# Talk To Me JAWS! 10 Tips To Make Documents More Screen Reader Friendly

**Elizabeth Whitaker**

Manager, User Education & Outreach

**Cori Perlander**

Manager, Sales Enablement

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# What You Will Learn

- What it means to have a usable document for a screen reader
- Top 10 practical tips from screen readers
- The impact
- JAWS Examples
- Resources

# Screen Reader Friendly Doc Means...

- **Equal Access to Information:** Ensures individuals using screen readers can perceive and understand the same content as everyone else.
- **Seamless Interaction:** Enables users to navigate, input data, and engage with digital documents without barriers.
- **Full and Independent Use:** Allows individuals with disabilities to utilize services without limitations, ensuring equal participation.

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# Top 10 Tips from Screen Readers

# 1 - Use Numbered and Bulleted Lists

- Logical, easy to understand and navigate.
- Screen readers can skip over lists, more efficient

SOLUTION:

- Use a numbered list to convey steps in a process or number of parts.
- Use a bulleted list to convey related items.

# Impact: Find The Ingredients

This is what a screen reader has to work with when there are no bulleted or numbered list.

recipe receipt item: apple pie ingredients: 6 cups sliced apples (granny smith) $5.00 1 cup granulated sugar $0.50 1 tsp cinnamon $0.10 1/4 tsp nutmeg $0.05 1 tbsp lemon juice $0.20 2 tbsp cornstarch $0.15 2 pie crusts (store-bought) $3.00 1 egg (for egg wash) $0.25 1 tbsp butter (cubed) $0.30 instructions: preheat oven to 375°f (190°c) mix apples, sugar, cinnamon, nutmeg, lemon juice, and cornstarch in a bowl roll out one pie crust and place in a 9-inch pie dish pour apple mixture into the crust and dot with butter cover with the second pie crust, seal edges, and cut slits on top brush with egg wash bake for 45-50 minutes until golden brown let cool before serving subtotal: $9.55 tax (8%): $0.76 total: $10.31 thank you for baking!

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# 2 - Apply  Headings Styles

- Signify titles and sections within a document.
- Crucial for screen reader users to navigate efficiently.
- Visually styled text without h tags will not be recognized as a heading by JAWS.

Solution

- To ensure proper recognition and readability, always use h tags.

