Special type styles (bold, italic, ALL CAPS) should be used sparingly

Don’t make every other word on your site bold or italic or in ALL CAPS. Only use them sparingly when you want to emphasize something important.

Don’t use centered blocks of text — justify text to the left

Avoid text that is centered for paragraphs or other large blocks of text. The jagged edges of centered text take longer to read and tend to interrupt the flow of the text.

Don’t underline anything but links

People expect underlined text online to be linked to something. If it isn’t, you’ll do nothing but confuse your visitors.

Word Spacing—Use only one space!

*The Chicago Manual of Style* and the *AP Stylebook* advise leaving a single space, not two spaces, between sentences and after colons used within a sentence.

Section Headers

“A wall of text is deadly for an interactive experience. Intimidating. Boring. Painful to read. Write for online, not print.” — Jakob Nielsen

One strategy is to break up large amounts of text (more than 2-3 paragraphs) into sections so that users can easily skim down the page. Do not just bold text for your section headings, use “header” tags (<H1>, <H2>, <H3>, etc.) instead.

Do not just bold text for your section headings, use “header” tags (H2 for major headings, H3 for subheadings) instead. For screen reader users, header tags are vital in giving a sense of the main topics of the page and enabling easier navigation through your content. Additionally, effective header tags help with search engines — making your site more accessible to everyone.
The header tags are found on Drupal menus:

From the dropdown menu, select Heading 2 for major headings, Heading 3 for subheadings.

**LINKS**

Do NOT use “Here” or "Click Here" or “More Information” or the URL to label your links

Use concise, descriptive and unique link text.

Meaningful link text should not be overly general and should clearly describe the content to be found or action to be performed by the link (ask yourself if you could predict what you’d find if you clicked on the link by only reading the link text). Each piece of link text on a page should also be unique to the target of the link and be approximately two to five words long.

**DO:**

ODOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Program offers both English and Spanish downloadable copies of the [Oregon Bicyclist Manual](https://example.com).

Up to 500 lights will be given away during the "Bike Lights Instead of Citations" effort being conducted in a partnership involving the [UO Bike Program](https://example.com) and [UO Police Department](https://example.com).
DON’T:

For the full schedule, click here.

The U.S. Department of Arts and Culture is a "people-powered" civic engagement initiative focused on community arts and culture participation. Read more.

Read the full story in Oregon Quarterly: http://oregonquarterly.com/farming-for-the-future

Using “Click Here” hurts accessibility and the UO is required to make all websites accessible

Users who are visually impaired will commonly move through content by tabbing through various different links within a page. If the title of the link is "Click Here" it provides no context for where the link goes and what it does. Links should be labeled with the most important keyword or phrase people are looking for to guide them to the information they want.

Using “Click Here” hurts your ranking in search engines like Google

In addition to making the page more accessible to all users, but especially helps disabled users, descriptive link text helps your search-engine ranking. "Click here" or the URL does not tell Google any additional information about your link so it ignores it, but meaningful text tells Google what you are linking to and that adds value of your site and the linked site.

Also, when users are scanning your website, they want to see links that tell them where the information they are looking for is located. If they just see a link titled "click here," they are forced to read the surrounding text to find out if that is what they are looking. Don’t force users to read the text surrounding a link to determine where it leads.

Try NOT to bury important links within text

You should try to structure your sentences so that the links fall at the beginning or end of your paragraph or sentence, especially when you want your readers to complete a task – sign up, email comments, purchase tickets, etc. This will make links easier to spot because users will see each one as soon as they start or finish reading the sentence.

Web users also have very short attention spans and don’t read articles thoroughly or in their entirety. They skim webpages, especially when they want to complete a task, to find the information they need and burying a link makes it harder for someone to scan the page and find the information they are looking for.
DO:
For the full story, see “Climate Change Is a Social Issue.”

