverted colors? | | | |
| Size | 26. If the software application draws its own screen elements, does it pick up the size settings that the user has selected in the Control Panel? | | | |
| Documentation | 27. Are all manuals and documentation provided in electronic format as well as ASCII text files, including text descriptions of any charts, graphs, pictures, or graphics of any nature? | | | |
| Documentation | 28. Can a user choose to have any report generated by the software made available in a "print to ASCII file" format? | | | |
| Training | 29. Is special training provided for users with disabilities that will enable them to become familiar with the software and learn how to use it in conjunction with assistive technology provided as an accommodation? | | | |

30.    After you have evaluated this application using the Checklist, test it by running the application with a sampling of the common assistive technologies used by persons with disabilities (including, at a minimum, screen readers, and, if possible, alternate input devices, screen enlargement software, and voice recognition software and devices). Describe the accessibility successes and problems you encountered during these testing exercises, as well as your plans for addressing any problems:

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**Any "no" answer may indicate a problem with accessibility.**