

# WORD 365 ACCESSIBILITY

Microsoft Word includes options for adding accessibility information to documents to support access by individuals with disabilities. This information also ensures that Microsoft Word documents converted into other formats (e.g., tagged PDF, ePub, DAISY, etc.) maintain this level of accessibility.

The best practices for Microsoft Word accessibility include attention to:

- **Heading styles** should be nested in a logical and sequential order. Content should be organized into meaningful sections using headings.
- **List Styles** are formatted using the embedded list tool.
- **Images** have appropriate alternate text; images, which are unrelated to page content should be designated as decorative.
- **Link text** is meaningful, descriptive, and in context.
- **Tables** are for data with identifiable headers and header rows identified.
- **Color and contrast** are sufficient. Color is not the only method to convey meaning.
- All pages should be reviewed with an **accessibility checker**.

When you are finished creating an accessible Microsoft Word document, you may want to learn how to **export to other formats** such as a PDF.

## HEADINGS

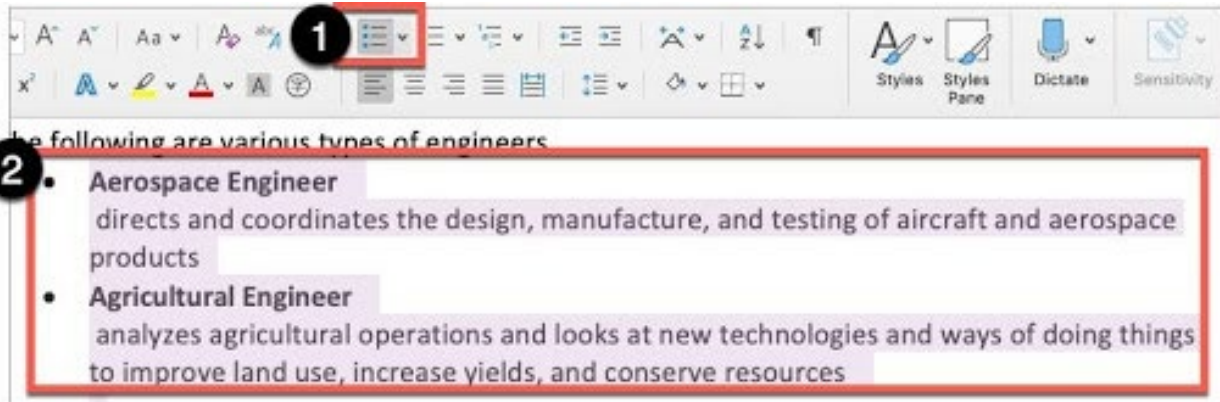
Headings can provide an organizational and navigational framework for a document's content, communicating both the informational hierarchy and relationship between different sections. Headings also provide a simple mechanism for an individual using assistive technologies to "jump" from one heading to the next when navigating the document.

## LISTS

Lists provide a structured order to a group of connected or sequential content. A numbered or bulleted list may present the same information more effectively than simple data tables with fewer steps.



## LISTS IN MICROSOFT WORD



1. Highlight the grouped list of items.
2. In the **Home** tab, select the appropriate list style (i.e., numbered list or bulleted list).