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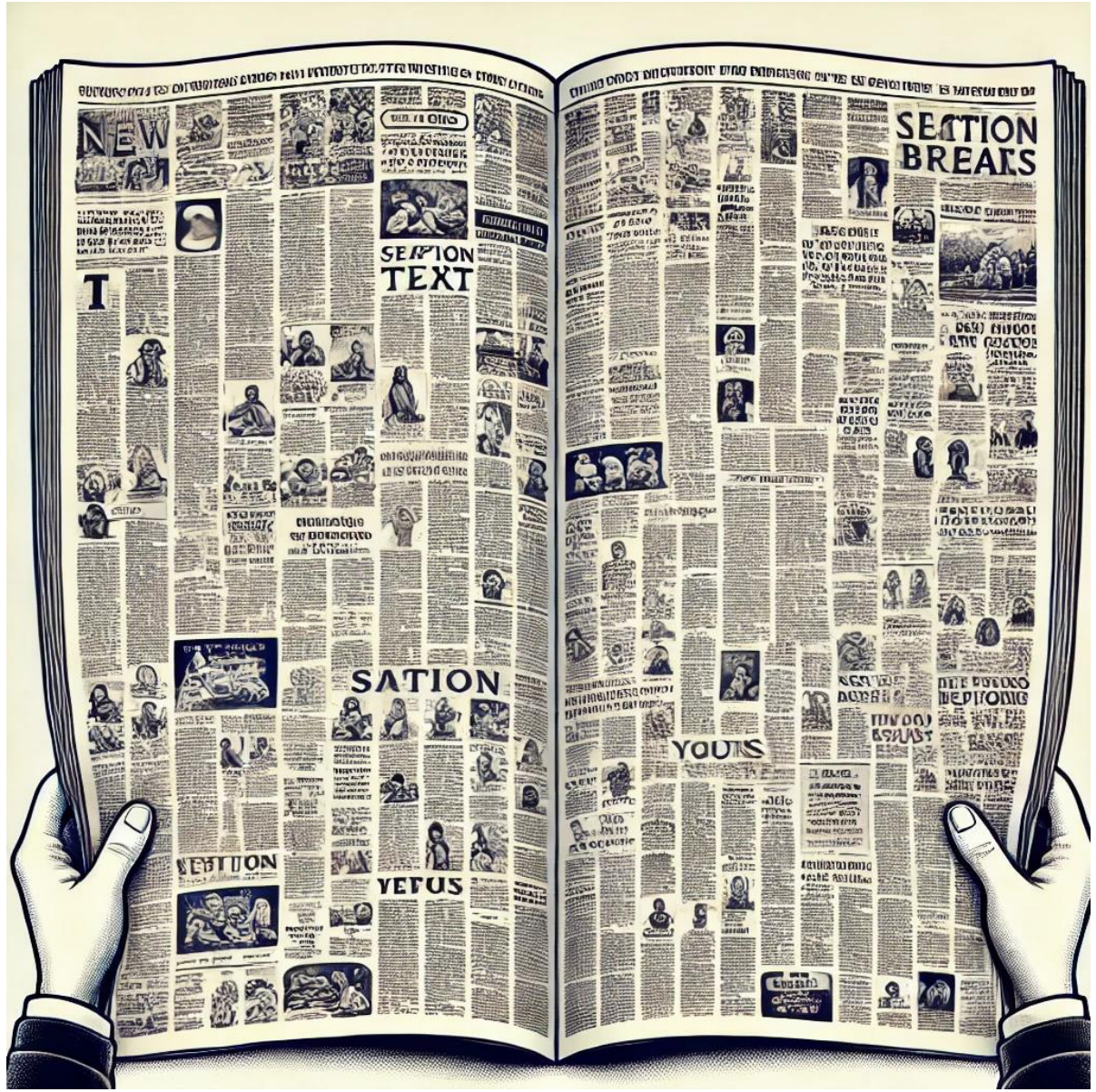
# Impact: Lifestyle Section?




This is what a screen reader has to work with when there are not appropriate heading styles.

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# 3 - Use Table Headers

- Tables without proper headers make data difficult to interpret.

SOLUTION:

- Use table headers  by selecting option to "repeat as header" when creating table
- JAWS will announce the number of columns and rows.
- Table headings will be read as users navigate, making the data easy to understand.

# Impact: Electricity Over $500?

When a table does not have headings, it's like navigating through individual sticky notes, and much of the information is still not there.

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# 4 - Use Clear Form Labels

- Form fields are controls you interact with in a form.
- Examples are edit boxes, drop-down boxes, check boxes, and buttons.
- If unlabeled, screen readers won't hear required information.

SOLUTION:

- Use label tags for each control.
- Use clear language to describe the purpose of each control.
- Clearly labeled controls enable faster navigation.
- Ensures users will enter the correct information when filling out forms

