

# Introduction to Accessible Content Creation



# Content creation requires visual design, well-written copy, and structure.

## Ownership of accessibility by DEI teams corresponds with more proactive approaches.

Respondents at organizations where DEI teams own digital accessibility tend to approach digital accessibility more proactively than those at other organizations: 32% of professionals who say their organizations start addressing accessibility in planning report that accessibility is owned by DEI teams. That's compared to 25% when it's owned by technology teams and 24% when accessibility is owned by legal / compliance teams.

Meanwhile, respondents at organizations where accountability sits within technology teams are more likely to address accessibility later in the digital experience creation life cycle—in development or quality assurance (QA).

This may indicate that when accessibility is approached as part of a broader effort to advance inclusion, teams are more inclined to be proactive than when they treat it as a purely technical or legal problem. We explore how organizations are adopting proactive accessibility, and the benefits of this approach, in more depth, in the section of this report titled, "Organizations are approaching accessibility more proactively and embracing automation."

## Organizations that assign accessibility ownership to DEI teams address accessibility earlier than those that assign ownership to technical or legal teams.

	When an organization begins addressing digital accessibility during the digital experience creation life cycle			
Team accountable for digital accessibility	Planning	Design	Development	QA
DEI	31.6%	23.1%	22.5%	21.2%
Technology	25.2%	21.7%	39.0%	30.8%
Legal / compliance	24.2%	26.3%	23.5%	22.1%
Other department	17.5%	22.2%	13.0%	21.2%
No accountable department	1.5%	6.7%	1.9%	4.8%

Notes: Percentage figures refer to the proportion of respondents who begin addressing digital accessibility during this stage of the digital experience creation life cycle.

## Forewords

### Foreword from G3ict and IAAP

We stand at a pivotal moment in the evolution of digital accessibility. According to the Sixth Annual State of Digital Accessibility Report, businesses continue to prioritize accessible digital experiences, showing sustained progress in organizational accessibility, and many are embracing AI tools to improve inclusion.

Whether this progress reflects a more profound recognition that access to the digital world is a fundamental human right, or whether it's being driven by legal entanglements remains unclear. But what is evident is that, as businesses increasingly adopt inclusive design practices and integrate innovative technologies, they open doors to millions of additional users and uphold their responsibility to provide equitable access.

This year's data also shows that now, more than ever, organizations are seeking AI and automated tools to accelerate progress. As technology continues to evolve, it is our responsibility as champions to embrace this evolution while ensuring we don't sacrifice quality—or ethical principles—as we aim to drive efficiency. We must be thoughtful in how we integrate AI and automation, aligning with ethical solution providers and keeping real users' experiences at the forefront of our efforts. Our latest research also underscores the need for human involvement to achieve lasting accessibility success: While technology can accelerate, technology alone will not replace what only trained experts can accomplish.

IAAP, a division of G3ict, is dedicated to this ethical cause, offering accessibility professional certifications to support organizations' inclusion needs. In 2024, we introduced the Disability Inclusion & Accessibility (DI&A) Program, a set of recommended criteria designed, maintained, and vetted by a disability steering committee to address the organizational needs around inclusion maturity.

As we look to the future, this expertise will become increasingly important. The deadline for compliance with the EAA in 2025 will provide the accessibility community with a significant new opportunity. This Act will necessitate an army of trained, certified accessibility professionals to tackle various challenges, including the added complexity introduced by the EAA. It's a time of growth and development for the accessibility field.

It's only through our collective efforts that we can shape a digital landscape that is both inclusive and transformative. Together, united in accessibility, we can make a significant difference in promoting digital inclusion and ethical practices.

## Headings and Subheadings

HTML elements provide information on structural hierarchy of a document. Using elements correctly will help convey additional meaning to assistive technology. In many cases, doing so will also make your document easier to edit.

For documents longer than three or four paragraphs, headings and subheadings are important for usability and accessibility. They help readers to determine the overall outline of a document and to navigate to specific information of interest.

Headings are classified into levels from one to six. The highest level is "Level 1" and often corresponds to the title of the page or major document section. Sub-headers proceed through increasing header levels.

