

WCAG 2.1 AA Website Accessibility Checklist

A printable working checklist covering all 50 Level A and AA success criteria: 30 Level A and 20 Level AA.

WCAG 2.1 remains relevant where a contract, legacy policy or specification names it. For current UK public-sector work, WCAG 2.2 AA is the stated government standard. A conforming page must meet every applicable Level A and AA success criterion, not merely achieve an automated score.

Website/service:		Auditor:	
Scope/sample:		Audit date:	
Browsers/devices:		Assistive technology:	

1. Perceivable

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
1.1.1	A	Non-text Content	Provide a text alternative for meaningful images, icons, charts, controls and other non-text content. Mark decorative content so assistive technology can ignore it.	☐	☐	☐	
1.2.1	A	Audio-only and Video-only (Prerecorded)	Provide an equivalent alternative for prerecorded audio-only or video-only content.	☐	☐	☐	
1.2.2	A	Captions (Prerecorded)	Provide synchronised captions for prerecorded video with audio.	☐	☐	☐	
1.2.3	A	Audio Description or Media Alternative (Prerecorded)	Provide audio description or a complete text alternative for prerecorded video.	☐	☐	☐	
1.2.4	AA	Captions (Live)	Provide synchronised captions for live video with audio.	☐	☐	☐	
1.2.5	AA	Audio Description (Prerecorded)	Provide audio description for prerecorded video where visual information is needed to understand it.	☐	☐	☐	
1.3.1	A	Info and Relationships	Ensure structure and relationships conveyed visually are available in code or text, including headings, labels, lists and tables.	☐	☐	☐	
1.3.2	A	Meaningful Sequence	Ensure the reading and focus order preserves the intended meaning.	☐	☐	☐	
1.3.3	A	Sensory Characteristics	Do not rely only on shape, colour, size, visual location, orientation or sound in instructions.	☐	☐	☐	
1.3.4	AA	Orientation	Do not restrict content to portrait or landscape unless a particular orientation is essential.	☐	☐	☐	
1.3.5	AA	Identify Input Purpose	Use programmatically identifiable autocomplete purposes for common personal-data fields.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.1	A	Use of Colour	Do not use colour as the only way to communicate meaning, status, action or distinction.	☐	☐	☐	

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
1.4.2	A	Audio Control	For audio that starts automatically and lasts over three seconds, provide pause/stop or independent volume control.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.3	AA	Contrast (Minimum)	Normal text must have at least 4.5:1 contrast and large text at least 3:1, subject to WCAG exceptions.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.4	AA	Resize Text	Text can be resized to 200% without loss of content or functionality, except captions and text images.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.5	AA	Images of Text	Use real text rather than images of text unless essential or user-customisable.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.10	AA	Reflow	At 320 CSS pixels wide or 256 CSS pixels high, content reflows without two-dimensional scrolling except where essential.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.11	AA	Non-text Contrast	UI components, states and meaningful graphics have at least 3:1 contrast against adjacent colours.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.12	AA	Text Spacing	Content remains usable when users increase line, paragraph, letter and word spacing to WCAG test values.	☐	☐	☐	
1.4.13	AA	Content on Hover or Focus	Additional content shown on hover or focus is dismissible, hoverable and persistent where applicable.	☐	☐	☐	

2. Operable

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
2.1.1	A	Keyboard	All functionality is operable with a keyboard, except where path-dependent input is essential.	☐	☐	☐	
2.1.2	A	No Keyboard Trap	Keyboard focus can be moved away from every component using standard or clearly documented methods.	☐	☐	☐	
2.1.4	A	Character Key Shortcuts	Single-character shortcuts can be turned off, remapped or are active only while the relevant control has focus.	☐	☐	☐	
2.2.1	A	Timing Adjustable	Users can turn off, adjust or extend time limits unless a WCAG exception applies.	☐	☐	☐	
2.2.2	A	Pause, Stop, Hide	Users can pause, stop or hide moving, blinking, scrolling or auto-updating content where required.	☐	☐	☐	
2.3.1	A	Three Flashes or Below Threshold	Content does not flash more than three times per second or exceed the flash threshold.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.1	A	Bypass Blocks	Provide a way to bypass repeated blocks, such as skip links or appropriate landmarks.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.2	A	Page Titled	Each page has a descriptive and useful title.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.3	A	Focus Order	Keyboard focus follows an order that preserves meaning and operation.	☐	☐	☐	

