Website Accessibility: How to Design a Site Everyone Can Use

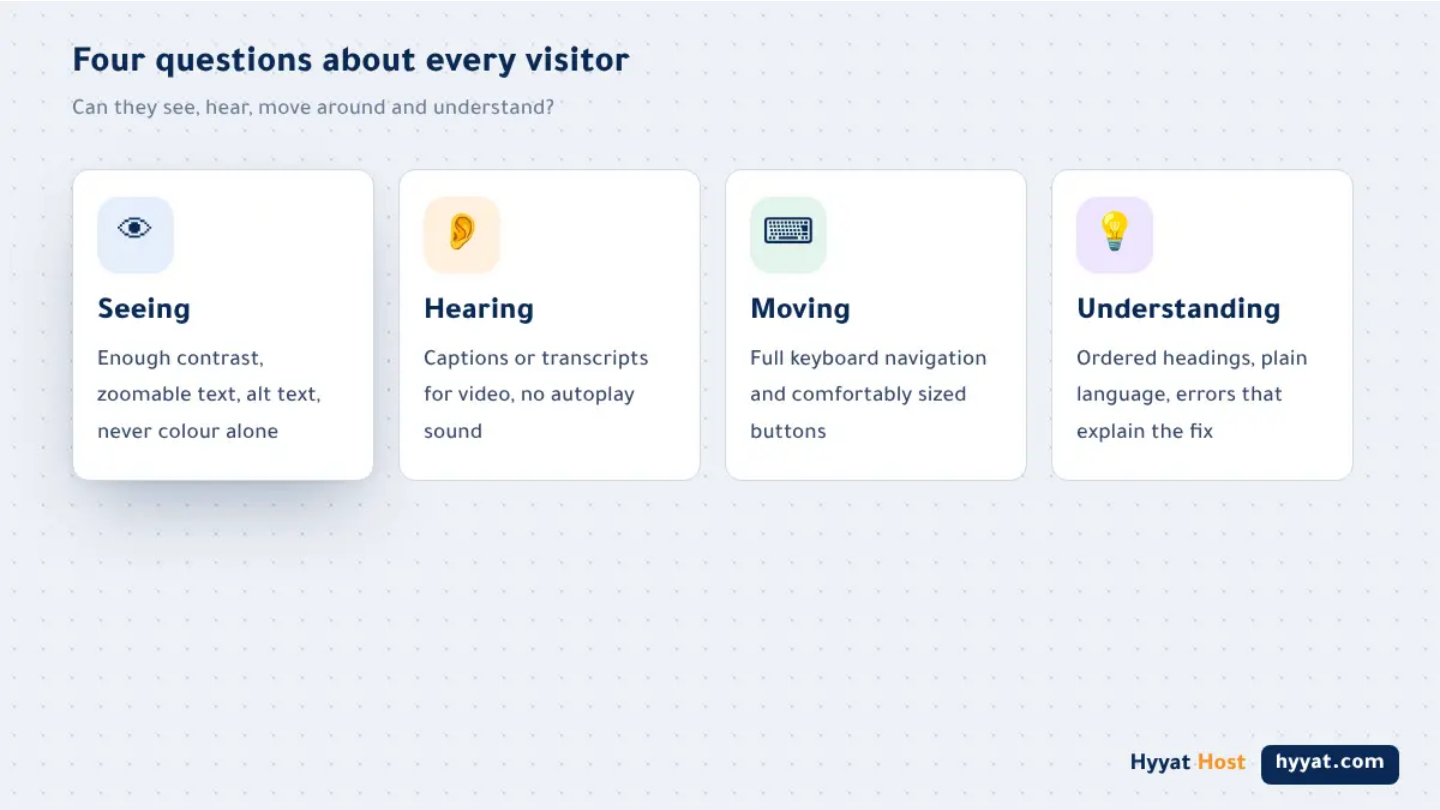
Programming and design · https://www.hyyat.com/en/knowledgebase/website-accessibility/

In short Accessibility means **everyone** can use your site: people who struggle to read, people who cannot tell some colours apart, screen-reader users, people who do not use a mouse, and older visitors. Most of it comes down to simple design decisions: **enough contrast, readable type, alt text on images, keyboard navigation and clear forms**. The result is a site that is easier for everyone, not for one group only.

Embedded media: https://www.hyyat.com/wp-content/uploads/2026/11/hyyat-ds-a11y-en.mp4?_=1

When we design a website, we usually picture a visitor with good eyesight, a new phone and nimble fingers. Your real visitors are far more varied: a parent who enlarges the text to read, a colleague who cannot tell red from green, a blind person browsing with a screen reader, and someone with a broken arm navigating by keyboard.