Visual readers identify headers by scanning pages for text of a larger size or a different style. Assistive technology users are not able to see these visual changes, so changing the style is not a sufficient cue. Instead, the headings must be semantically "tagged" so that assistive technology can identify headings. This can be presented to the user as a navigation aid.

This makes adding headings one of the most important tools for a screen reader user so that he or she can learn what is on the page. Note that tagging usually triggers a formatting change visually which can be adjusted in many documents.

Adapted from [Headings and Subheadings at Penn State](#)

## Headings and Subheadings

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### Purpose of Headings

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### Heading Levels

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### Meaning vs. Formatting

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Adapted from [Headings and Subheadings at Penn State](#)

Visual design

Copy

Structure

Section 01

# Visual Design

# Contrast

## Section 01 | Visual Design

Trends for the spring!

Review Order

Submit

Trends for the spring!

Review Order

Submit

We have the same contrast ratio

We have the same contrast ratio

We have the same contrast ratio

We have the same contrast ratio

# Color reliance

Section 01 | Visual Design

## Color only

- Amanita
- Chanterelle
- Porcini
- Shiitake
- Tylopilus

## Labels

- Amanita (poisonous)
- Chanterelle
- Porcini
- Shiitake
- Tylopilus (poisonous)

## Icons

- Amanita 
- Chanterelle
- Porcini
- Shiitake
- Tylopilus 

## Headings

### Edible Mushrooms

- Chanterelle
- Porcini
- Shiitake

### Poisonous Mushrooms

- Amanita
- Tylopilus

## Headings and color

### Edible Mushrooms

- Chanterelle
- Porcini
- Shiitake

### Poisonous Mushrooms

- Amanita
- Tylopilus

# Visual differentiation

Section 01 | Visual Design

## Headings

Unparalleled expertise, unlimited support

Benefit from direct access to experts, who are always ready to help you navigate challenges. Our team includes celebrated leaders in accessible design, and we provide unlimited support.

## Button states

Default	<div>Add to Cart</div>	<b>Button color:</b> #F1A073C <b>Text color:</b> #FFFFFF <b>Contrast ratio:</b> 18.42
Hover	<div>Add to Cart</div>	<b>Button color:</b> #5B1FF4 <b>Text color:</b> #FFFFFF <b>Contrast ratio:</b> 7.12
Focus	<div>Add to Cart</div>	<b>Button color:</b> #5B1FF4 <b>Text color:</b> #FFFFFF <b>Contrast ratio:</b> 7.12

## Table column headers

Bedrooms	Studio	Apartment
1	11	20
2	0	43
3	0	13

# Text legibility

Section 01 | Visual Design

## Font type

This is Arial font.

This is Verdana font.

This is Times New Roman font.

This is a fancy font.

This is a thin font.

## Font size

This is 9pt font.

This is 12pt font.

