

Making Your Learning Site Accessible

A Practical Guide to Creating WCAG-Conformant Experiences on the Thought Industries Platform



Accessibility Is a Shared Responsibility

At Thought Industries, accessibility is an ongoing commitment. Our team continues to improve the platform's conformance with WCAG 2.2 AA standards, and we regularly publish updates in our [Release Notes](#). But full accessibility isn't just about the platform, it's also about how you use it.

This guide outlines the steps you can take to ensure that your site design, learning content, and interactive elements are accessible to all users, including those who use assistive technologies. If you're already familiar with accessibility but new to our platform, this guide will help you apply those best practices in context.

Designing for Visual Accessibility	3
Add Accessible Assets	4
Structure Written Content	5
Build Accessible Interactions	6
Resources & Support	7



[Link to Help Center: Release Updates](#)

Design Your Site for Visual Accessibility

Accessible design starts with your site's foundation—colors, layout, and typography.



User Focus: Learners with low vision, color blindness, or other visual disabilities rely on sufficient contrast and non-color cues to navigate and understand content.

Implementation Guidelines:

- **Use high-contrast color combinations**

WCAG 2.1 AA requires a minimum contrast ratio of 4.5:1 for normal text and 3:1 for large text and UI components.

✓ Test your palette with trusted tools like [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#) or [Color Contrast Analyzer \(TPG\)](#).

- **Avoid using color as the only visual cue**

Don't rely solely on color to communicate meaning (e.g., red for errors). Always pair color with a label or icon.

(WCAG 1.4.1 Use of Color)

Quick tips:

- Use online tools to preview your color palette in grayscale.
- Avoid light gray text on white backgrounds—this often fails contrast checks.

Add Accessible Media and Images

Every learner, regardless of vision or hearing, should be able to understand your media content.



User Focus: Learners who are blind, have low vision, are deaf, or are hard of hearing depend on alt text, captions, and transcripts to access and understand visual and audio content.

Implementation Guidelines:

- **Provide meaningful alt text for every image**
 - Keep it concise (typically under 125 characters)
 - Avoid repeating surrounding text
 - For decorative images, apply null alt text by leaving the Title field blank when editing the image in the WYSIWYG editor. This passes through the value `alt=""`, which signals to screen readers to skip the image entirely. Note that this enhancement was added in July 2025; to apply this to images that were uploaded to your site before this date, edit the image, enter a title and save, then edit again to remove the title and save once more. (*WCAG 1.1.1 Non-text Content*)
- **Use video captions and audio transcripts**
 - When uploading videos using the Video Content type, make sure to attach an SRT caption file. You can do this by navigating to the video's settings panel and uploading your SRT file under the Captions tab.
 - For audio files, add a transcript directly into the page using a WYSIWYG content block or include a downloadable transcript file. If you're embedding audio using the Course Text Page or Text + Audio template, use the editor to include the transcript just below the player. (*WCAG 1.2.1–1.2.5*)
- **Avoid using images of text**
 - Text in images can't be read by screen readers or resized for legibility. Use HTML text whenever possible. (*WCAG 1.4.5 Images of Text*)

Quick tips:

- Write alt text as if you're describing the image over the phone to someone who can't see it.
- Avoid phrases like "image of..."—screen readers already announce it's an image.
- Test captions for accuracy if using auto-caption tools before uploading the SRT.

Structure Written Content for Screen Readers

Consistent structure makes content easier to navigate for all learners, and essential for those using assistive tech.



User Focus: Learners using screen readers or other assistive technologies rely on correct semantic structure to navigate, scan, and understand your content.

Implementation Guidelines:

- **Use proper heading levels (H1 → H2 → H3)**

Don't skip levels or choose a heading based on visual size.
(WCAG 1.3.1 *Info and Relationships*)

- **Use ordered and unordered lists correctly**

Don't insert horizontal rules or non-list content within `` or `` tags.

- **Avoid formatting tricks (e.g., bolded text as a "heading")**

Use semantic elements instead.
(WCAG 1.3.1, 2.4.6 *Headings and Labels*)

Quick tips:

- Use the "Format" dropdown in the WYSIWYG editor to apply correct heading tags.
- Preview your page using a screen reader emulator to hear the content flow.
- Make sure lists aren't just bullet characters manually typed into the text (e.g., using dashes instead of real ``).

Build Accessible Interactions in WYSIWYG Editors

Our WYSIWYG tools make content creation easy—but accessibility still depends on how you use them.



User Focus: Learners who navigate with screen readers or keyboards need meaningful labels, clear link context, and structured markup to interact effectively with content.

Implementation Guidelines:

- **Use descriptive link text**

Avoid “click here.” Describe what the link does or where it goes.
(WCAG 2.4.4 Link Purpose)

- **Add ARIA labels and captions using HTML edits**

To enhance accessibility in WYSIWYG editors, you can manually edit the HTML to add semantic elements like `<aria-label>` attributes for links, buttons, or other interactive components that need more context. Similarly, to improve the accessibility of data tables, insert a `<caption>` tag within the `<table>` element. These additions help screen reader users better understand the purpose and structure of your content.

- **Avoid nesting non-semantic elements in structured content**

For example, don’t insert `<hr>` tags into lists.

Quick tips:

- When linking to a PDF or downloadable file, mention the file type and size (e.g., “Download Accessibility Checklist (PDF, 1.2MB)”).
- Keep link text unique—even repeated links like “Learn more” should be differentiated by context.
- If you duplicate blocks or pages, double-check that all labels and headings still make sense.

Resources & Support



- [Thought Industries Accessibility Statement](#)
- [WCAG 2.2 Guidelines \(W3C\)](#)



Questions or Need Help?

Email accessibility@thoughtindustries.com

