Quertum

Beginner Guide: How to Check if Your PDFs are PDA/UA Accessible for EAA Compliance

BEST PDF ACCESSIBILITY CHECKERS

Start by using free or paid application to scan your PDFs for basic accessibility

PAC 2024 Accessibility Checker
Free

Adobe Acrobat Pro DC
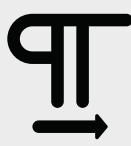*Paid*

PDFix Desktop Lite
Free

CommonLook PDF Validator
Paid

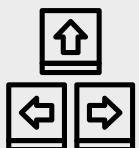## WHAT MAKES PDF FILE ACCESSIBLE

Content is organized into meaningful tags: paragraphs, headings, lists, so screen reader can interpret the structure.

True semantic headings (H1, H2, H3) used and nested logically - not just bold/large text visually

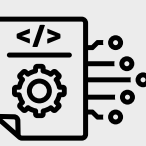Every meaningful image includes a concise, descriptive alt text, which is also used by screen reader.

All form fields have labels, tooltips, and tab order supports keyboard navigation. Ensure that tab order is not broken

Reading sequence and logical reading order defined in the tag structure (top-to-bottom, left-to-right). Check with reader, if the context jumps around.

Links with clear purpose. Hyperlinks are descriptive (e.g., "Download the 2025 Accessibility Report")

Consists valid metadata, such as title, author, subject, and document language are correctly set.

Fonts of the PDF are embedded, Unicode-based, and readable by assistive tech

HOW TO FIX A REGULAR PDF (STEP-BY-STEP)

- Analyze the PDF using PAC 2024 or Adobe Acrobat Pro to identify missing tags, reading order issues, and alt text gaps.

- Open the PDF in Adobe Acrobat Pro and run the Autotag Document function to generate a basic tag structure. The results are often imperfect — a starting point only.

- Open the Tags panel and manually review or adjust the tag structure to reflect headings, paragraphs, and lists correctly.

- Add or correct alt text for all meaningful images and mark decorative images as artifacts.

- Use the Reading Order tool in Acrobat to define the correct logical reading flow from top to bottom.

- Fill in the document metadata by adding title, author, subject, and setting the default language.

- Check and update all hyperlinks to ensure they use descriptive text and are keyboard accessible.

- Open the Prepare Form tool and ensure all form fields are labeled, ordered properly, and include tooltips.

- Validate the updated PDF using PAC 2024 and test usability with a screen reader like NVDA or VoiceOver.

- Save the PDF as a tagged or PDF/A-compliant file with all accessibility features embedded.

One inaccessible PDF is a challenge. What about hundred? A thousand? Now add migration from legacy systems—without breaking workflows.

Quertum delivers full-scope PDF accessibility and legacy migration—at scale, with zero downtime.

🔧 Let's make your documents future-ready, fast.

Talk to our experts today