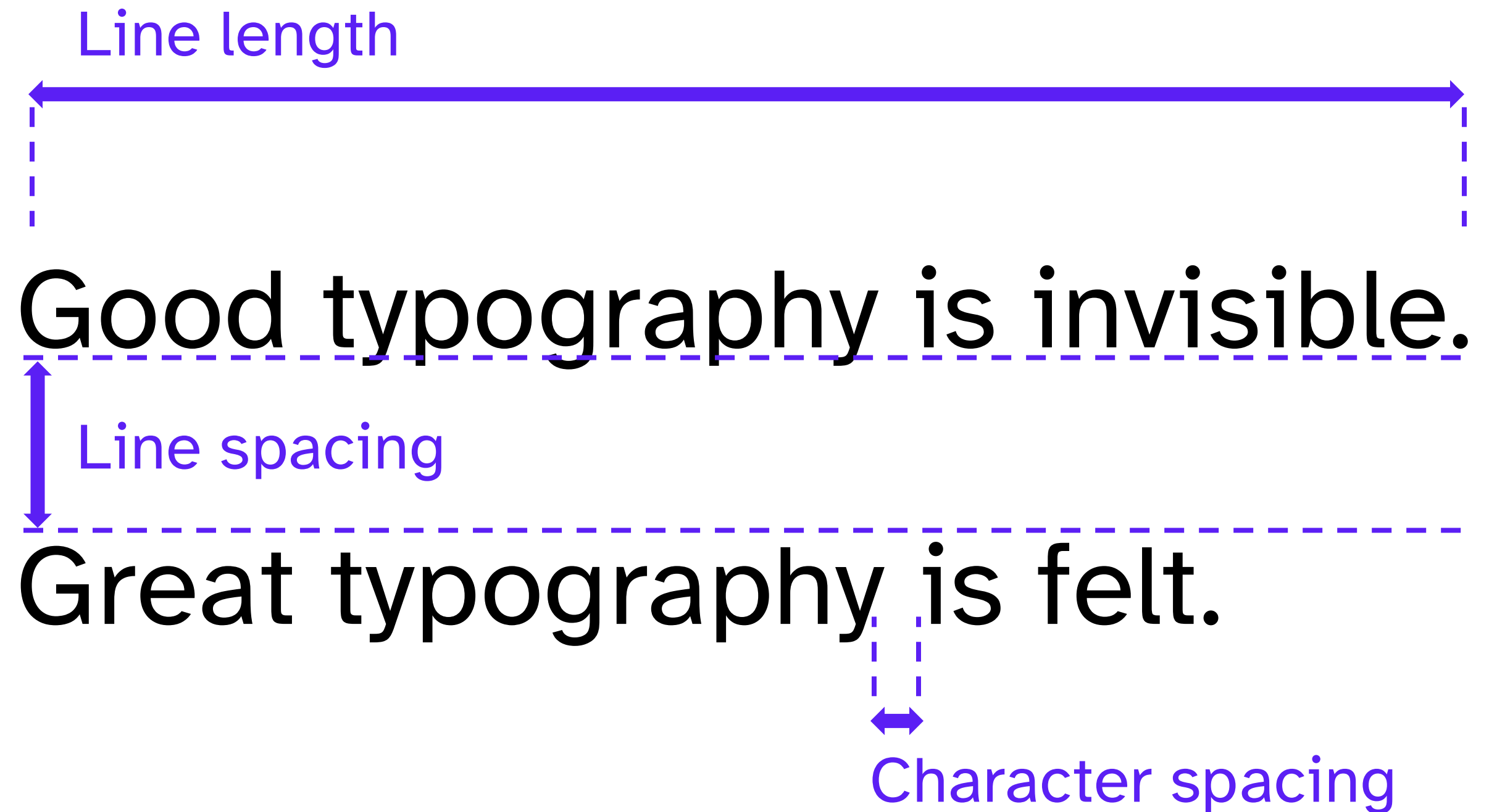
This is 14pt font.

This is 16pt font.

This is 20pt font.

# Text legibility continued

Section 01 | Visual Design



# Text legibility examples

Section 01 | Visual Design

## Line length



Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat.

## Line spacing



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Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis.

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis.

## Character spacing



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Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt.

# Text formatting

Section 01 | Visual Design

## Italics

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## Underline

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat. Maecenas eu luctus eros, a consequat neque. Donec ultrices ligula leo, at molestie ante ornare a. Etiam tincidunt sapien ut mi pulvinar, vitae mollis magna maximus.

## Bright colors

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat. Maecenas eu luctus eros, a consequat neque. Donec ultrices ligula leo, at molestie ante ornare a. Etiam tincidunt sapien ut mi pulvinar, vitae mollis magna maximus.

## All caps

LOREM IPSUM DOLOR SIT AMET, CONSECTETUR ADIPISCING ELIT. NUNC MALESUADA IPSUM EGET NUNC CONDIMENTUM MATTIS. SED ULLUMCORPER EST UT NIBH MOLLIS DICTUM. UT PRETIUM VEL JUSTO TINCIDENT. NAM ACCUMSAN EU DIAM FRINGILLA VOLUTPAT. MAESCNEA EU LUCTUS EROS, AT MOLESTIE ANTE ORNARE A. ETIUM TINCIDUNT SAPIEN UT MI PULVINAR, VITAE MOLLIS MAGNA MAXIMUS.

