

Website Accessibility Statement

We are continuously working to improve the accessibility of content on our website. Below, you'll find a few recommendations to help make your browsing experience more accessible.

1. Use Your Computer to Read Web Pages Out Loud

You can use a free browser plug-in called BrowseAloud to listen to the web pages. This plug-in is provided to you at no cost. BrowseAloud helps people who may find it difficult to read text online, those who may have literacy problems, or those with learning disabilities such as dyslexia. It is also a beneficial tool for those for whom English is a second language. BrowseAloud reads the words on any web page through your computer speakers and highlights words as they are spoken. You can turn BrowseAloud on and off with a click of the Ctrl key on your keyboard. You can also customize the voice, pitch, and speed of the reader to suit their needs. You must download and install the BrowseAloud plug-in before using it.

2. Use the Keyboard to Navigate Screens

Most applications contain hotkeys to improve navigation and provide information. On many screens there is a continue button that allows you to go to the next page or a previous button to return to the prior page. Other keyboard commands, hotkeys or access keys will vary based upon your type and version of browser. You will find a list of these commands in the Help section of your browser. Locate the Help feature on the Menu bar of your browser or by using your keyboard F1 function key. Use these common keyboard commands to navigate web pages without a mouse. Some keystrokes may not work with every Internet browser.

3. Increase Text Size

With almost all modern web browsers you can hold down the Ctrl key (Command key on a Macintosh) and press the + (plus) key to increase text size or - (minus) key to reduce text size. You will find step-by-step instructions on how to increase the size of the text in the Help section of your browser.

4. Magnify Your Screen

If enlarging the text is not enough to make the page easily readable, the next step is to magnify your screen. Recent versions of Windows include magnification software, which will allow you to increase text to a very large size. The Windows magnifier is limited in its functionality, however, so many visually impaired users find they need a more sophisticated magnification software program such as Lunar, MAGic, Apple Magnification or ZoomText.

5. Change Background and Text Colors

Some website users have difficulty reading text on a web page because of the background or text colors, or because of the way colors contrast with each other. You will find step-by-step instructions on how to change background and text colors in the Help section of your browser.

6. Make Your Mouse Pointer More Visible (Windows Only)

The mouse pointer is sometimes hard to see. A Windows feature can help you locate it. (Some mouse drivers or software may not have this feature). Not all versions of Windows behave the same and you may need to refer to Windows help pages for further assistance. If you are looking for mouse and keyboard alternatives, speech recognition software such as Dragon Naturally Speaking may help you navigate web pages and online services. This software allows the user to move focus around a web page or application screen through voice controls.

If you are deaf or hard of hearing, there are several accessibility features available to you.

1. Closed Captioning

Closed captioning provides a transcript for the audio track of a video presentation that is synchronized with the video and audio tracks. Captions are generally visually displayed over the video, which benefits people who are deaf and hard of hearing, and anyone who cannot hear the audio due to noisy environments. Learn how to turn captioning on and off in YouTube.

2. Volume Controls

Your computer, tablet, or mobile device has volume control features. Each video and audio service has its own additional volume controls. Try adjusting both your device's volume controls and your media players' volume controls to optimize your listening experience.

If the recommendations above do not meet your needs, we invite you to contact our office for assistance.

If you have trouble seeing web pages, the US Social Security Administration at <https://www.ssa.gov/accessibility> offers additional tips for optimizing your computer and browser to improve your online experience.