## LIST GUIDELINES:

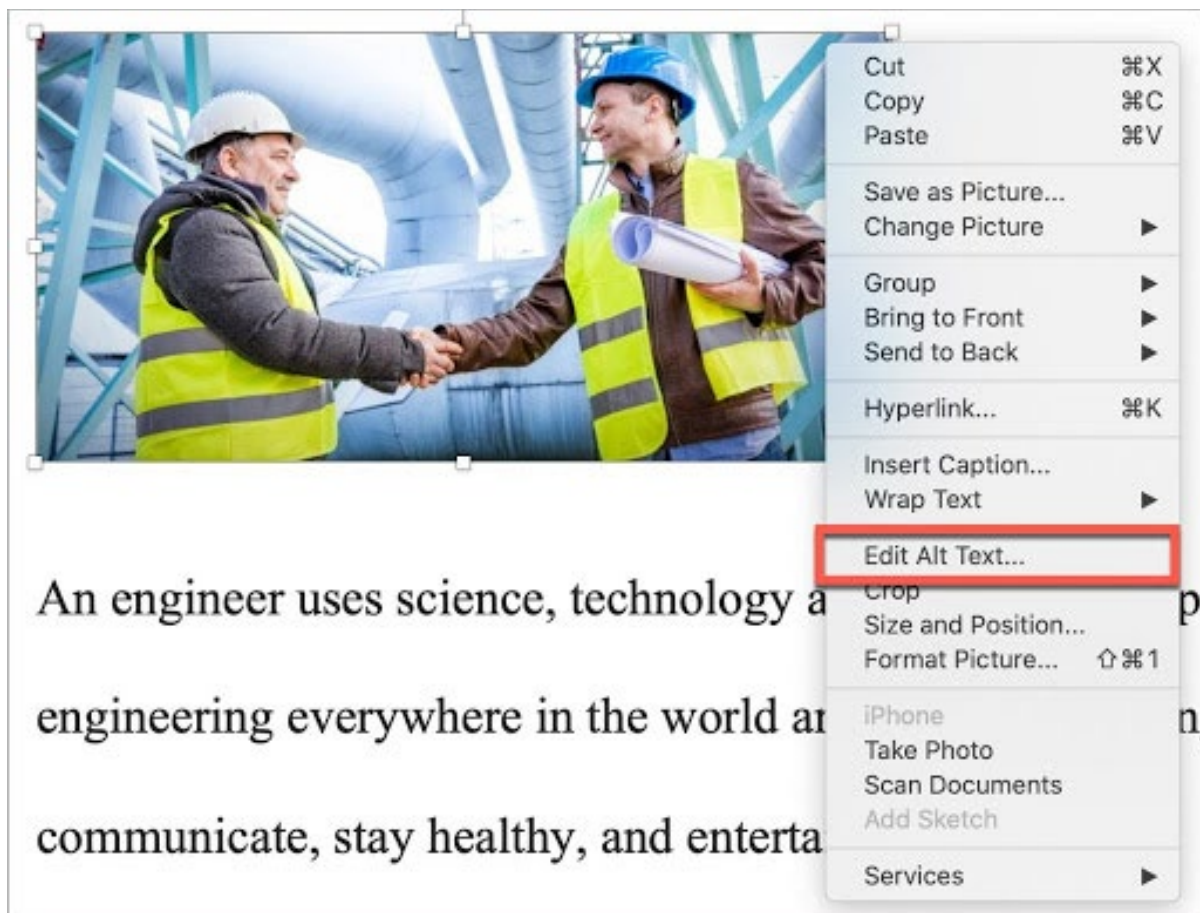
- Remove any lists manually created, such as those using dashes or asterisk characters. Manual lists are not "true" lists.
- Avoid using indentation to provide a visual list in lieu of the list style button.
- You can use ordered or numbered lists to present a group of items (words, phrases, sentences) that follow a sequence.
- You can use unordered or bulleted lists for a group of items without a sequence.
- Your lists should contain at least two or more list items unless they are used to create an outline.
- Nested lists are acceptable, such as a numbered list that contains a nested bulleted list.

## IMAGES

Images that support the content require a text description (also called "alt text") that communicates the purpose and/or content of the image. You can convey image information to the individual using assistive technologies, which allows them to hear the description of the image. Image descriptions should be short and communicate the main purpose of the image. You can also mark images as decorative and are ignored by assistive technologies.

If a longer description of the image is necessary to fully explain its content, consider inserting a more detailed description of the image within the document text that precedes and/or follows the image.

## ADDING ALT TEXT



Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind?  
*(1-2 sentences recommended)*

Two construction workers shaking hands.