## Light text, dark

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat. Maecenas eu luctus eros, a consequat neque. Donec ultrices ligula leo, at molestie ante ornare a. Etiam tincidunt sapien ut mi pulvinar, vitae mollis magna maximus.

## Justified text

Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consectetur adipiscing elit. Nunc malesuada ipsum eget nunc condimentum mattis. Sed ullamcorper est ut nibh mollis dictum. Ut pretium vel justo et tincidunt. Nam accumsan eu diam fringilla volutpat. Maecenas eu luctus eros, a consequat neque. Donec ultrices ligula leo, at molestie ante ornare a. Etiam tincidunt sapien ut mi pulvinar, vitae mollis magna maximus.

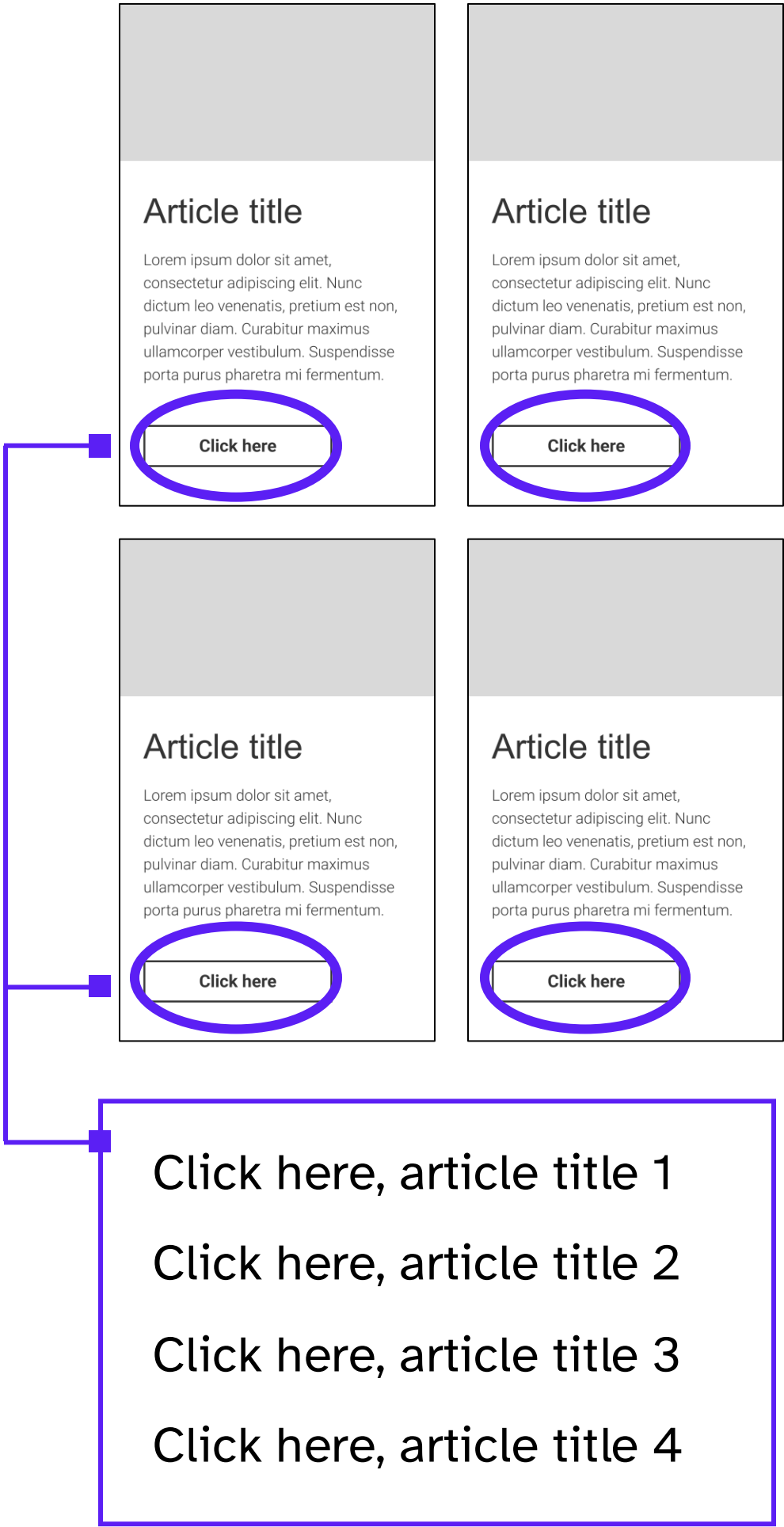
Section 02

**Copy**

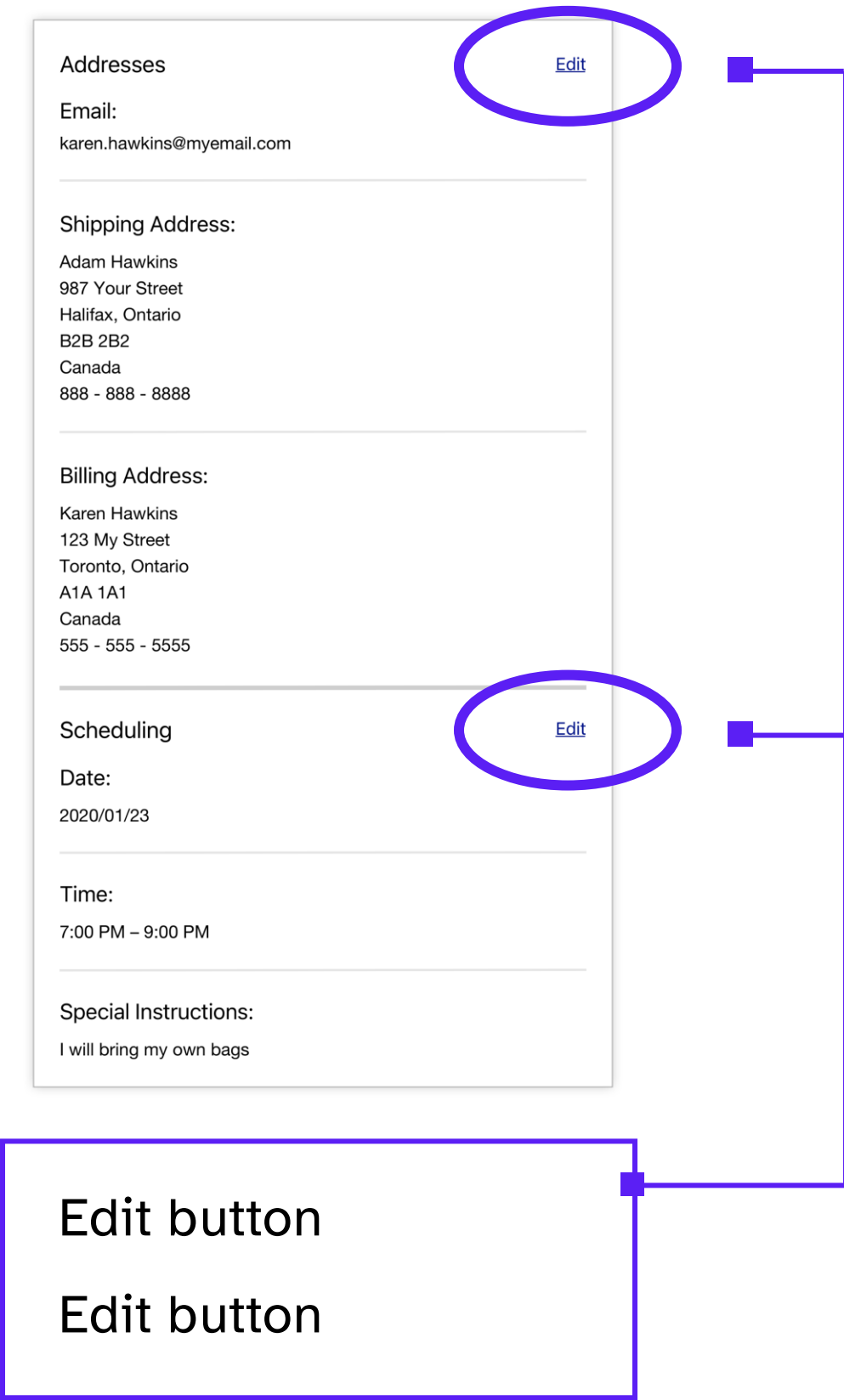
# Aim for uniqueness and differentiation

