

A GUIDE TO DESCRIPTIVE LINKS

What is a Descriptive Link?

A good descriptive link tells the viewer the journey they are about to take. A descriptive link is unique with helpful keywords that will intrigue the visitor to click for more information.

The Importance of Using Descriptive Links:

- Makes it easier to skim the web page for content
- Provides users with the proper context of where the link will take them
- Meets accessibility requirements

Tips for Writing Link Text:

- Link keywords
 - Improves search engine results
 - Helps users quickly scan a website for content
 - Helpful for people who use screen reader devices
- Keep linked phrases meaningful out of context and as short as possible
- Link at least one full word. Using two words is best practice
- Do not add the word "link" to your descriptive content
- Avoid using generic phrases such as "click here" or "see more."
- Tell your users when you are opening a new window. A link should open a new window when your users are leaving your website or opening a PDF file.
- If you add action prompts (example: "Opens PDF" or "Opens new window"), put them at the end and don't include as part of the link
 - *Example: "Feel free to [contact us](#) (opens PDF) for any concerns"*
- Website URLs are **not** considered informative and should not be used. The screen reader reads each letter individually. Instead make the text descriptive.

Linking Images:

All linked images should have an appropriate alternative text (ALT tag) as the link text. The ALT tag must include the content and function of the image. The ALT tag is the text read by the screen reader when an image or graphic is encountered on the webpage.

Example: "Board members; linking to board policies"

- The ALT tag should be precise content that describes the image accurately
- A short phrase or sentence is the best practice
- Don't use the same ALT tag for every image