☐ Mark as decorative

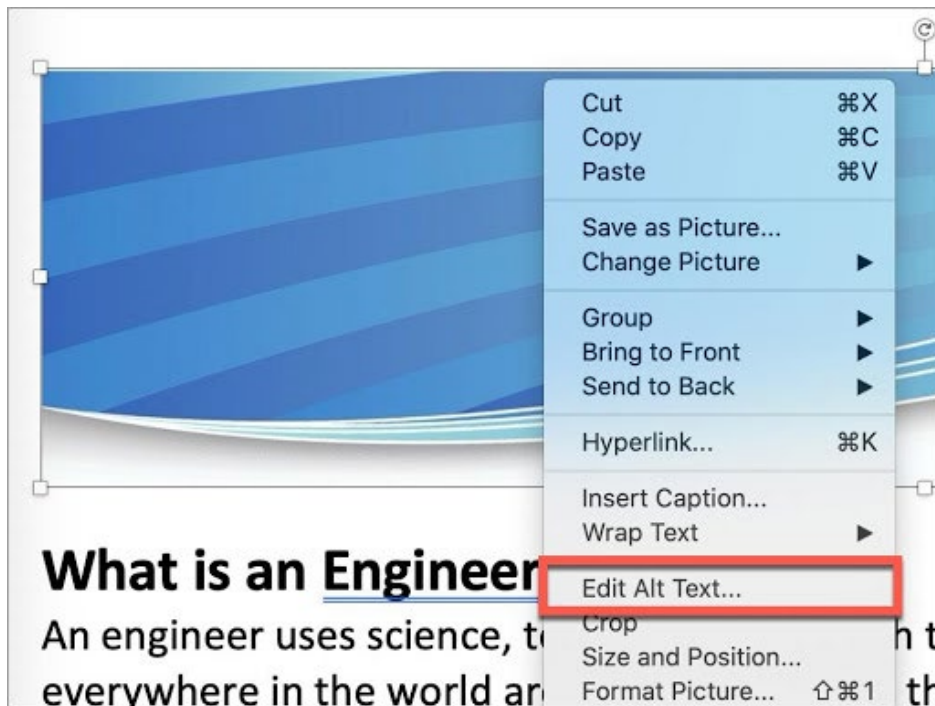
Generate a description for me

1. Select and right-click the image.
2. Select **Edit Alt Text...**

3. Provide a brief and concise description and “X” or close the window.

## MARKING A DECORATIVE IMAGE

If an image lacks essential information necessary for the user to understand the page content, it can be considered decorative because its only function is to enhance the appearance of the page.



Alt Text

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind?

(1-2 sentences recommended)

Content marked as decorative will not expose a description to screen readers.

☒ Mark as decorative

Generate a description for me

1. Select the image. Right-click the image.

2. Select **Edit Alt Text...**
3. Select **Mark as decorative** and “X” or close the window.

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR IMAGES

### Technical Guidelines:

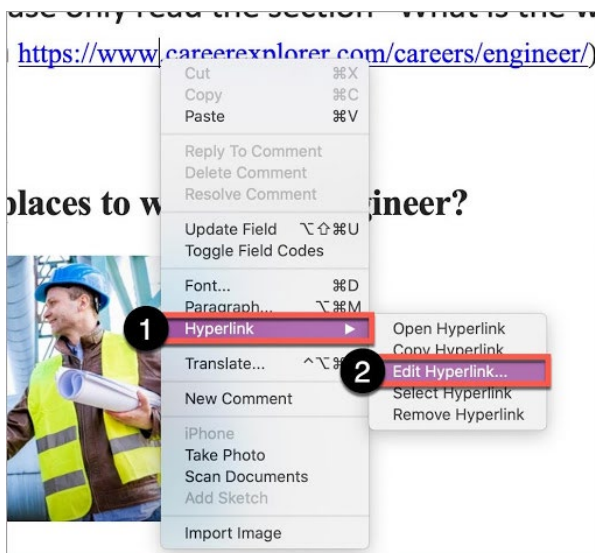
- You should refrain from using "Behind Text" or "In Front of Text" due to how this format setting can obscure text and make the content difficult or impossible to read.
- For older versions of Microsoft Word, leave the Title field blank, and only use the Description field for alt text.