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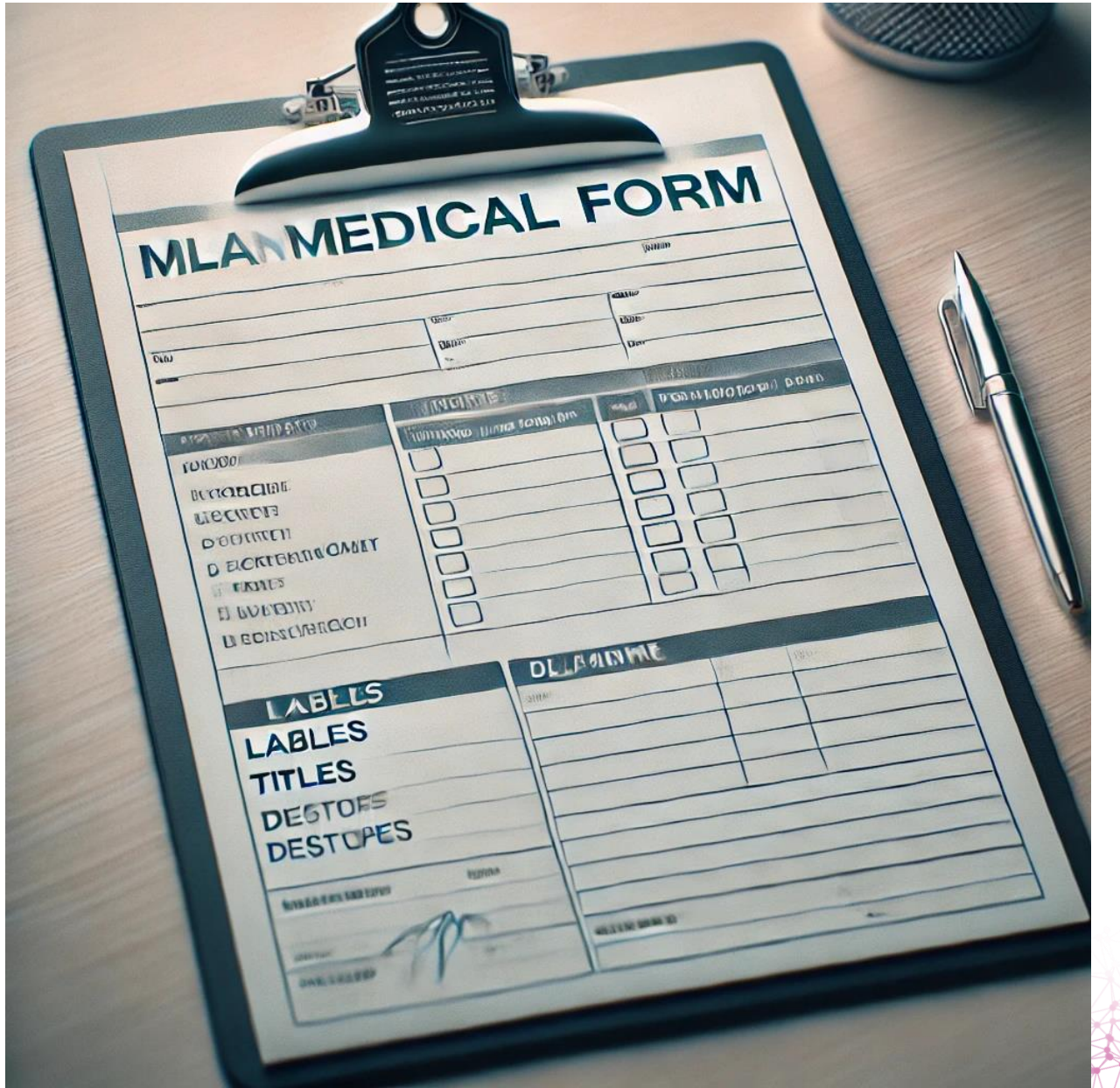
# Impact: Where Do You Put Date of Birth?




When form fields are not tagged, screen readers have no idea what information is being requested.

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# JAWS Examples

# 5 - Alternative Text

- Describes images to users who cannot see them.
- Helps users understand the content and purpose of the image.
- Depicts important information included in graphs, charts, and photos.

SOLUTION:

- Provide concise and informative ALT text for every valuable image to convey the meaning or function it provides.
- Decorative images don't require descriptions.

