



# OSU Minimum Web Accessibility Standards (rev. 06/30/2004)

<http://www.wac.ohio-state.edu/standards/>



**Standard 13 -- Applications and Plug-ins.** When a web page requires that an applet, plug-in or other application be present on the client system to interpret page content, the page must provide a link to a plug-in or applet that complies with standards 1-9 of this document. .

**Examples:**

**13.1 -- When applets, plug-ins or applications (Java applets, Java scripts, Acrobat PDF files or PowerPoint files) are not accessible to assistive technologies you must provide an alternative means of accessing the content within the applications (e.g., a mirror HTML file for a PDF file).**

**13.2 -- When an applet, plug-in or application is utilized you must provide a link to a an accessible page where the plug-in can be downloaded.**

## Plug-ins -- Dos and Don'ts

Do	Don ' t
Only require the use of accessible plug-in or external applications to access content.	Offer content only in a format requiring a non-compliant application or in a non-compliant format.

**Why:** Web authors frequently rely on other applications beyond those available in a browser to display specialized content. It is the responsibility of the web author to insure that these applications are compliant with MWAS and available to assistive technology users.

**How:** Do not assume that popular technology like video and presentation viewers are accessible to users of assistive technology. Investigate the accessibility policies of the companies responsible for any auxiliary application you require and, if possible, test those applications using assistive technology.

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Do	Don ' t
Provide a link to accessible versions of required plug-ins.	Assume users will have the necessary plug-ins installed or require the use of plug-ins that are not compatible with assistive technology.

**Why:** To make it possible for specially formatted files (e.g. PDF or video) to be viewed by web browsers, add-on programs or "plug-ins" need to be downloaded and installed on the user's computer. Web designers should not assume users already have these plug-ins installed.

**How:** Provide a link to the download page of any necessary plug-in on each page it is required to view information or perform tasks.

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Do	Don ' t
If a plug-in compatible with assistive technology is not available, offer the content in an alternate format.	Exclude users who cannot obtain or use a required plug-in from access to site content.

**Why:** Web authors should, whenever possible, only require the use of external applications if those applications meet accessibility guidelines. However, if no such accessible plug-in exists, content requiring the plug-in must be offered in a different format.

**How:** Offer the content both using the plug-in application and in an accessible format. For example, if you are posting a PowerPoint presentation that requires the PowerPoint viewer (which is not an accessible technology), you may also display the content of the presentation in HTML format.

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Do	Don ' t
Include a link to the Acrobat Reader plug-in.	Expect users to have Acrobat Reader already installed.

**Why:** Because assistive technology can be very system intensive, many users avoid extraneous software. Users with slow connections may not have wanted to take the time to download additional software or keep up with updates.

**How:** Include a link to the download page for the latest version of Adobe Reader on *every page* in which a link to a PDF file occurs.

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**Get more help with plug-ins, visit [Usability.gov](http://www.usability.gov).**

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