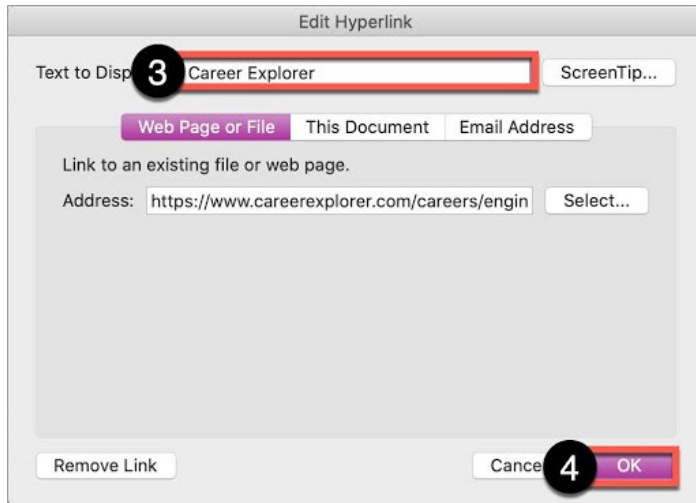
### Formatting Guidelines:

- A text description should convey the purpose or content of the image in approximately 120 characters or less. Avoid repeating the same information as contained in the surrounding text.
- If the image is complex, consider providing additional information in the surrounding text of the document while providing a shortened text description.
- Do not include the file format in the alt text (Example: .JPEG, .PNG)
- Do not include “picture of” or “image of” in the alt text.
- For older versions of Microsoft Word, leave the Title field blank, and only use the Description field for alt text.

## HYPERLINKS

You can improve documents containing hyperlinks to websites or other online resources by including hyperlink text. Using the full URL as the hyperlink text may not make sense to the reader, particularly if it is long.





1. Place the cursor anywhere on the desired hyperlink. Right-click the hyperlink.
2. Select **Hyperlink**, then **Edit Hyperlink**.
3. Under **Text to Display**, write the descriptive text for the hyperlink, keeping the text name short and descriptive.
4. Select OK.

## IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS

Use link text that is descriptive and or informs the person as to the link's destination. For additional guidance on formatting and why descriptive text is important for hyperlinks, please review the [W3C information on Links](#).

## TABLES

You should use tables in Microsoft Word for data and not layout purposes. An accessible table includes the following:

- At least one header (row and/or column).
- Alt Text description summarizing the table

## APPLY AT LEAST ONE HEADER

To mark a header row for a data table:

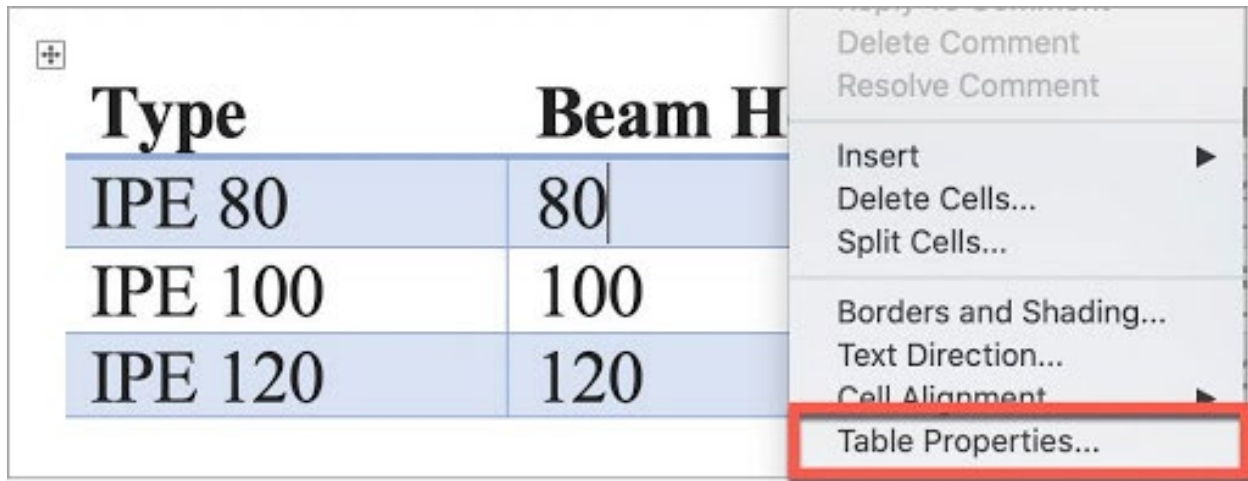
1. Select the table to reveal **Table Design**. (Note: you can only see this option if you select the table.)
2. In the far left-hand section, determine the required header type:
  - Header row: check the box **Header Row**.
  - Column header: check the box **First Column**.



