

WCAG 2.1 CHECKLIST FOR CONTENT EDITORS

Updated: November 16, 2025

PERCEIVABLE — “CAN PEOPLE SEE OR HEAR MY CONTENT?”

IMAGES & MEDIA

- Every image has an accurate, concise alt description.
- Images with text are avoided unless necessary.
- Video or audio has captions (and transcripts if prerecorded).

TEXT & LAYOUT

- Headings are used in proper order (H1 → H2 → H3).

OPERABLE — “CAN PEOPLE NAVIGATE IT EASILY?”

LINKS & BUTTONS

- Link text clearly describes its destination (“Read about financial aid,” not “Click here”).
- Avoid duplicate link text pointing to different destinations.
- External links open in a new tab with “(opens in new tab)” text in the title text field.

STRUCTURE & NAVIGATION

- Each page starts with a meaningful heading.
- Use lists (/) for grouped items – don’t fake them with line breaks or dashes.
- Keep content sections short and clearly labeled.

UNDERSTANDABLE — “CAN PEOPLE MAKE SENSE OF IT?”

LANGUAGE & CLARITY

- Write in plain language – aim for middle school reading level.

- Explain acronyms and abbreviations on first use.
- Don't use unexplained jargon or insider language.
- Keep sentence length short and direct (under 20 words is ideal).

CONSISTENT & PREDICTABLE

- Keep button and link labels consistent site-wide ("Submit," not sometimes "Send").
- Navigation menus stay in the same order across pages.

BONUS: 2.1 MOBILE-FRIENDLY ADDITIONS

- Don't add wide tables or large images that force horizontal scrolling.
- Don't assume device orientation (portrait vs landscape).

QUICK SUMMARY: THE BIG THREE FOR EDITORS

- Describe what you show. Every image, link, and media item should make sense out of context.
- Structure what you say. Use proper headings and lists.
- Write for humans, not insiders. Simple, scannable, and consistent wins every time.