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
2.4.4	A	Link Purpose (In Context)	The purpose of each link is clear from its text or programmatically determined context.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.5	AA	Multiple Ways	Provide more than one way to locate pages in a set, except where a page is a step in a process.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.6	AA	Headings and Labels	Headings and labels describe topic or purpose.	☐	☐	☐	
2.4.7	AA	Focus Visible	Keyboard focus is visibly indicated.	☐	☐	☐	
2.5.1	A	Pointer Gestures	Multipoint or path-based gestures have a single-pointer alternative unless essential.	☐	☐	☐	
2.5.2	A	Pointer Cancellation	For single-pointer actions, avoid triggering on down-event or provide cancellation/undo mechanisms.	☐	☐	☐	
2.5.3	A	Label in Name	For controls with visible text labels, the accessible name contains that visible text.	☐	☐	☐	
2.5.4	A	Motion Actuation	Functionality activated by device or user motion has a conventional alternative and can be disabled unless essential.	☐	☐	☐	

3. Understandable

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
3.1.1	A	Language of Page	The default human language of each page is programmatically identified.	☐	☐	☐	
3.1.2	AA	Language of Parts	Changes in human language are programmatically identified, subject to exceptions.	☐	☐	☐	
3.2.1	A	On Focus	Receiving focus does not unexpectedly change context.	☐	☐	☐	
3.2.2	A	On Input	Changing a form control does not unexpectedly change context unless users are advised beforehand.	☐	☐	☐	
3.2.3	AA	Consistent Navigation	Repeated navigation appears in a consistent relative order unless users initiate a change.	☐	☐	☐	
3.2.4	AA	Consistent Identification	Components with the same function are identified consistently.	☐	☐	☐	
3.3.1	A	Error Identification	Input errors are identified and described in text.	☐	☐	☐	
3.3.2	A	Labels or Instructions	Provide labels or instructions where user input is required.	☐	☐	☐	
3.3.3	AA	Error Suggestion	When an input error is detected and a correction is known, suggest it unless this would compromise security or purpose.	☐	☐	☐	
3.3.4	AA	Error Prevention (Legal, Financial, Data)	For important submissions, provide reversal, checking or confirmation safeguards.	☐	☐	☐	

4. Robust

SC	Level	Success criterion	Practical check	Pass	Fail	N/A	Evidence / issue / owner
4.1.1	A	Parsing	Use markup that can be parsed reliably: complete elements, valid nesting, unique IDs and no duplicated attributes. This criterion is obsolete in WCAG 2.2.	☐	☐	☐	
4.1.2	A	Name, Role, Value	Controls expose accessible name, role, state, properties and values, and changes are available to assistive technology.	☐	☐	☐	
4.1.3	AA	Status Messages	Status messages can be identified by assistive technology without moving focus.	☐	☐	☐	

Audit completion and conformance notes

Area	Completed / evidence
Automated testing	Tool(s), date and saved report location:
Keyboard-only testing	Key journeys tested, including menus, dialogs, forms and focus order:
Screen reader testing	Screen reader/browser combinations and journeys tested:
Zoom and reflow	200% text resize, 400% browser zoom and narrow viewport checks:
Colour and contrast	Text, controls, states, charts and focus indicator checks:
Forms and errors	Labels, instructions, validation, error recovery and authentication:
Media and documents	Captions, audio description, transcripts and accessible PDFs/documents:
Known issues	Impact, affected pages/components, workaround, owner and target date:

Overall result	Fully conformant / Partially conformant / Non-conformant / Not assessed:
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Important: WCAG conformance applies to complete pages and complete processes, including content supplied by third parties where it forms part of the service. Automated tools find only some issues. Manual inspection and testing with keyboard and assistive technology are essential.

Primary references: W3C Web Content Accessibility Guidelines and WAI Quick Reference. UK public-sector guidance: GOV.UK accessibility requirements for public-sector websites and apps. Prepared 5 August 2026.