

# What is DIGITAL ACCESSIBILITY?

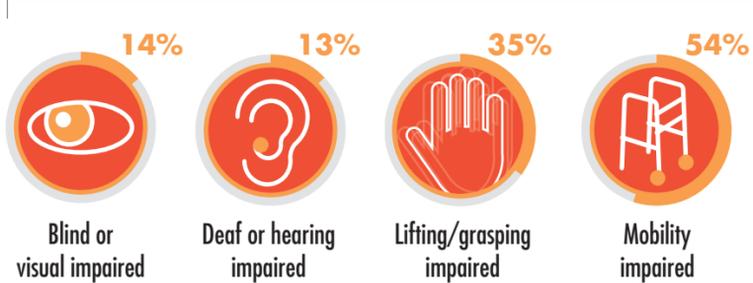
**Digital Accessibility** refers to how well any type of electronic or online media can be used by people with visual, hearing, motor or learning disabilities, as well as by the aged.



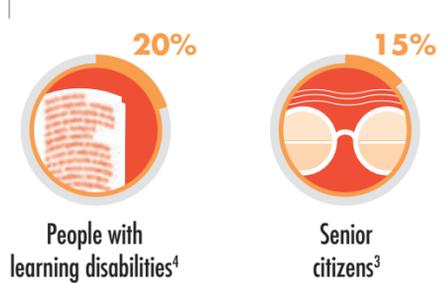
Roughly **1 out of 5** Americans has some kind of disability<sup>1</sup>

For comparison, only **1 out of 12** Americans watches *Game of Thrones*<sup>2</sup>

What types of disabilities are included in this number?\*



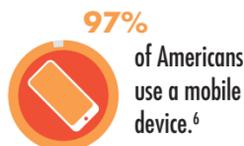
Who else needs digital accessibility? \*\*



\*includes overlaps

\*\*percentage of U.S. population

A growing number of disabled people use mobile devices to access the Internet, so an accessible site should be mobile friendly, if not mobile first.



## Who needs to have a digitally accessible website?<sup>8</sup>

**ANY INSTITUTION THAT RECEIVES FEDERAL MONEY**, including government offices, nonprofits, school and universities.

**ANY BUSINESS THAT OPERATES A PUBLIC ACCOMODATION**, including banks, retail stores, restaurants and hotels.

**EVERYONE ELSE.** It's not legally required, but it is the ethical thing to do. Also, if your website isn't accessible, you've foregone a sizable percentage of potential users.

To be accessible, your **content** (text, images, videos, audio files, etc.) should work on every kind of **delivery system** (website, smartphone, tablet, screen reader, headphones, etc.).



Content



Delivery Systems

To do this, you need to use **WCAG best practices**<sup>9</sup> to separate *form* from *content*. When creating your website or app, follow these tips:



**Supply text alternatives for images.**  
Use <alt> tags or other techniques for every image your page.



**Don't rely on color itself to convey information.**  
Color blindness is not uncommon, and screen readers don't capture color.



**Caption all videos.**  
Or provide transcripts or sign language translation.



**Make sure background audio is low volume and can be turned off.**  
And that audio or video can be paused or stopped.



**Use proper HTML semantics.**  
Follow titling conventions, and use CSS instead of inline styles.



**Design forms so that they can be tabbed through without using a mouse.**  
Many users only navigate via keyboard.



**Ensure that fonts can change size independently from screen size.**  
This is important for mobile devices as well.



**Keep navigation simple.**  
For people with motor impairments, nonstandard menus can be a problem.



**Make sure there is sufficient contrast between foreground and background colors.**  
Poor contrast can render your text illegible to visually impaired users.



**Make your language as straightforward as possible.**  
Simple doesn't mean simplistic – just try to use appropriate language for your audience.

## <get> accessible

For more information on how to make your digital media accessible, visit [getaccessible.com](http://getaccessible.com)

Sources

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- 5 pewinternet.org/2011/01/21/americans-living-with-disability-and-their-technology-profile/
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