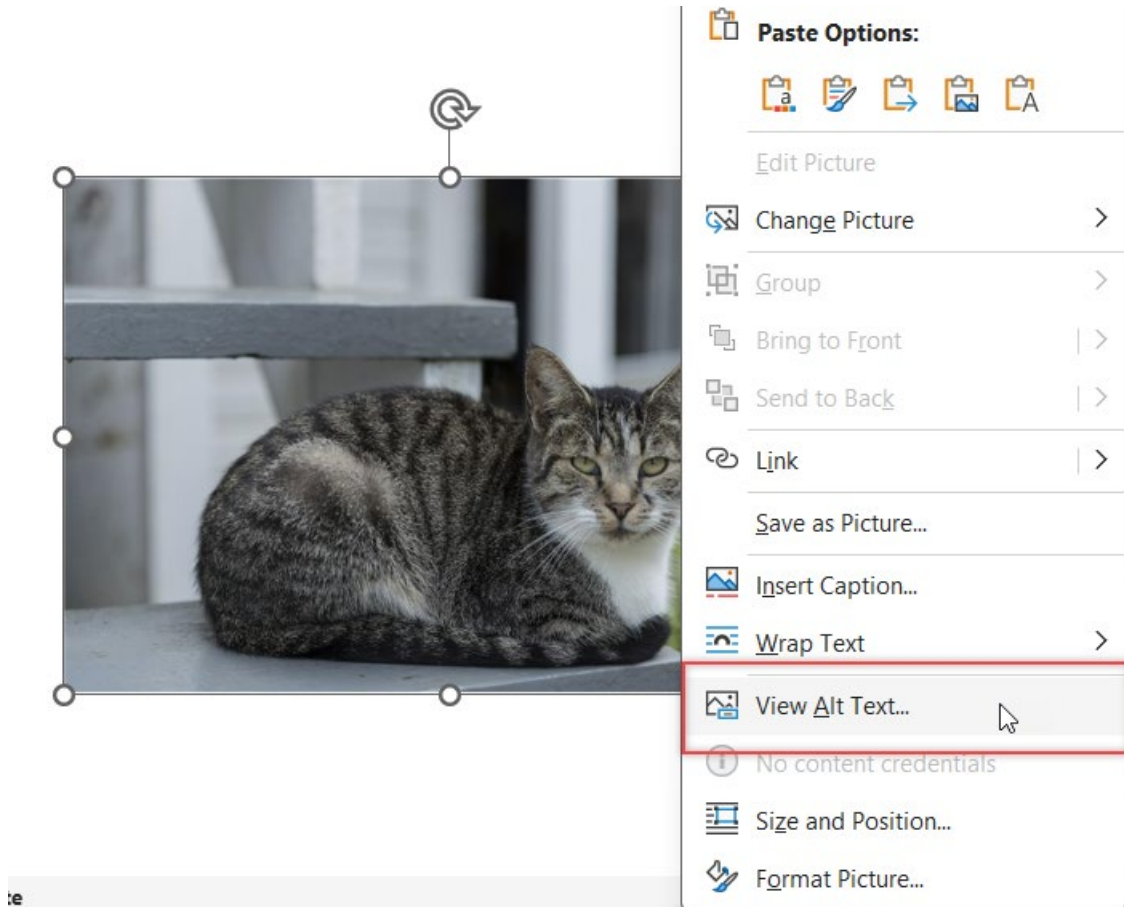


# How to Add Alternate Text to Images, Figures, etc.

## Steps to Provide Alternate Text

*See Figure 1*

- 1) Select the picture, image, clip art, shape, or graph and right click
- 2) A drop down menu will appear, locate and select “View Alt Text,” near the bottom of the list.



- 3) The “Alt Text” menu will open on the right-hand side of the screen. This menu provides a brief description on how to craft alt text as well as blank field record the text itself. Additionally, there is a button labeled “Generate alt text for me” and a check box labeled “Mark as decorative.”

**Alt Text** ∨ ×

How would you describe this object and its context to someone who is blind or low vision?

- The subject(s) in detail
- The setting
- The actions or interactions
- Other relevant information

*(1-2 detailed sentences recommended)*

Generate alt text for me

Mark as decorative [?](#)

- 4) The “Generate alt text for me” description is prone to failure. It can be a good starting point, but should not be solely relied upon for description.
- 5) If the image is purely decorative such as a line separating paragraphs or an abstract shape, type “null” into the description field or “” to show that there should be no description as the “Mark as decorative” option is not always reliable in Word.

## How to Create Meaningful Alternative Text

Alt text should be no more than two sentences long. Start with the broadest category of description and get more specific as you write the alternative text. Such as:

- Model of
- Pie chart of
- clip art depicting

After the initial descriptor, add the specific details relevant to the particular image

- educational theory showing “Learning” at the center “Teachers” as the second ring and “Books” as the outermost ring.
- responses to above question where 25% responded “Yellow” 25% “Green” and 50% “purple”
- a stick figure with a light bulb over its head

See the below image and description provided via the [Perkins School for the Blind](#). You may also [visit their website](#) for more information on the elements of good alternative text.



Image description- An infographic titled “How To Write Alt Text” featuring a photo of a capybara. Parts of alt text are divided by color, including identify who, expression, description, colour, and interesting features. The finished description reads “A capybara looking relaxed in a hot spa. Yellow yuzu fruits are floating in the water, and one is balanced on the top of the capybara’s head.”

Infographic created by digital agency Puzzle in the UK for their #AccessAlt campaign. [Puzzle on Instagram](#): “Okay, so you’ve signed up to our #AccessAlt campaign, and now you’re looking to start including alt text when you post on social. But what...”

## **Additional Information**

### **Provide Additional Descriptions for Complex Images/Charts**

#### **Explanation**

If charts and graphs are complex and require additional explanation beyond what can be provided in the alternate text, provide this additional explanation in the surrounding text. Alternate text descriptions should be short and concise while conveying equivalent information. Some images and/or charts will require descriptions longer than should be entered into the alternate text description area. In these cases, it is appropriate to further explain the image or graph in the surrounding text.

### **Smart Art**

Smart Art is a combination of images and texts that allows users to build visual graphs that include a text component. However, this combination creates errors when converted to PDF. If you use Smart Art make sure that the information that you include in the text is repeated elsewhere in your file. Then make the entire Smart Art into an image by using an image tool like Snagit or “print screen”. If you have not included the text in the Smart Art elsewhere in your file you should consider using a more accessible format such as a Table or a list instead of a Smart Art graphic.

### **Avoid Using Images of Text**

#### **Explanation**

Authors should present information as text rather than using an image of text. This will enable people who require a particular visual presentation of text (e.g. a particular font size, foreground and background color, font family, line spacing or alignment) to be able to adjust the text presentation as required. If for any reason, the document author cannot format the text to get the same effect, then an image of text may be used. However, the entirety of the information presented in the image must be represented elsewhere in the file.

#### **Exception**

If a particular presentation of text is essential to the information being conveyed, then it is acceptable to use images of text, for instance a Word cloud. Make sure to provide sufficient alt text for the image, or describe the image adequately. Note: Logotypes (text that is part of a logo or brand name) are considered essential.