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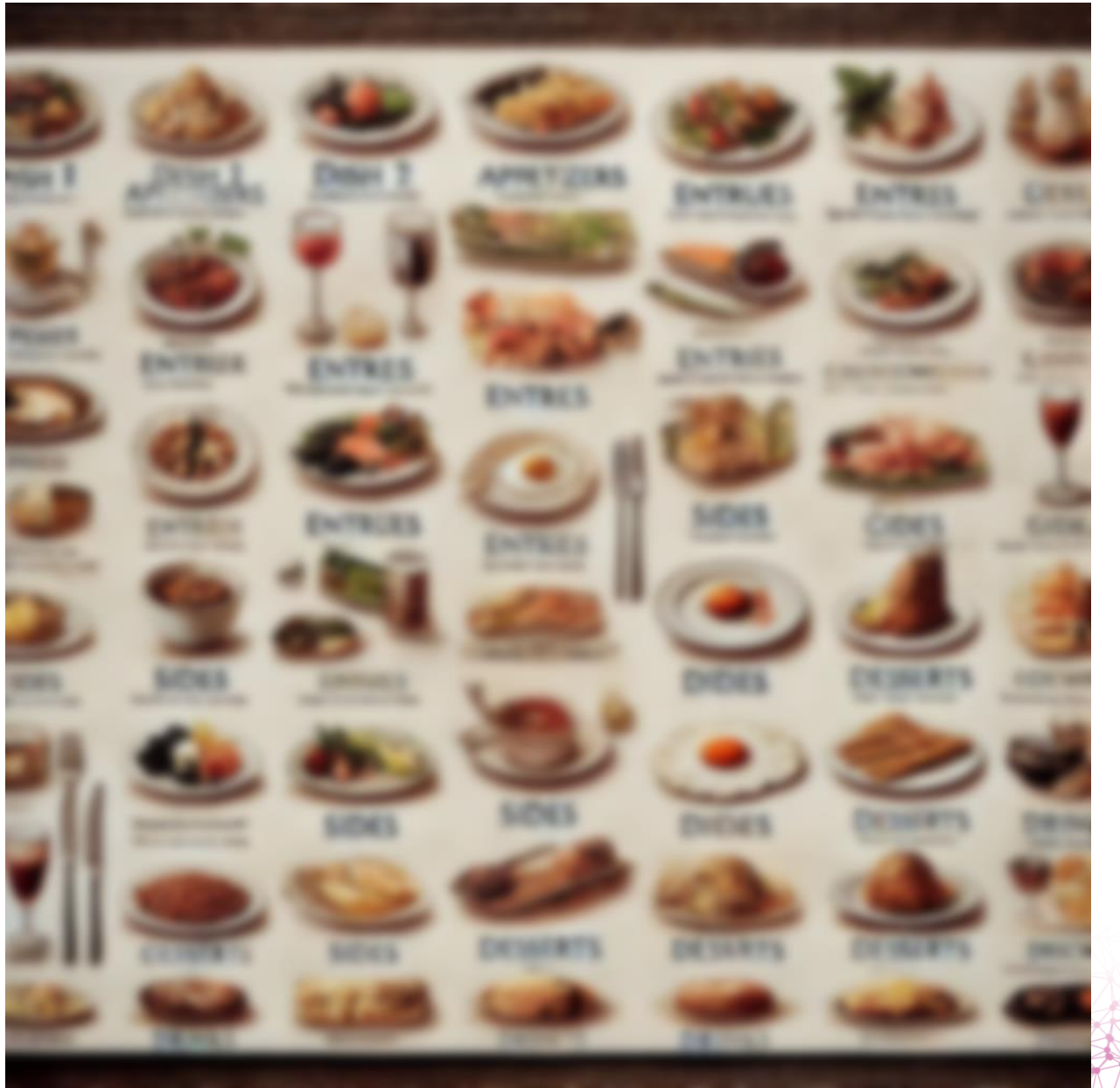
# Impact: May I Take Your Order?



With no alt text, a screen reader has to ask for help.

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# 6 - Use Inline Images

- Images should be inline with the text rather than floating.
- Floating images do not align with the document text.
- When this occurs, a screen reader user will not know the images are present- even if the image has alt text.

SOLUTION:

- Select this setting in layout options

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# Impact: As You Can See Here...

Blank slide

This is a picture of a beautiful rose garden on a sunny day with roses blooming with shades of pastels, and everyone can see this except for you.

When a document does not have inline images, a screen reader has no idea the image is there.

