Microsoft Word: ADA Accessibility for Documents

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How to Prepare Word Documents for ADA Accessibility

To ensure accessibility for all users, follow these steps when preparing Word documents for sharing or uploading to OwlMed or Canvas.

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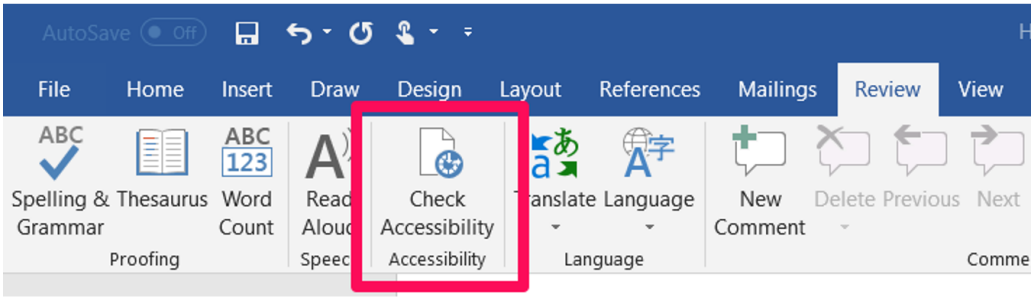
1. Use Microsoft Word Accessibility Tools

- Open your document in Word.
- Go to **Review > Check Accessibility**.



- Fix any issues flagged, such as:
  - Missing alt text for images
  - Improper heading structure
  - Missing table headers
  - Non-descriptive link text

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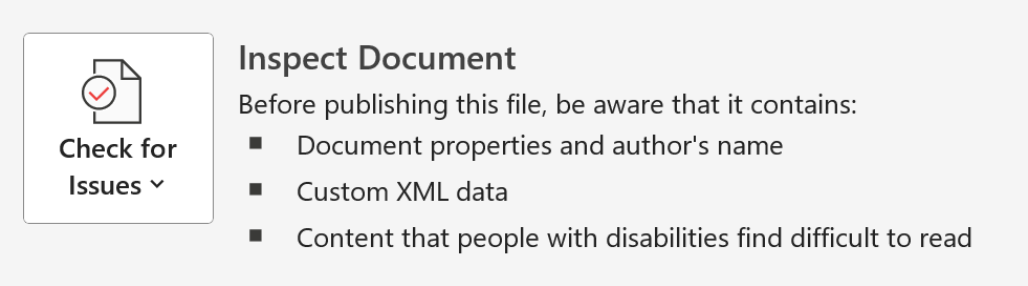
2. Clean the Document

- Go to **File > Info > Check for Issues > Inspect Document**.
- Remove hidden comments, metadata, and personal information.