Accessibility is designing the site so all of them can use it. The best part is that what helps them helps everyone: clear text is easier for all, and large buttons are easier on mobile for all. There are well-known international guidelines for this field called WCAG; here we summarise what matters most for company websites.



1) Contrast between text and background

Light grey text on white looks elegant in a mockup but is hard for many people to read, especially in sunlight on a phone. The guidelines set a minimum contrast ratio between text and background, and free tools measure it from the two colours. Keep body text clearly dark on light backgrounds.

2) Do not rely on colour alone

A field marked as an error only with a red border goes unnoticed by someone who cannot see red. Always add a second cue: an icon, text explaining the error, or an underline on links rather than just a different colour.

3) Type and size

A readable font at a comfortable size, which can be enlarged in the browser without elements overlapping or disappearing. Do not disable zoom on mobile in the page settings; some visitors need it to read.

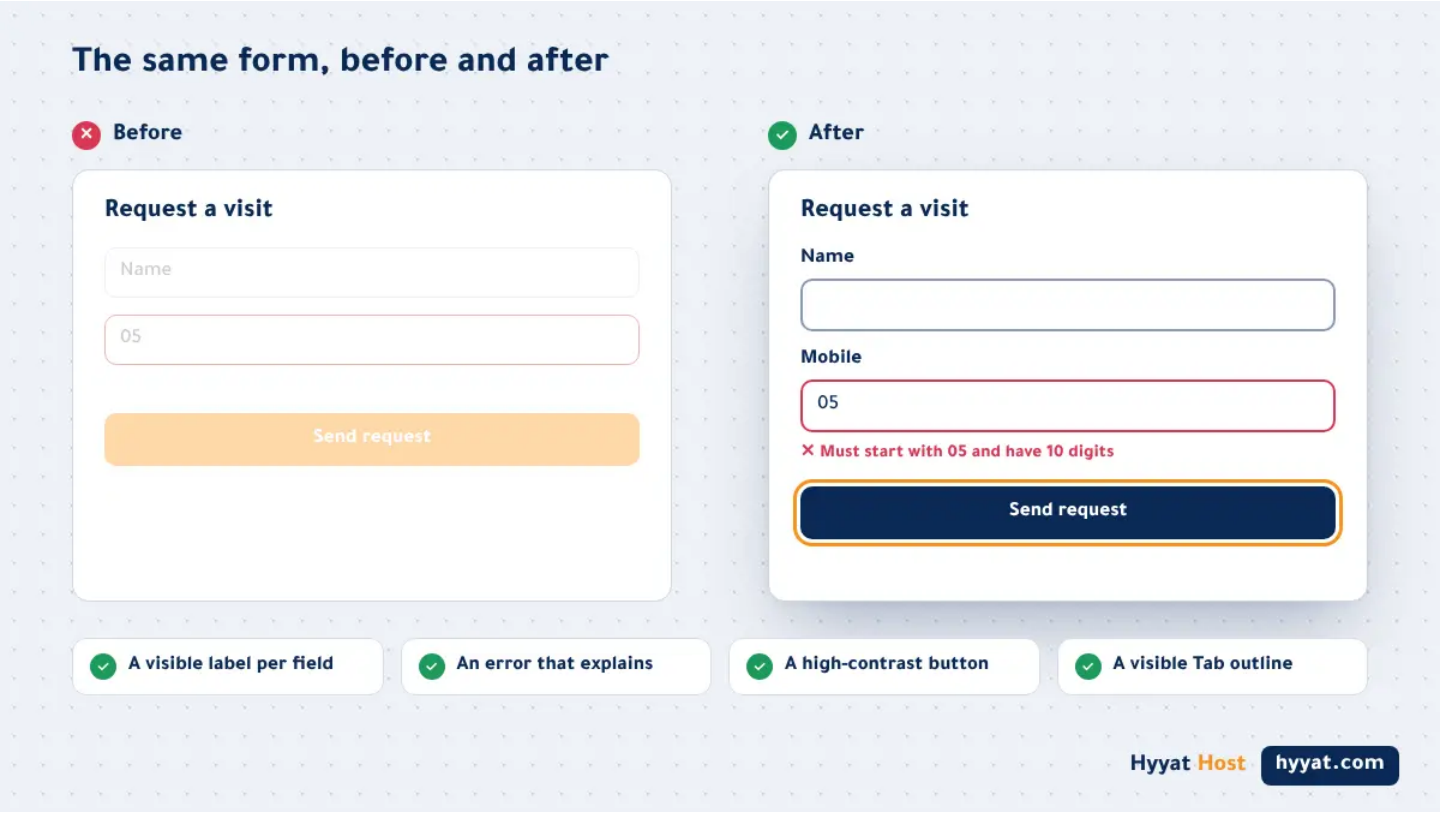
4) Alt text for images

A screen reader cannot see an image; it reads the **alt text** you write for it. Write a short description of what the image shows and why it is on the page: "The maintenance team installing an air conditioner in an office" beats "image1". Decorative images that carry no information get empty alt text so the reader skips them. In WordPress, alt text is set for each image in the media library.