3. Highlight the header row of your table. Right-click the table. Select **Table Properties**.
  - In the Row tab, check the box **Repeat as header row at the top of each page**.



- In the Alt Text tab, write a short, one sentence description of what the table information presents.
4. Select **OK**.



Type	Beam Height
IPE 80	80
IPE 100	100
IPE 120	120

- Delete Comment
- Resolve Comment
- Insert
- Delete Cells...
- Split Cells...
- Borders and Shading...
- Text Direction...
- Cell Alignment
- Table Properties...**



Table Properties

1 **Row** Column Cell Alt Text

Row 1:

**Size**

☐ Specify height: 0" Row height is: At least

**Options**

☐ Allow row to break across pages

2 ☒ Repeat as header row at the top of each page

Previous Row Next Row

Cancel 3 **OK**

## ALT TEXT DESCRIPTIONS SUMMARIZING THE TABLE

Type	Beam H
IPE 80	80
IPE 100	100
IPE 120	120

Delete Comment  
Resolve Comment

Insert  
Delete Cells...  
Split Cells...

Borders and Shading...  
Text Direction...  
Cell Alignment

Table Properties...

Table Properties

Table Row Column

1 Alt Text

Title

Description

2 Cross-section areas of I-beam profiles.

Titles and descriptions provide alternative, text-based representations of the information contained in tables, diagrams, images, and other objects. This information is useful for people with vision or cognitive impairments who may not be able to see or understand the object.

A title can be read to a person with a disability and is used to determine whether they wish to hear the description of the content.

3 OK

1. Right-click the table. Select **Table Properties**.
  - o In the Row tab, check the box **Repeat as header row at the top of each page**.
  - o In the Alt Text tab, write a short, one sentence description of what the table information presents.
2. Select **OK**.

## COLOR

Color can be an effective method to communicate ideas and draw attention to information. Ensuring there is sufficient contrast as well as using color in combination with other formatting can support a diverse campus community, including individuals with visual disabilities.





## CONTRAST

When choosing colors to present text information in documents, choose color options that provide a contrast ratio of:

- 4.5:1 for regular text
- 3:1 for 18-point font and larger, or 14-point font and bold

In general, pastel colors or the “light” version of a particular color do not provide sufficient contrast against a white background.

You can evaluate contrast ratios using tools such as:

- [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)
- [The Paciello Group Color Contrast Analyser](#)

## COLOR AND FORMATTING

When using color to indicate a specific condition or state, you need to include a formatting attribute to also provide a distinguishing characteristic. For example, if you identified a list of vocabulary words only in red text, this could present difficulties for an individual who had a type of color-blindness.

Options to support accessibility can include a combination of color AND formatting, such as:

- Red text with Bold formatting
- Using an asterisk, brackets, or other annotation symbols in addition to color

Information provided by the entity (**\*IPE**) is any information that is produced and provided as audit evidence, whether it be for your controls testing or procedures performed by external audit. In some environments, this is all electronic audit evidence (**\*EAE**) or key reports/spreadsheets.

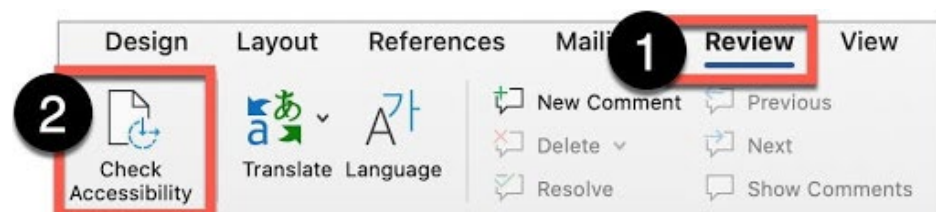
## How Do We Manage IPE in Our Environment

A good starting point is to identify all reports and spreadsheets currently used by business owners for your existing **\*SOX** controls. This should give you a good population of all your IPE. From here, you should identify any other key factors

