

## Microsoft Word Best Practices

1. Use system fonts when creating/modifying documents
2. Use a sans serif font
3. Select a font point size no smaller than 12
4. Use styles to associate attributes such as bold, underline, etc. with text (Do not manually associate attributes to text, Note: some readers do not recognize underlines when trying to associate attributes, if used check for accuracy of reading.)
5. Use upper and lower case letters in your sentences
6. Note: Using all capital letters is not recommended
7. Hyphens at the end of a line are not recommended unless absolutely necessary
8. Format your document so that all text (except for the title) is left justified when possible
9. Format your document using a block style (i.e., no indenting other than for bulleted/numbered items)
10. Use color only as an enhancement, not as the sole means of conveying information
11. Make headings different than the body text
12. Create headers and footers using Microsoft Word's header and footer feature
13. Use page numbering codes to number pages within a document (Do not manually type page numbers at the bottom of a page)
14. Use a hard page break code to designate the end of a page (Do not use the Enter key to move text to the next page)
15. Use simple and clear design layout
16. Bullets can be used with lists and key points

17. Explain all acronyms the first time they are used, or in a table near the front of the document
18. Ensure contrast is sufficient
19. Add alternate text to non-text elements
20. Group complex images
21. Ensure images are inserted “Inline with text”, rather than as a floating image
22. Do not use text boxes
23. Create tables properly
24. Create columns properly
25. All edits in track changes must be accepted and comments removed
26. The document must be free of background images or watermarks that interfere with text elements
27. Create navigational aids for long documents
28. All URLs must be linked to active Web sites.
29. All URLs must be hyperlinked with the fully qualified URL (<http://www.usda.gov>)
30. The document must be reviewed in Print Preview for a final visual check