Section 02 | Copy

## Links



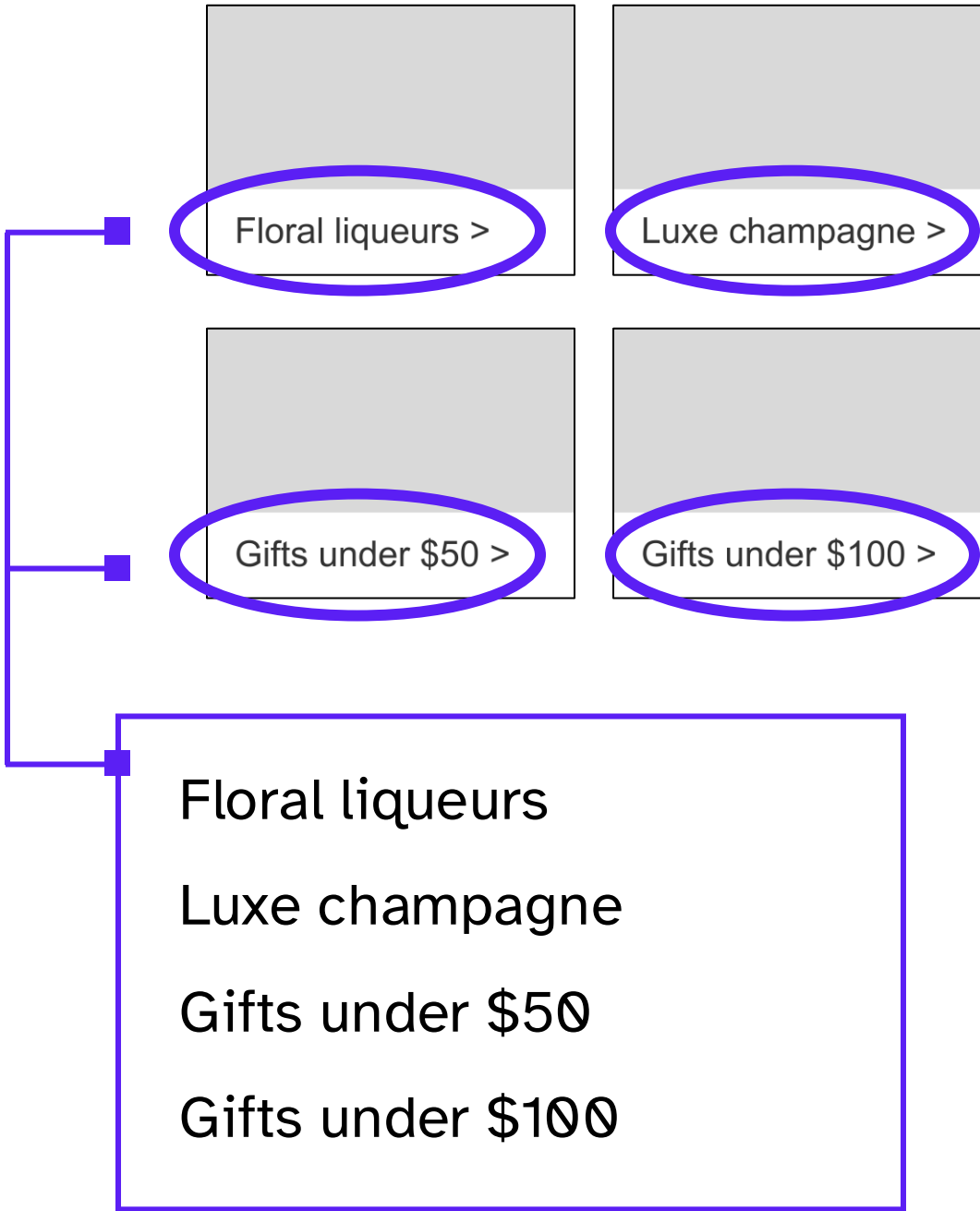
## Form controls



# Aim to be descriptive

Section 02 | Copy

## Links



# Aim to be specific and helpful

Section 02 | Copy

## Error message text

 BAD

First Name

⚠ This field has an error

 GOOD

First Name

⚠ Enter a first name

## Expected date format

 BAD

Date

DD/MM/YYYY

 GOOD

Date

Expected format: DD/MM/YYYY

## Words as a link

 BAD

Blog post about Hawaii

<https://www.pretend-travel-company.com/blog/Hawaii/>

 GOOD

[Blog post about Hawaii](#)