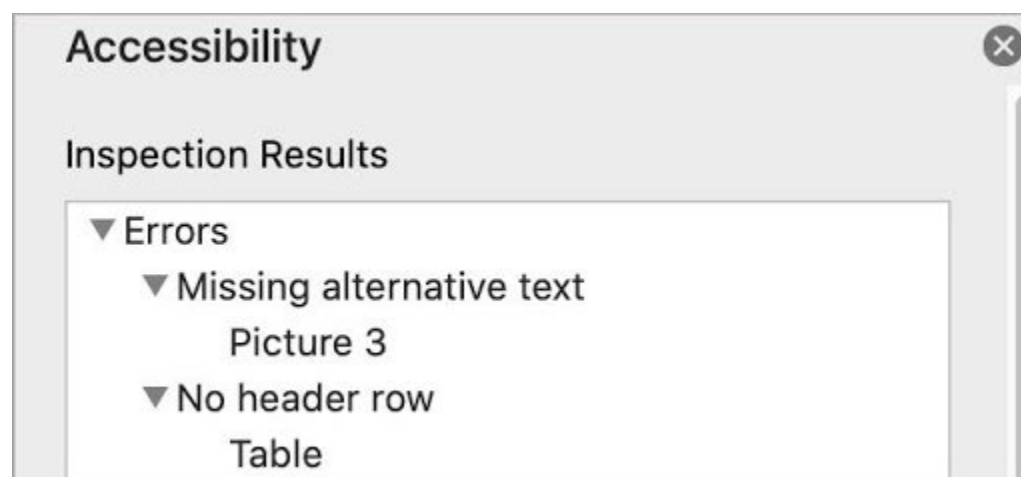
For more information on using color or these tools, please review the [W3C information on color](#).

## ACCESSIBILITY CHECKER

Microsoft Word features an accessibility checker that can assist in identifying accessibility issues.



1. On the ribbon, select **Review**.
2. Select **Check Accessibility**.
3. The Accessibility checker will appear on the right-hand side.



## ERRORS, WARNING, AND TIPS

The Accessibility Checker presents the results in a pane on the right-hand side of the interface. It organizes the results into three categories: Errors, Warnings and Tips.

- **Errors- Must fix**  
**Errors** are issues which indicate content that contains an accessibility issue and is extremely challenging, if not impossible, to read or understand.
- **Warnings- Most likely will need to be address**  
**Warnings** indicate that the content may be challenging for individuals with disabilities to read or understand. Resolving Warnings may require the author to consider a different visual or organizational layout
- **Tips- Very helpful**  
**Tips** are pointers intended to help you improve the user experience of your audience by streamlining and organizing your content in certain ways. Tips provide additional guidance and will appear depending on the content.

The Accessibility Checker is a good starting point towards identifying potential accessibility issues in a document. Microsoft continually updates the [Accessibility Checker rules](#) and so newer versions of Microsoft products may result in a different list of accessibility results. Using the Accessibility Checker can help identify the more significant accessibility issues present in a document.

## EXPORTING TO OTHER FORMATS

Including accessible authoring practices into Microsoft Word documents allows for versions exported as other formats to retain most, if not all, accessibility features.

## IMPORTANT

Never choose a "Print" to PDF option in Office, or in any other program. A screen reader user may still be able to access the text of a PDF created in this way, but heading structure, alternative text, and any other tag structures will be lost.