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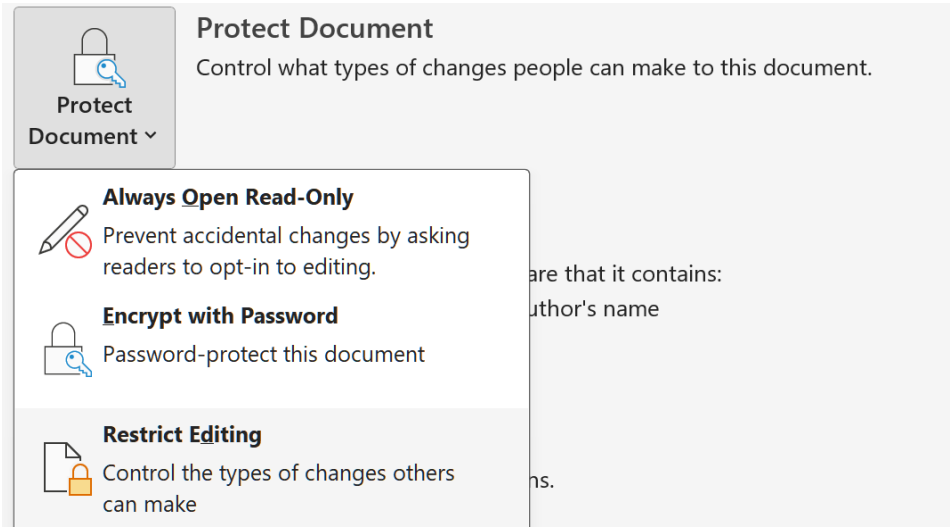
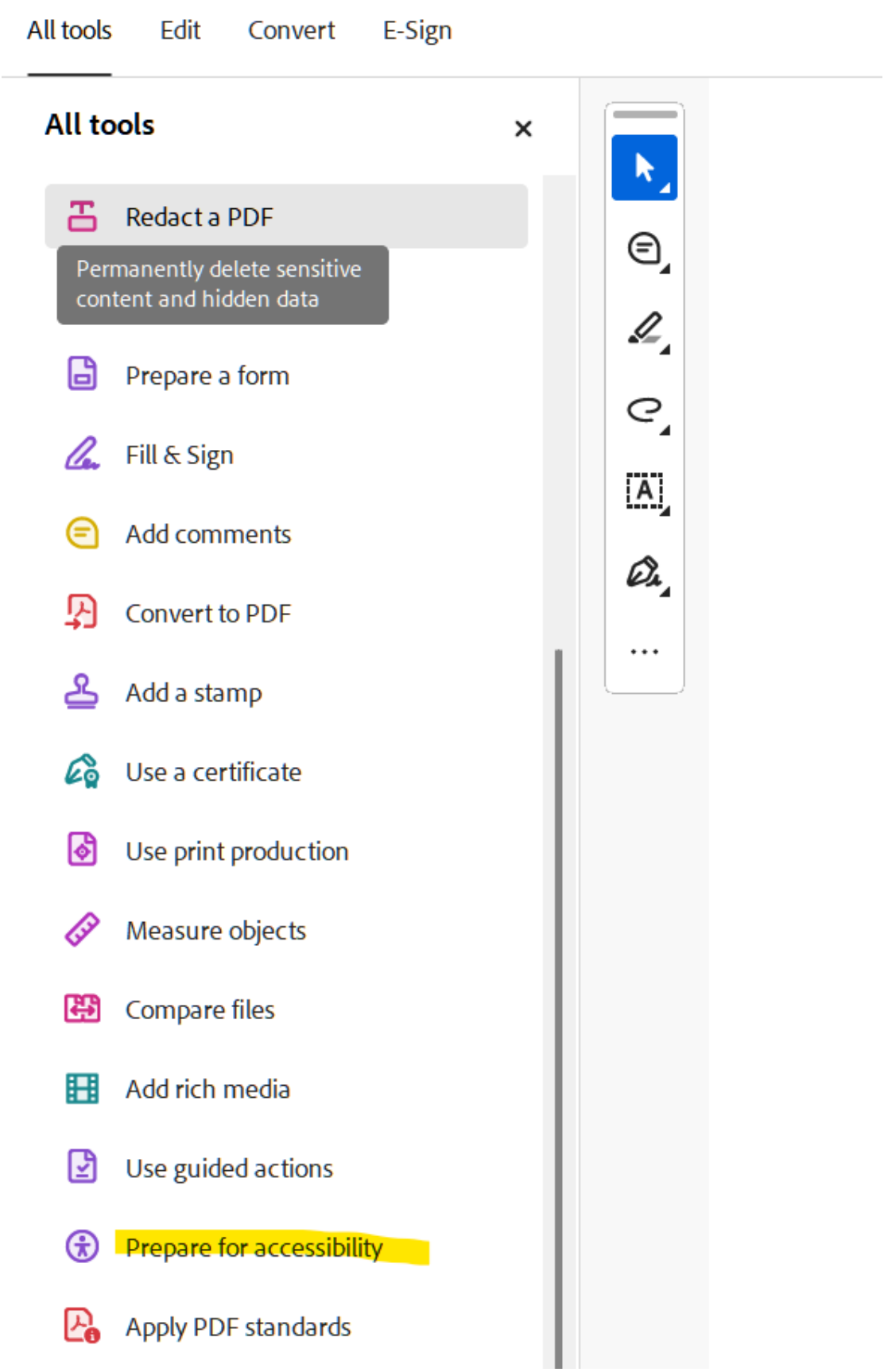
3. Save and Share Options

Option A: Upload Word Document

- Keep the file in **.docx** format.
- Ensure Accessibility Checker issues are resolved.
- Optional: Use **Restrict Editing** to prevent changes:
  - Go to **File--> Info --> Restrict Editing**
  - Select **"No changes (Read only)"**
  - Click **"Yes, Start Enforcing Protection"**
  - 

Option B: Save as Accessible PDF

- Use **File > Save As > PDF** (not Print to PDF).
- Open the PDF in **Adobe Acrobat Pro**
- Go to **All Tools --> View More --> Prepare for Accessibility**
- Follow the prompts to
  - Add a document title
  - Tag the document

    - Identify scanned content
    - Add alt text
- Then run the **Accessibility Checker** from the left panel to verify compliance.
- Review the report and fix any remaining issues.