



**GRADUATE
WRITING
CENTER**
—
TEXAS TECH

Figures (Alt-Text)

To pass the thesis/dissertation accessibility check, **all images, graphs and figures** in your final PDF document must include **descriptive alternative text** (alt-text). This is a full description of the figure written into the code behind the image (or non-text item). Screen readers read this description to individuals who are visually impaired to give them information on what the image is about. This ensures documents are accessible to all users.

Resources:

1. [Alt-text overview](#): – A video which explains why, how and tips to writing good alt-text
2. [TTU alt-text decision process](#): A comprehensive guide to creating effective and accessible alt-text for images
3. [Poet training tool](#): Helping you write effective image descriptions

How to add alt-text to an image in Word

In the desktop application:

1. Place the cursor over the image and right-click
2. Select **View Alt-Text** from the pop-up menu
3. Type in the description of the image in the Alt-Text box
4. Click on upper right-hand **X** to finish adding alt-text

In the web version:

1. Place the cursor over the image and right-click
2. Select **Format Picture** from the pop-up menu
3. Type in the description of the image in the Alt-Text box
4. Click on upper right-hand **X** to finish adding alt-text

Note: Word has an option to generate AI text to describe the image. If you use this option, you are responsible for ensuring that the generated text describes the image clearly.

How to write good alt-text:

1. Think about what the image is trying to convey – focus on the meaning rather than the details. For example, for an image of a hotel’s lobby on their website:
 - **Weak alt-text (just describes the image):** “a hotel lobby.”
 - **Strong alt-text (conveys meaning):** “an open and airy hotel lobby with multiple seating options.”
2. Keep it short and sweet – 140 characters or less whenever possible

3. If alt-text is too long, use a text equivalent on your page. Graphs, flow charts or complex diagrams can't be described easily. Provide a text equivalent in the body of your website or document (this is beneficial to everyone, not just people using screen readers). E.g. for a flow chart, describe the text in the flow chart and its sequence
4. Be specific: e.g. "Golden retriever puppy" not "dog"
5. Avoid redundant phrases: Don't start with "image of" or "picture of"
6. For images with embedded text, include that text in the alt-text attribute

For more information including trainings and resources, visit [Texas Tech's Digital Accessibility Website](#).