



# Canvas & Accessibility Guide

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## Accessibility isn't just a checkbox.

Canvas should be a great experience for every user, whether they're students with disabilities, second language learners or nontraditional learners. Everyone benefits from more accessible content. Your institution can use Canvas knowing they have the tools necessary to keep their courses accessible and compliant with modern accessibility standards. Accessibility is ingrained from Product Design to Engineering. We adhere to ADA guidelines and are fully committed to the accessibility guidelines you care about, such as:

- Canvas conforms to WCAG AA 2.1 guidelines
- Canvas is committed to Section 508 guidelines
- Canvas is in conformance with the European Web Accessibility Directive
- Canvas undergoes a semi-annual third party accessibility evaluation from WebAim and internal audits are conducted with each release
- The [VPAT](#) allows clients to know what Canvas functions are supported and partially supported in accordance with web accessibility guidelines

## Accessibility Testing

We have three dedicated QA engineers who work on testing accessibility. Additionally, all design, engineering, and QA members are required to be aware of, and build according to, accessibility requirements. We also perform third-party audits at least once a year through WebAIM.

## Helping Teachers & Learners Stay Accessible

Canvas guides faculty to build inclusive and equitable learning content easily

- Faculty have the freedom to create learning experiences that can adapt, morph, or stretch to address the needs of individual or all students, benefiting retention
- Canvas focuses on interconnectedness--the platform/ecosystem is flexible and adaptable

Canvas has features and functionality that help your institution's staff support learners in every situation.

- Canvas has a **welcoming and minimalist design** to make navigation easy for all users.
  - **Plain language** (language on the web/in many courses should be kept at Gr.8 literacy level)
  - **Little reliance on peripheral indicators** (most important information is in the center of the screen)
- Canvas uses **consistent iconography** of commonly recognized objects to represent functions communicates information effectively for less-text oriented users
- Canvas has **multiple, one-click, points of access, such as the toDo List** so that you can immediately get to the information you need.
- All the elements of our platform are **designed in a meaningful order**, to ensure that users who are blind or have limited mobility can navigate.

- **Modules** provide instructors built-in methods to organize course content and **provide predictability for students** reducing anxiety and stress for students
- Canvas is geared toward making content easier to see for those who may have visual difficulties by providing **High Contrast styles and underline links**. and Visual cues are beneficial for organizing information. Canvas enables users to select their **personal color preferences** that persist throughout the platform and mobile experience
  - Color contrast is important for users to distinguish various text and non-text elements, it makes imagery easier to see. This feature is enabled on a user-by-user basis.
- Accessibility is about **inclusion**, all Canvas users can set their **preferred pronouns**.
- Some accessibility concerns are a matter of **equity**, which is why Canvas provides the teacher with the ability to **create accommodations** for students such as the ability to make multiple submissions, or extra time on assignments.

## Screen Reader Support

- Canvas officially supports the most common screen reader and browser combinations:
  - Macintosh: VoiceOver (latest version for Safari/Chrome)
  - PC: JAWS (latest version for Firefox/Chrome)
  - PC: NVDA (latest version for Firefox/Chrome)

## The Canvas Accessibility Checker

Instructure recognizes the technology and accessibility landscape is always changing, and so we do everything we can to stay ahead of the curve. Canvas has even created a built-in [accessibility checker](#) that helps your instructors, course designers and students build truly accessible content. At the click of a button, they can see if the content they have created is accessible. If something isn't accessible, the Accessibility Checker provides a user-friendly explanation about the accessibility errors, while providing a clear way of how to fix the error. The explanation also provides a link to additional resources to educate them about the accessibility guideline. This tool checks over a dozen common accessibility errors such as contrast ratio and image alternate text.

We're passionate about accessibility, and so are many of our customers. We are optimistic about the potential the accessibility tool has to raise awareness and education on the importance of accessibility. We don't believe that accessibility should be a competitive advantage or a source of revenue, and that's why we've published our accessibility checker as open source on [github](#) for anybody to use in their software.

## Community Driven

Within the Canvas Community, we have an [Accessibility user group](#), where over 230 Canvas users from all around the world discuss accessibility in the education landscape, and they help shape Canvas' accessibility goals.

## Accessibility Resources

Utilize the following resources to learn more about the tools and features that empower Canvas users to keep their courses accessible and compliant with modern accessibility standards

[Accessibility within Canvas](#) (Includes list of Supported Screenreaders)

[www.instructure.com/canvas/accessibility](http://www.instructure.com/canvas/accessibility) (Canvas VPAT)

[How do I use the Accessibility Checker in the Rich Content Editor as an instructor?](#) (Canvas Guides)

[Accessibility User Group](#) (Canvas Community)