



Accessibility Core Skill # 4: Hyperlinks

Benefit to User

When meaningful text is used for hyperlinks, screen readers can quickly scan the document and produce a helpful list of all available links.

Step by Step

1. Select meaningful text to convert to a link.
2. 'Right Click' selected text.
3. Click "Hyperlink".
4. "Text to Display" will be auto-filled by the selected text. (Figure 2).
5. Add the website URL.
6. Word will automatically style the font to provide a visual cue that this link is a text (when readers see blue or underlined text they assume it is a link so never underline text for emphasis. To add emphasis to non-link text, use the "Emphasis" style from the style ribbon instead).
7. "Screen Tips", the text box that appears when you hover over a link, will not export to PDF so don't worry about adding one.

Take-Aways

Do (Accessible):

- Do use meaningful text as your link text.

Don't (Not Accessible):

- Don't underline or use blue text for non-linking text.
- Don't worry about adding tool or screen tips.

Figure 1

The two paragraphs below convey the same information. One is accessible, using meaningful link text and one is not.

Not Accessible

[Click here](https://www.adelaide.edu.au) to read works by H.G. Wells online from the University of Adelaide at <https://www.adelaide.edu.au>.

Accessible

[Read the collection of H.G Wells stories](#) made available from the [University of Adelaide](#).

Figure 2



Overview

Hyperlinks are convenient ways for a user to quickly access related pieces of information. For a screen reader user they can either be very helpful or very frustrating depending on how they are created (Figure 1).

Screen readers can quickly generate a list of all the links on a page. But this is only helpful if the list is meaningful. For example: [Click here](#) for Microsoft Office's Accessibility page. [Click here](#) to read section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act or visit our website for [more info](#).

Would produce the following list:

- [click here](#)
- [click here](#)
- [more info](#)

This list is not helpful and can be frustrating for the user. A better list would be generated by using meaningful content for the link text. For example: Visit [Microsoft Office's Accessibility page](#) and read [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#) or visit the [KPC Accessibility page](#) for more information.

Meaningful link text results in a meaningful list:

- [Microsoft Office's Accessibility page](#)
- [Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act](#)
- [KPC Accessibility page](#)