**Use proper sentence structure,  
spelling, and punctuation.**

They're important.

# Stay positive

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

- are not
- were not
- will not be



**Do**

- are
- were
- will be

# Use the active voice

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

The house was painted by Anna.



**Do**

Anna painted the house.

# Avoid slang and jargon

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

The populous legion of impecunious vagrants congregated near the basilica.



**Do**

The large crowd of poor unhoused people gathered near the old church.

# Define unusual words

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

...impecunious...



**Do**

...impecunious (having little  
or no money, usually  
habitually)...

# Expand abbreviations

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

...WCAG...



**Do**

...WCAG (Web Content  
Accessibility Guidelines)...

# Define pronunciations

Section 02 | Copy



**Don't**

...Acaí...



**Do**

...Acaí (ah-sigh-ee)...

# Aim for a specific reading grade level

Section 02 | Copy

## General

8th grade reading level  
(aim for 6th grade)

## Educated / specialized

12<sup>th</sup> grade reading level

# Keep it short and simple

Section 02 | Copy

## ■ Sentences ■

Aim for 20 words maximum

## ■ Paragraphs ■

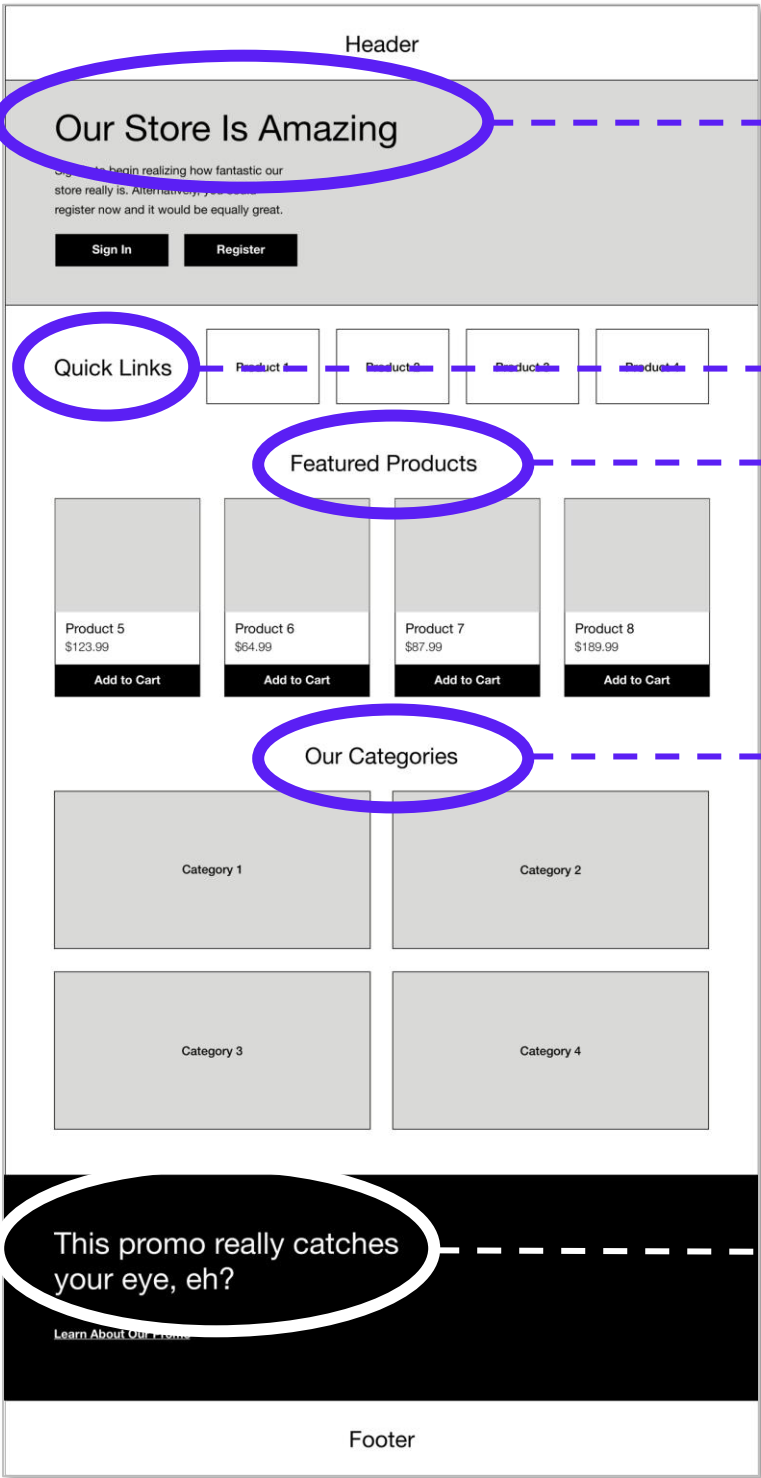
Aim for 5 to 7 sentences

Section 03

# Structure

# Nested headings

Section 03 | Structure



Our Store Is Amazing

H1: Our Store Is Amazing

Quick Links

H2: Quick Links

Featured Products

H2: Featured Products

Our Categories

H2: Our Categories

This promo really catches your eye, eh?

H2: This promo really...

# Titles

Section 03 | Structure

## Video Replay: How to Prepare for Title II

STEP 3 (continued)

Develop a plan to address accessibility gaps.

How will you evaluate third-party vendors for accessibility?

▪ Procurement language

