

Website Accessibility Audit Checklist: 30 Checks for WCAG 2.2 AA

Mark each check Pass, Fail or Not sure. Fix the Fails in order, worst first. The checks are sorted by how often they fail on real websites, so the first six catch most problems.

You need four free tools: the WAVE browser extension, the WebAIM Contrast Checker, a screen reader (NVDA on Windows or VoiceOver on Mac), and your own keyboard. Checks marked with a WCAG number point to the rule they test.

Run this checklist on your homepage, your contact page and every page where a customer books, orders or pays.

A. The six problems that cause most errors on the web

1. Color contrast passes.

Text has to stand out from its background, or people with weak eyesight cannot read it. Normal text needs a contrast ratio of at least 4.5:1, and large text needs 3:1. To test it, paste the text color and the background color into the WebAIM Contrast Checker.

WCAG 1.4.3

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

2. Every informative image has alt text.

Alt text is the short description a screen reader speaks instead of showing the picture. "Three tacos on a plate" tells a blind visitor what is there, and "image1" tells them nothing. To test it, run WAVE and read every alt text it shows you.

WCAG 1.1.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

3. Decorative images have empty alt text.

A line, a shape or a background photo carries no information, so a screen reader should skip it. The code for this is alt="". To test it, run WAVE and look for the grey icons that mark these images.

WCAG 1.1.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

4. Every form field has a form label joined to it.

The label is the word next to the box, such as "Email". If the label is not joined to the field, a screen reader says "edit text, blank" and the visitor has to guess. To test it, click the label text and see whether the cursor jumps into the field.

WCAG 1.3.1, 3.3.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

5. No empty links.

A link that holds only an icon, such as a Facebook logo, needs a name like "Visit us on Facebook". Without a name, a screen reader says only "link". To test it, run WAVE and look for "empty link".

WCAG 2.4.4

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

6. No empty buttons.

The menu button, the search button and the close button all need a name. Without one, a screen reader says only “button”. To test it, run WAVE and look for “empty button”.

WCAG 4.1.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

7. The language attribute matches the language on the page.

A screen reader uses this setting to pronounce words correctly. A Spanish page must say es, not en. To test it, right click the page, choose View page source, and read the lang value in the first line.

WCAG 3.1.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

B. Heading structure and navigation

8. The page has one H1, and the headings go in order.

The page title is the H1, big sections are H2, and the parts inside them are H3. Screen reader users jump through a page by its headings, so a page without them has no map. To test it, run WAVE and open the Structure tab.

WCAG 1.3.1, 2.4.6

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

9. A skip link appears on the first Tab press.

The skip link lets keyboard users jump past the menu straight to the content. To test it, click in the address bar, press Tab once, and look for the link at the top left of the page.

WCAG 2.4.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

10. Every link says where it goes.

“Book a table” tells the visitor what will happen, and “Click here” does not. To test it, run WAVE, open the list of links, and read them one by one.

WCAG 2.4.4

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

C. Keyboard access and focus (a scanner cannot test these)

11. Everything works with the keyboard alone.

Many people cannot use a mouse. To test it, put the mouse away and press Tab again and again until every link, button and field has had its turn.

WCAG 2.1.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

12. Focus is visible.

As you press Tab, an outline should show which element is selected. Many themes remove this outline, which leaves keyboard users lost. To test it, press Tab through the page and watch for the outline on every element.

WCAG 2.4.7

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

13. There are no keyboard traps, and Escape closes popups.

A keyboard trap is a menu or popup you can get into but not out of. To test it, Tab into every menu and popup, Tab out again, and press Escape on every popup.

WCAG 2.1.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

14. Focus is never hidden behind a sticky element.

A sticky header, a cookie banner or a chat bubble must not cover the focused element. To test it, Tab down a long page and watch whether the outline disappears behind anything.

WCAG 2.4.11, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

15. Menus and dropdowns open with the keyboard.

Enter or Space should open them, the arrow keys should move inside them, and Escape should close them. To test it, Tab to each menu and try those keys.

WCAG 2.1.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

16. Nothing works only by dragging.

A slider or a map must also work with clicks or with keys. To test it, try each dragging feature with the keyboard.

WCAG 2.5.7, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

17. Targets are big enough to hit.

Buttons and links need to be at least 24 by 24 pixels, or have clear space around them. To test it, right click a small button, choose Inspect, and read its size.

WCAG 2.5.8, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

D. Forms

18. Required fields are marked with text, not only with color.

A red border means nothing to someone who cannot see red. Write "required", or use a star and explain what the star means. To test it, look at every form on the site.

WCAG 1.4.1, 3.3.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

19. Error messages name the field and say how to fix it.

"Please enter your email address" helps, and "Error" does not. To test it, submit an empty form and read the messages. Then turn on a screen reader and check that it reads them too.

WCAG 3.3.1, 3.3.3

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

20. Nobody has to type the same information twice.

If a visitor typed their address on step 1, step 2 should not ask for it again. To test it, go through your checkout or booking flow from start to finish.

WCAG 3.3.7, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

21. Logging in does not need a puzzle.

A picture puzzle locks out people who cannot see it, and blocking password managers locks out people who rely on them. To test it, log in as a visitor would.

WCAG 3.3.8, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

22. Help is in the same place on every page.

The phone number, the chat button and the contact link should sit in the same spot across the site. To test it, open five pages and compare.

WCAG 3.2.6, new in 2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

E. Video, audio and motion

23. Every video has captions.

Captions let deaf visitors follow the video. Auto captions are a start, but someone has to check them for mistakes. To test it, play each video with the sound off.

WCAG 1.2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

24. Every video and audio file has a transcript.

A transcript is the written version, placed on the page or one click away. To test it, look under each video and audio player.

WCAG 1.2.1, 1.2.3

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

25. Carousels and sliders can be paused.

Anything that moves by itself for more than 5 seconds needs a pause button. To test it, load the page and look for the button.

WCAG 2.2.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

26. Nothing plays sound on its own.

A video or a music track that starts by itself drowns out a screen reader. To test it, load each page with the sound on.

WCAG 1.4.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

F. Screen reader testing and hidden places

27. The page makes sense through a screen reader.

NVDA is free on Windows, and VoiceOver is built into every Mac. To test it, turn one on, close your eyes, and listen to the homepage and the main form.

WCAG 1.3.2

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

28. Every PDF is a tagged PDF.

Tags are what let a screen reader read a PDF, and a scanned picture of a menu has none. To test it, open the PDF in Acrobat and look for Tags, or run the free PAC checker. If the PDF fails, publish the content as a web page instead.

WCAG 1.1.1, 1.3.1

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

29. Third party widgets pass the keyboard checks.

Chat boxes, booking tools, maps and payment forms come from outside, but they are still part of your site. To test it, run checks 11 to 13 on each one.

Process

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

30. There are no forgotten pages or files.

Old PDFs and test pages stay online long after everyone forgets them, and Google still finds them. To test it, search Google for site:yourdomain.com and open every result.

Process

☐ Pass ☐ Fail ☐ Not sure Notes _____

Found more Fails than you expected? NexoBee audits websites by hand, with a code fix for every finding. Start with a \$249 Snapshot of your three most important pages at nexobee.com/services/accessibility-audit, or read the full guide at nexobee.com/accessibility-audit-checklist.

This checklist covers the most common WCAG 2.2 AA problems on small business websites. Passing every check lowers your risk, but it is not a legal guarantee. Last reviewed October 2026. NexoBee, nexobee.com.