Rule of thumb: Ask: if the image disappeared, what meaning would the visitor lose? That is what goes in the alt text.

5) Keyboard navigation

Try browsing your site with the Tab key alone. Do you move between links and buttons in a logical order? Can you see where you are? Many designs hide the outline around the focused element because it "does not look nice", leaving keyboard users lost. Design that outline instead of removing it.



6) Clear forms

- **A visible label for every field**, not placeholder text that disappears when typing.
- **An error message that explains the problem** beside the field: "Mobile number must start with 05" beats "Invalid input".
- **No short time limits** that wipe what the visitor typed.
- **Bot checks** that do not lock out humans, as in protecting your contact form from spam.

7) Headings and page structure

Screen readers let users jump between headings to understand a page, just as you scan it with your eyes. So use real, ordered headings: one main heading per page, then subheadings beneath it, not large bold text that merely looks like a heading. And link text should describe its destination: "Read the returns policy" is clearer than "Click here".

8) Video and motion

- Captions or a transcript for any video with speech.
- No autoplaying sound.
- A pause button for any continuous motion or carousel.
- Avoid rapid flashing.

9) Arabic and accessibility

On Arabic sites, make sure the page language is set to Arabic in the code, so screen readers speak the text with an Arabic voice rather than an English one, and that the direction is correct as in Arabic website design. Alt text is written in the page's language.

How to check your own site

1. **Browse with Tab only** from the top of the page to the form, without a mouse.
2. **Zoom the browser to double size** and make sure the page is still readable and tidy.
3. **Measure contrast** with a free tool for your main text and button colours.
4. **Review alt text** for your most important images in the media library.

5. **Run an accessibility audit** built into browser developer tools, such as the Lighthouse report in Chrome.

Example: A clinic's booking button was white text on light orange, and its form fields had no visible labels. We darkened the button, added a label above each field and a clear error message, and the form became clearer for older patients and everyone else.

Accessibility in WordPress

- **Choose an accessibility-ready theme:** the WordPress theme directory lets you filter by the "Accessibility Ready" tag for themes reviewed against these criteria.
- **Write alt text when uploading:** easier than going back to hundreds of images later.
- **Use real heading blocks** in the editor, not paragraphs in large bold text.
- **Beware of magic fixes:** "accessibility button" plugins that overlay zoom and contrast tools on the site do not fix underlying design problems, such as missing alt text or field labels. The real fix is in the design itself.

If you are choosing a new theme, add this to the criteria in how to choose a WordPress theme.

Why companies care about accessibility

Beyond being the right thing to do, accessibility widens your audience to everyone who used to struggle with your site, improves the mobile experience for all, and overlaps with what search engines need to understand your pages: ordered headings, image alt text and clear links. In some countries and sectors it has also become a regulatory requirement for websites.

Summary

- Enough contrast, zoomable text, and never colour alone.
- Alt text on images, ordered headings, and links that describe their destination.
- Keyboard navigation, clear forms, and transcripts for video.

We build accessibility into every site we design as part of our website design service and WordPress website design.

Frequently asked questions

What does website accessibility mean?

Designing a site so everyone can use it, including people with visual or motor impairments, older visitors and screen-reader users.

What is image alt text?

A text description of an image that screen readers read aloud and that appears if the image fails to load. In WordPress it is set in the media library.

What are the WCAG guidelines?

International guidelines for web content accessibility, setting criteria such as contrast, alt text and keyboard navigation.

Does accessibility help ordinary visitors?

Yes. Clear text, large buttons and understandable forms make the site easier for everyone.

How can I check my site quickly?

Browse with Tab only, zoom the browser, measure contrast and run the Lighthouse report in Chrome.

Related guides

- Arabic Website Design, Right to Left: What Gets Mirrored and What Does Not
- Responsive Website Design: How It Works and How to Check Your Site Is Truly Mobile-Friendly
- UI vs UX: User Interface and User Experience Explained With Company Website Examples
- How to Protect Your Website Contact Form from Spam and Bots
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