

# To Use Alt(ernative) Text or Not to Use Alt(ernative) Text for Images

## How to Write More Meaningful Alt Text

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<https://tinyurl.com/alt-text-glam>

# Overview

Background

Types of Images

- Informative
- Decorative

Examples of Images from Websites

Resources

# Background

## Web Content Accessibility Guidelines - WCAG 2.1

### 1. Perceivable

#### 1. Guideline – Text Alternatives

##### 1. Non-text Content - Level A

# Web Content Accessibility Guidelines - WCAG 2.1

## 1. Perceivable

Information and user interface components must be presentable to users in ways they can perceive.

### Guideline 1.1 – Text Alternatives

Provide text alternatives for any non-text content so that it can be changed into other forms people need, such as large print, braille, speech, symbols or simpler language.

#### 1.1.1 Non-text Content - Level A

All non-text content that is presented to the user has a text alternative that serves the equivalent purpose....

# What is alt Text?

Used to describe an image

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# Questions to Consider

Why are you using the image?

What are you trying to communicate with it?

# Types of Images

Informative

Decorative

Functional

Images of Text

Complex Images - [Food Security Status of U.S. Households in 2020](#)

Image Maps - [Canada Province Example](#)

# Informative Images



Aerial view of Lost Lake in the Adirondack Mountains



# Informative Image



A duck standing on a rock that is sticking out of the water

# Decorative Images



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## Decorative Image

# The Book With No Pictures

**B.J. Novak**

The Book With No Pictures  
By B.J. Novak

This is a great book that will help you in thinking about the importance of using words to communicate your message without the use of pictures.

# Decorative Image

The Book With No Pictures  
By B.J. Novak

This is a great book that will help you in thinking about the importance of using words to communicate your message without the use of pictures.

## Example 1

alt="two student in the makerspace lab using a 3D printer"

# Example 1 with Image and Content



alt="two student in the makerspace lab using a 3D printer"

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## Example 2

alt="parents"

# Example 2 with Image and Content

And asking for help is the first step in supporting your loved one's journey to health.



alt="parents"

## **Parents: it's a challenge you can meet head on**

Hearing that your child or loved one has diabetes can be a shock. But after that shock wears off....



## Example 3

alt="by anmakn, on Flickr"

# Example 3 with Image and Content

If you want more specific research help or you have a question (simple or complex) please email me at...



alt="by anmakn, on Flickr"

"Untitled" (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0) by anmakn

# Summary

Alt Text is required even if it has an empty value

Use a short phrase to describe an image

Context is important

## Avoid

- Image of
- One word descriptions

## Do Add

- Purpose
- Location

# Resources

WCAG Guidelines - <https://www.w3.org/WAI/standards-guidelines/wcag/>

How to Meet WCAG (Quick Reference) - <https://www.w3.org/WAI/WCAG21/quickref/>

WebAim Alternative Text - <https://webaim.org/techniques/alttext/>

Deque University - <https://dequeuniversity.com>