*Text adapted from:*

<https://www.siteimprove.com/glossary/accessible-fonts/#:~:text=Top%20accessible%20fonts&text=The%20most%20accessible%20fonts%20are,rather%20than%20the%20body%20text>

**Kindly contributed to** [**www.skillsworkshop.org**](http://www.skillsworkshop.org) **by Stephanie Gilford, February 2022.**

This text accompanies the Essential Digital Skills ‘EDS Unit 2 (Creating & editing) with embedded English tasks’ PPT by Stephanie Gilford at

<https://www.skillsworkshop.org/resources/eds_unit_2_creating_editing_with_embedded_english_tasks>

**Questions:**

1. Read the article given to you by your teacher and answer the following questions.
2. Identify 2 headings that are used in the text about accessibility.
3. Identify 2 subheadings that are used in the text.
4. Define the word inclusive. What does it mean? (You can use a dictionary to help.)
5. In the following sentences, replace the highlighted words with a synonym that keeps the meaning of the sentence the same.

A. *To meet the principles of inclusive design, it’s* ***important*** *to pick a font that is simple, unembellished, and clear.*

B*. Make it difficult to* ***distinguish*** *between the shapes of different letters and characters.*

1. The text states that those with vision impairments need accessible fonts. In what other cases would people require accessible fonts?
2. Identify two of the most accessible fonts listed in the article
3. What are ‘imposter letter shapes’ that are mentioned in the article?

What are accessible fonts?

Not all fonts have been designed with web accessibility in mind. Size, colour, and contrast are the three key factors that determine whether a font is accessible.

To meet the principles of inclusive design, it’s important to pick a font that is simple, unembellished, and clear. One of the easiest ways to narrow down your options is by knowing what features to avoid in a font. Inaccessible fonts tend to have one or more of the following characteristics:

* Make content more difficult to read
* Make it difficult to distinguish between the shapes of different letters and characters
* Slow the reader down
* Make it hard to separate one letter from another with overlapping characters or letters
* Are decorative or include unnecessary embellishments
* Are display fonts, such as hand-writing style, custom, or cursive

Why are fonts important for web accessibility

Most of the web’s information – and the value your business offers – is communicated with text. With more than 32 million brits experiencing vision loss, you risk endangering your reputation and commercial success by ignoring this group’s website needs. This figure includes people who experience trouble seeing even when wearing corrective lenses or contacts. And that number will continue to swell as the population grows older and experiences more age and disease-related issues with their vision.

It’s not just people with visual disabilities who struggle to read certain fonts. People with learning difficulties like dyslexia can also be sensitive to certain typefaces. Your choice of font type can greatly impact their level of readability too. It’s worth noting that dyslexia affects up to 20% of the population.

By ensuring your website fonts are accessible, you can better reach this significant section of the population and safeguard your brand reputation as an organisation that takes inclusivity seriously.

Best fonts for web accessibility

Top accessible fonts

The good news is that you don’t need to invest in a specialist, custom font to make your website’s content accessible. Many standard and widely available fonts score highly for web accessibility. The most accessible fonts are Tahoma, Calibri, Helvetica, Arial, Verdana, and Times New Roman.

You may have heard that sans serif fonts are more accessible for screen reading. However, as the research is not conclusive either way as to whether serif or sans serif typefaces are more readable, the decision is up to you. For the best outcome, it’s recommended to pick common fonts or font families that have strong and unique characters.

Fonts to avoid

You should opt for more common fonts over less popular ones, to increase the likelihood of your website visitor’s device being able to correctly display it.

Avoid fonts featuring “imposter letter shapes” that are designed to be very similar to other letter shapes as part of their visual style, such uppercase Is, the number 1, and lowercase Ls.