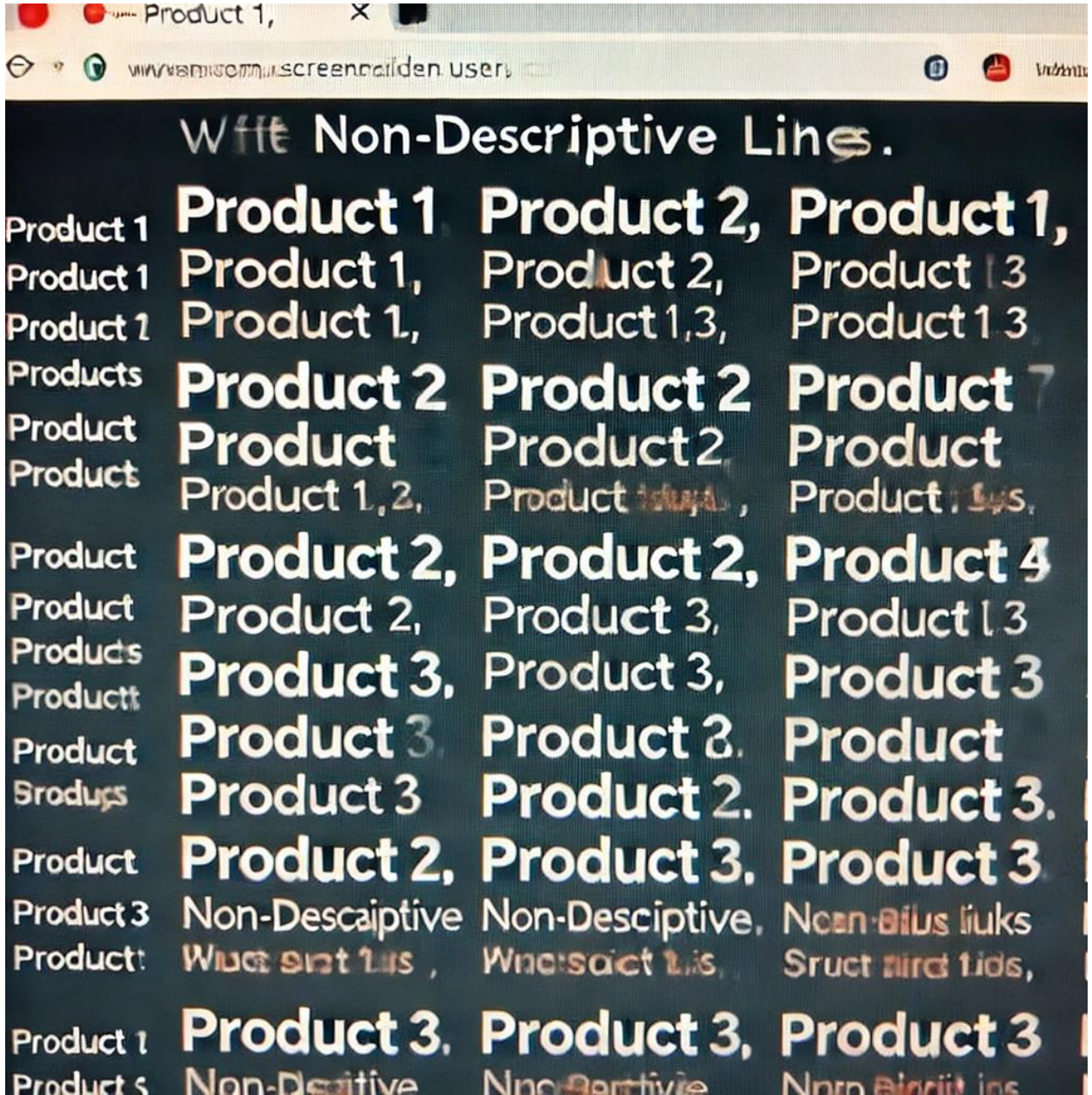
# 7 - Use Descriptive/ Meaningful Links

- Descriptive links provide context about where the link points.
- Example, Freedom Scientific Blog
- Avoid link text such as “click here” or “more.”
- Do not include the word “link” in the text, as JAWS already announces the presence of a link.

SOLUTION:

- Use link text that clearly and concisely conveys the title or content of the page being pointed to.

# Impact: Favorite Shirt?




When links are not descriptive, it's a guessing game for a screen reader. They must click around until they land in the right place.