▪ Vendor questionnaires

▪ Review of VPAT® reports

▪ Demonstrations of products with assistive technology

▪ Inclusion of accessibility questions in RFPs

▪ Procurement contracts that address accessibility

▪ Report back to the vendor

▪ Validation of vendor's updates

level

access

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23

## Availability of Holiday Accommodation in Paris

Bedrooms	Studio	Apartment	Chalet	Villa
1	11	20	25	23
2	0	43	52	32
3	0	13	15	40

# Lists

Section 03 | Structure

## Ingredients

6 egg whites, 6 whole eggs, 5 packets of Splenda, 1 ½ cups of quick oats, 1 cup of berries



## Ingredients

- 6 egg whites
- 6 whole eggs
- 5 packets of Splenda
- 1 ½ cups of quick oats
- 1 cup of berries

## Recipe

Crack the eggs into a bowl. Add the Splenda and mix. Add the remaining ingredients and mix. Fry in a frying pan, making 4 to 6 pancakes.



## Recipe

1. Crack the eggs into a bowl.
2. Add the Splenda and mix.
3. Add the remaining ingredients and mix.
4. Fry in a frying pan, making 4 to 6 pancakes.

# Thank you



# Appendix

# Contrast check resources

- [WebAIM's contrast checker](#)
- [WebAIM's link contrast checker](#)
- [WebAIM's contrast checker bookmarklet](#)
- [Contrast Analyser](#)
- [Color Review](#)
- [Tanaguru Contrast Finder](#)
- [Color & Contrast Picker](#)
- [Color contrast checker from polypane](#)
- [Accessible-colors.com](#)
- [Who can use this color combination?](#)
- [Colorable](#)
- [Contrast of text on an image](#)

# Editing resources

- [Editoria11y](#)
- [Hemmingway editor](#)
- [Sa11y](#)

# Figma plugins

- [Stark Contrast & Accessibility Tools](#)
- [Adee Comprehensive Accessibility Tool](#)
- [CVS Health Web Accessibility Annotation Kit](#)
- [Indeed Accessibility Annotation Kit](#)
- [Include Accessibility Annotations](#)
- [Intopia Accessibility Annotation Kit](#)
- [Microsoft Accessible Design Toolkit](#)
- [IBM Accessibility Design Kit](#)