

Universal Usability Checklist

Fundamentals

- Is the page easy to decipher? Can you quickly determine what site you are on and what is offered?
- Is the page easy to navigate? Can you quickly determine how to use the site?
- Is the design flexible? Do page elements respond to user customization?
- Do all non-text items (e.g., images, audio, video) have text fallbacks?
- Is all relevant information presented in HTML format? If not, is an alternate HTML version offered?
- Can all functional elements be activated from the keyboard? Is keyboard access logical and sequential?
- Can the user define elements that are in the user's domain, such as link underlines, cursor focus, and text size?

Document Structure

- Is the HTML free of presentation markup?
- Are page elements marked up using structural markup?
- Is CSS used for presentation information?
- Is CSS in a linked style sheet?
- Are pages usable without styles sheets?
- Do the pages validate?

Text

- Is textual content presented as plain text?
- Is CSS used to style text?
- Does the user define the base text size? Are other text elements sized using relative measurements?
- Does the design stay intact with the text size is changed? Do all text elements resize?
- Is there sufficient contrast between the text and background colors? Are colors set using style sheets? Can color settings be overridden?
- Is there a redundant scheme in place when color is used to convey information?
- Is structural markup used to tag text? Is it used correctly?

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Images

- Are the images relevant in conveying information about the site?
- When images are used for text, is the text non-essential content?
- Does the page avoid animated images, or images that appear to animate?
- Do all relevant images have descriptive alt-text? Do irrelevant images have blank alt-text?
- Are content images described in the text or caption?
- Are images small and do they load quickly? Are they saved using the correct format? Are large images accessed via thumbnails?

Data Tables

- Are tables used for tabular information?
- Are table layouts as simple as possible?
- Are row and column headings marked up as headings?
- Do tables include a caption and summary?

Layout Tables

- Is the layout table used out of necessity?
- Is the layout table as simple as possible?
- Are table tags used inappropriately?
- Does the table make sense linearly?
- Are cell widths set using flexible measurements?

Frames

- Are frames used out of necessity?
- Are frames titled in the frameset?
- Is an alternate to frames provided?

Lists

- Are all list elements marked up using list markup?
- Are lists as simple as possible?

Forms

- Are forms as simple as possible?
- For forms-based tasks, is an alternate method provided of performing the the task?
- Are form fields labeled properly?
- Are related form elements grouped?
- Can forms be completed successfully using the keyboard? Do form elements follow a logical sequence?
- Are form fields free of default text?
- Are the form elements used correctly?
- Do menu-style form elements allow users to provide a “null” response?

Links

- Are links text-based?
- Are links underlined?
- Are visited and unvisited links differentiated?
- Does navigation include a “you are here” marker?
- Do image-based links have alt-text that describes the link target?

Color

- Is there sufficient contrast between foreground and background colors?
- When color is used to communicate information, is the same information provided without color?
- Can users customize the color settings?

Audio and Video

- Does audio content have a text alternative?
- Does video content have a text alternative?
- Is media content provided in different formats and at different data rates?
- Can media content be activated and operated from the keyboard?
- Does the interface allow users to control media playback?

Interactivity

- Are add-on technologies used out of necessity?
- Do interactive features control elements that are normally in the user’s domain?
- Can interactive features be controlled from the keyboard?
- Is an alternate HTML version provided?

Editorial Style

- Is the text written for skimming?
- Is the language clear and to the point? Is the language appropriate for the audience?
- Do headings and links begin with keywords?
- Are links functional?
- Is the natural language of the document identified? Are language changes marked in the code?
- Are abbreviations and acroymns marked in the code?
- For long documents, is a printing option provided?

Page Layout

- Do the page elements follow a logical sequence in the page code?
- Is the information structure of the page conveyed to nonvisual users?
- Is the design consistent throughout the site?
- Is the navigation system appropriate and relevant to current context?
- Are navigation tools provided, such as site map and search?
- Does the page layout adapt to different window widths and different text sizes?
- Is the layout designed using `css`?
- Is page content near the top of the page?, and marked with a heading tag? If not, does the page include a “skip to content” link?