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# Live JAWS Examples

# 8 - Complete Required Doc Properties

- Specifying a title allows for easier identification.
- Document is more searchable.
- Title is spoken when switching apps or when invoking Insert + T
- Title will be spoken at the beginning of a PDF

SOLUTION:

- Provide a concise, descriptive title.
- Provide a short description of the document content.

# Impact: Find Meeting Notes

If a title is not completed in document properties, it makes it difficult for a screen reader to know where to find that document or when they are in that document.

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# 9 - Ensure Correct Tab and Reading Order

- For sighted users, the logical order of a PDF is the visual order on-screen.
- When using assistive technology, the tab order determines the order users can navigate the content.
- Content includes text, interactive elements, form fields, and links.
- Tab order must reflect the logical order of the document.
- Reading order is determined by tag order of elements.
- The order of content in individual tags is determined by the document content tree structure.
- Logical structure is created when a document is a tagged PDF.

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# 9 - Ensure Correct Tab and Reading Order 2

- If reading order is not correct, users may not be able to understand the content.
- Example, the use of multiple columns
- Visually, reading order makes sense as flowing from the top to bottom of one column, then on to the next.
- If not properly tagged, a screen reader may read from top to bottom across both columns as if there is only one column.

SOLUTION:

- Use a PDF authoring tool to set tab and reading order

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# Impact: Now Sing!

**Up above the world so high,**

**How I wonder what you are!**

**Twinkle, twinkle, little star,**

**Like a diamond in the sky.**

If the tabbing order does not flow as the text does visually, content is scrambled; therefore, completely out of context.

# Live JAWS Examples

# 10 - Use Built-in Accessibility Checker

- Use the built-in accessibility checker
- Once the automated check is complete, manually review and make corrections.
- The accessibility checker WILL NOT find all accessibility issues- yet it's more efficient to let the automate tool take care of the low lying fruit.

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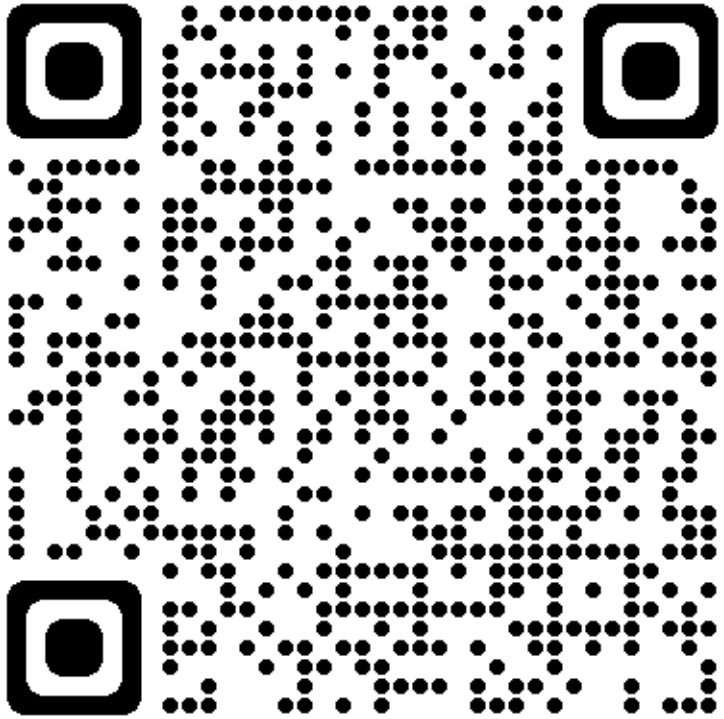
# Resources



Visit the Freedom Scientific Resources page

https://www.freedomscientific.com/resources

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# Introducing the Insert + J Club!

- Connecting JAWS users worldwide
- Exclusive content for members
- Virtual social events
- In-person meet and greets at various conventions
- Opportunity to give targeted feedback on products
- Early access to what's new in product releases
- **SIGN UP BEFORE MARCH 15th TO BE ENTERED INTO A DRAWING FOR 90 FREE MINUTES WITH AIRA!**

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# Questions?

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