

# Creating Accessible PDFs

A Guide by UCM Student Accessibility Services



## What is an accessible PDF?

An accessible PDF has searchable text, meaning that if you “ctrl f” (search for) a word in the document, the computer can find it. An accessible PDF also has selectable text, meaning that you can highlight each word in the document.

## How can I tell if a PDF is accessible?

To evaluate if a PDF is accessible, ask yourself the following questions:

- 1) Can I select or highlight the text in the document?
- 2) Can I have my device read the text aloud? (To check this, go to Adobe Reader’s **View** menu, activating **Read Out Loud**, then select either **Read this page only** or **Read to the end of the document** and listen to the document.)
- 3) If you scanned the document yourself, did you complete an **OCR** (Optical Character Recognition) or **Text Recognition** process?

If the answers to 1 and 2 (and 3, if you scanned the document yourself) are yes, then your document is accessible and requires no further action on your part. If the answer to 1 or 2 (or 3, if you scanned the document yourself) is no, your PDF is NOT accessible.

## How do I make a PDF accessible?

A PDF can be made accessible using Adobe Acrobat Pro’s OCR (Optical Character Recognition) feature.

To use this feature, follow these instructions:

- 1) Open your PDF in **Adobe Acrobat Pro** (If you do not have Adobe Acrobat Pro, you can request it from UCM IT [here](#))
- 2) Select the **Tools** tab on the left side of the screen
- 3) Select **Text Recognition**
- 4) Click **In this file**
- 5) Follow the on-screen prompts

## I’m having trouble using Adobe Acrobat. Who do I contact?

If you are having trouble using OCR in Adobe Acrobat, [this video](#) may help you out. The portion regarding OCR starts at 0:48 and ends at 1:57.

If you do not find the video to be useful, you can get further assistance using Adobe Acrobat to make PDF documents accessible by contacting UCM IT.

**Phone:** (209) 228-HELP (4357)

**Email:** [helpdesk@ucmerced.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ucmerced.edu)