

Creating Web Sites from the User's Perspective



Blindness	
Challenges	Solutions
Images, photos, graphics are unusable	Provide text descriptions, in the <code>alt</code> attribute and, if necessary, longer explanations (either on the same page or with a link to another page).
Users often listen to the Web pages	Create links that allow users to skip over navigational menus, long lists of items, ASCII art, and other things that might be difficult or tedious to listen to.
Users often jump from link to link using the TAB key	Make sure that links make sense out of context ("click here" is problematic).
Users generally do not use a mouse	Don't write scripts that require mouse usage. Supply keyboard alternatives (e.g. use <code>onFocus</code> instead of <code>onMouseover</code>).
It may be difficult for users to tell where they are when listening to data table cell contents	Provide column and row headers (<code><th></code>) for data tables. Avoid spanned rows or columns in data tables, if at all possible.
Complex data tables and graphs that are usually interpreted visually are unusable	Provide summaries and/or text descriptions, preferably on the same page, or link to another page as an alternative.
Frames cannot be "seen" all at once. They must be accessed separately, leading to disorientation.	Don't use frames unless you have to. If you use them, provide frame titles that communicate their purpose (e.g. "navigational frame", "main content").
Colors are unusable	Do not rely on color alone to convey meaning
Users expect links to take them somewhere	Don't write scripts in links that don't have true destinations associated with them (e.g. <code>href="javascript: function(this) "</code>)
Screen readers read Web content in the literal order that it appears in the code	Ensure that complex CSS or table layouts read correctly visually AND in the code.

Color Blindness	
Challenges	Solutions
Colors of similar contrast are often indistinguishable	Make sure that there is sufficient contrast. Don't use color alone to convey meaning (supplement the color with text, for example).

Low Vision	
Challenges	Solutions
Users often use screen enlargers	To reduce that amount of horizontal scrolling, use relative rather than absolute units (e.g., use percentages for table widths, instead of pixels)
Text in graphics does not enlarge without special software, and looks pixilated when enlarged	Limit or eliminate text within graphics. Use anti-aliasing to make text crisp and readable.

Deafness	
Challenges	Solutions
Audio is unusable	Provide transcripts for audio clips. Provide synchronous captioning for video clips

Motor Disabilities	
Challenges	Solutions
Users may not be able to use the mouse	Make sure that all functions are available from the keyboard (try tabbing from link to link). Make sure that the tab order is logical
Users may become fatigued when using adaptive technologies.	Provide a method for skipping over long lists of redundant links or other lengthy content.
Users may be using voice activated software	Voice activated software generally cannot replicate mouse movement as effectively as it can replicate keyboard usage, so make sure that all functions are available from the keyboard.

Cognitive Disabilities	
Challenges	Solutions
Users may become confused at complex layouts or inconsistent navigational schemes.	Simplify the layout as much as possible. Keep the navigational schemes as consistent as possible
Users may have difficulty focusing on or comprehending lengthy sections of text	Where appropriate, group textual information under logical headings. Organize information in manageable "chunks."
One method of input may not be sufficient	Where appropriate, supplement text with illustrations or other media, and vice versa.