## CREATE A PDF WITH MS WORD

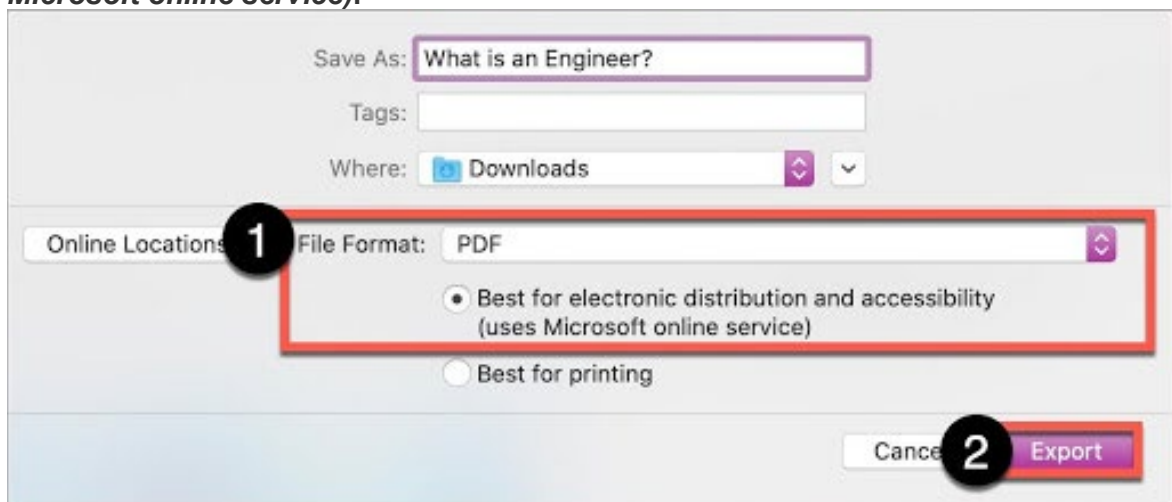
Mac

For Mac users, read Microsoft Word's Support for converting to PDF on your [Mac](#) for additional guidance.

1. In **File**, select **Save As...**



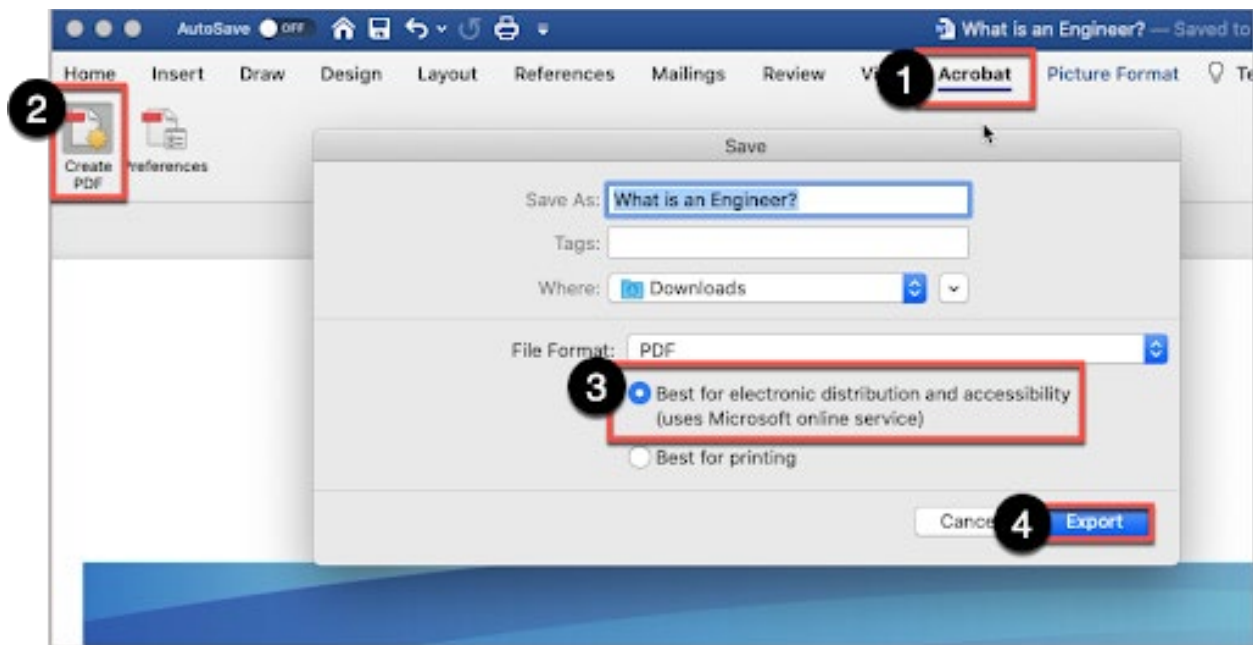
2. Select **PDF**
3. Select the radio button, **Best for electronic distribution and accessibility (uses Microsoft online service)**.



4. Select **Export**.

## CREATE PDF WITH ADOBE

It is easier to create an accessible MS Word document rather than trying to fix accessibility issues in a PDF document.



1. Use the Acrobat plug-in in the ribbon. Select the **Acrobat** tab.
2. Select **Create PDF**.
3. If using a Mac with Acrobat Adobe installed, select **Best for electronic distribution and accessibility (uses Microsoft online service)**.
4. Select **Export**.