Universal Design for Learning

Tables

Using tables

When inserting tables into written materials, consider the following suggestions to improve readability and accessibility for all learners.

Header row

Ensure that the first row of a table contains descriptive column headings. Descriptive headings not only help the reader to better understand the data but they are also needed by screen reader software to read the table.

In Microsoft Word, you can designate the header row by first selecting the header row and then applying the Repeat Header Rows command.
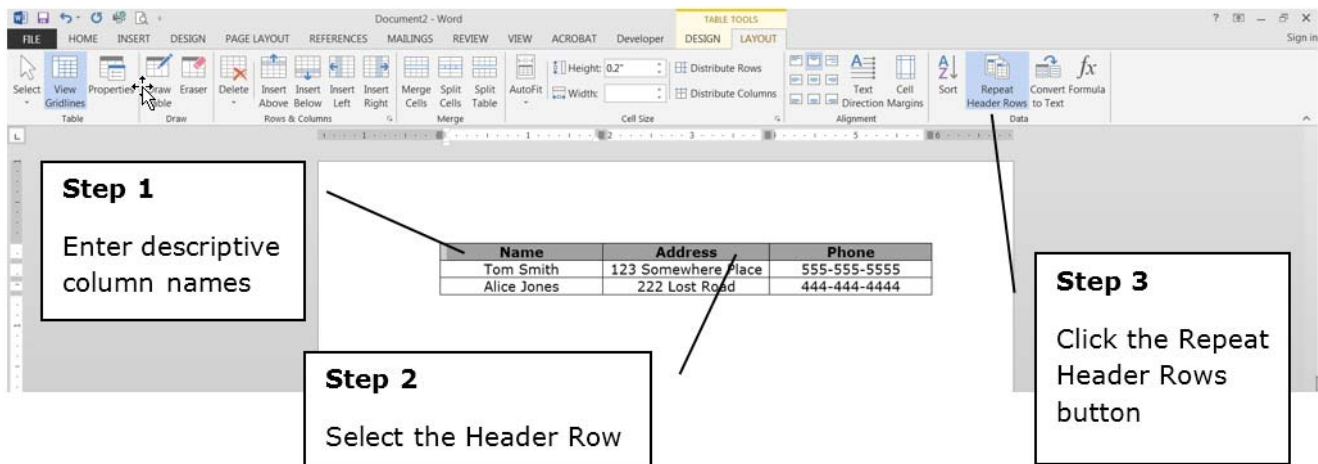

Image of table

Empty cells

When creating a table, it is important not to leave empty cells within the table as empty cells can cause problems for screen reader software.
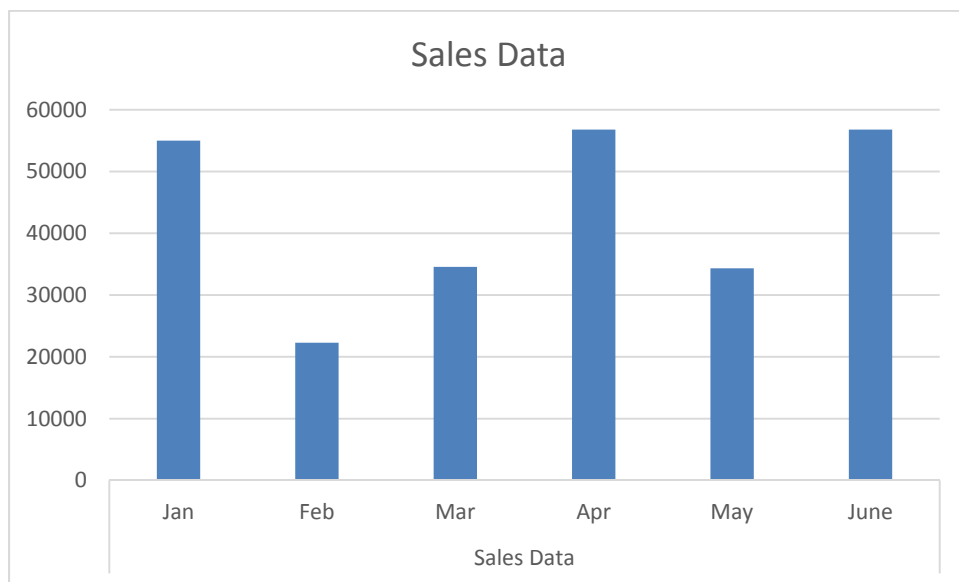
Colours

Black text on a white background is preferred. Avoid low contrast colour combinations.

Positioning

As with images, inserting tables between adjacent paragraphs can be a benefit to both the reader and screen reading software.

Using tables instead of charts

From time to time you may need to display chart data in the form of a pie chart or bar graph, etc. Unfortunately, some users may experience difficulty viewing the chart data with screen reading software. When inserting a chart or image of a chart into a document consider accompanying the chart with a table which lists the data or insert the data as a table.

Sales Data

Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	June
55000	22298	34567	56789	34321	56789

Tip

- Print a black and white copy of the material to ensure that all text is readable and that all colours (shades of gray) are clearly visible.