



Usability – Design Decisions

• Designing your course for usability means making decisions that will provide the greatest amount of accessibility for students.

- Here are five tips for instructors to make their course more accessible.

Know when to use PDFs.

- 1) Rule of thumb for good, better, best = Word, PDF, HTML.
- 2) When using a PDF format, remember to run the **Make Accessible** action from the Tools menu.
- 3) Check the **Options** menu in the results—it will provide more information about any flagged content as well as instructions for how to repair most issues.



Markup tables appropriately in HTML.

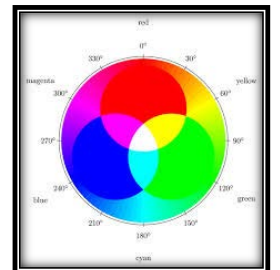
- 1) Tables in HTML have tags (th=table header and td=table data). Screen readers rely on tags like this to know what part of the table to read in what order. Without the tags, the table text gets jumbled.
- 2) However, tags are not visible unless you are viewing the code. We tend to use WYSIWYG (what you see is what you get) editors so we don't have to learn HTML. The HTML Editor in D2L Brightspace is an example.



Use a color contrast checker.

<http://wave.webaim.org/> or **Color Contrast Analyzer** extension in Chrome

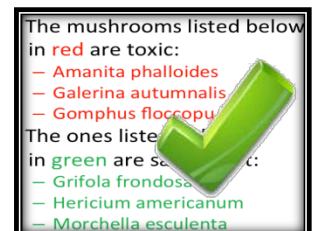
- 1) Choose a neutral background color.
- 2) Select similar or complementary colors for elements (menu, icons, images, etc).
- 3) Pairings of high-chroma, spectrally extreme colors are avoided. (e.g. red text on a green background)
- 4) Do not rely on color to convey important information.



Test on a mobile device.

Use a program like Screenfly to check website pages in different screen size translations.

<http://quirktools.com/screenfly/>



Test with assistive technology.

- 1) JAWS is one of the most popular screen readers. It is available on a computer in eLearning.
- 2) Kurzweil 3000 is on all six computers in the eLearning office.
- 3) There is an accessibility station in the library.
- 4) VoiceOver is available on any Apple computer.

Find more ideas for increasing the universal design of your course by reviewing this helpful checklist:

<http://dlat.utsa.edu/services/Forms/ID2%20Usability%20Analysis.pdf>

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