The Accessible Education Center (AEC) facilitates access and full inclusion of students with disabilities into the university environment. The AEC offers a wide variety of support services, including note-taking and testing services, sign language interpretation, adaptive technology, and free on-campus transportation via the Access Shuttle.

DON’T:
I ask you to keep these objectives of the document in mind as you review it and offer comments on its strengths and weaknesses. Please email any suggestions to StrategicFramework@uoregon.edu through February 3; all comments will be taken into consideration.

The play will premiere Thursday, Jan. 21, and it will also be shown Jan. 22, 23, 28, 29, 30 and 31. Tickets are $16 for adults and $14 for UO faculty, staff, non-UO college students and students in high school.

When posting a PDF, make sure the document is accessible

Whenever possible, link to pages rather than PDFs. When you do post a PDF, ensure that it was created from an electronic file and not a scanned image. Screen readers can usually interpret text from an original document but cannot from text in images.

Adobe Acrobat and Adobe Reader can do an accessibility “Quick Check” or “Full Check” on your document. Check Adobe help for your particular version of Adobe for accessibility tools.

For more information on converting documents to PDFs, refer to Adaptive Technology’s Accessible PDF Resources.

IMAGES

Always include descriptive alt text

All images and graphics need to have Alt Text. Alt text strengthens the message for search engines and improves the accessibility of your website. It shouldn’t surpass a single sentence and it is best to keep it under 16 words (Google seems to only count the first 16 words of alt text). Whenever possible, do not use a poster or a text-heavy graphic or image as a photo because someone who is blind or visually impaired can’t read the text on the image and the description of the text on the image is too long to include as alt text.
Alt text should be a natural description of the image in context. It should be clear and concise and describe the image to someone who is blind or visually impaired. Consider what the page looks like when images are not shown. Then, write Alt text that best works as a replacement.

Google also places a high value on alt text to determine what is in an image but also to determine the topic of surrounding text.

Don’t use redundant language like “An image of” or “This picture shows” as it is unnecessary.

Example:

For the photo on the left, you could use the generic “A bug on a leaf” if you know nothing else the image. But if you know what type of bug or what type of leaf, you should include the type of bug and type of leaf in the alt tag: “A rainbow shield bug on a jatropha leaf” or even “A Calidea dregii Coccinella septempunctata on a Jatropha gossypiifolia leaf” if it’s important to the story.

**Name your files with appropriate titles**

The filename can give Google clues about the subject matter of the image. Try to make your filename a good description of the subject matter of the image. This is also helpful for searching for images in the library when you want to reuse a photo that is already in the library.

**DO:**

president-michael-schill.jpg
Johnson-Hall.jpg
emu_construction.jpg

**DON’T:**

photo.jpg
img_9605_rs.jpg
picture-1568.jpg
11949488_10153270728054842_5306033129082581740_n.jpg
Image Dos and Don’ts

The images people look at most have the following characteristics:
- Are high contrast and high quality (crisp and colorful)
- Are cropped, rather than overly reduced, when necessary to fit a small space
- Are not excessively detailed – easy to interpret, almost iconic
- Are highly related to the content on the page
- Possess magnetic features

Features that make images magnetic include the following:
- Smiling and approachable faces – They make us feel like we are actually connecting with other humans, not only with some coded website
- People looking at (or at least facing) the camera
- Clear instructions or information

People ignore images that have the following characteristics:
- Are low contrast and low quality
- Are too busy for the space
- Look like advertisements - People don’t like ads and over the years they have successfully learned to ignore them
- Are not related to content on the page or only slightly related to it – people look for the content and ignore unrelated visual noise
- Are boring, cold, fake, or too polished
- Include people or objects that are generic or obvious stock art

AUDIO AND VIDEO

Caption all video

YouTube has very useful built-in captioning tools. For videos not hosted on YouTube you can caption your videos using web applications like Universal Subtitles.

All audio files must contain links to text transcripts

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- Drupal Basics
- Writing for the Web
- Visual Design
- Accessibility in Practice