

DEVLEARN

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101

Getting Started with Accessibility Features in Articulate Storyline

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Session 101

BYOD: Getting Started with Accessibility Features in Articulate Storyline

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DevLearn Conference 2025

Design Without Barriers

Have you ever tried taking an online course, but couldn't click a button, hear the audio, or see the text clearly?

Now imagine that's your learner's everyday experience.

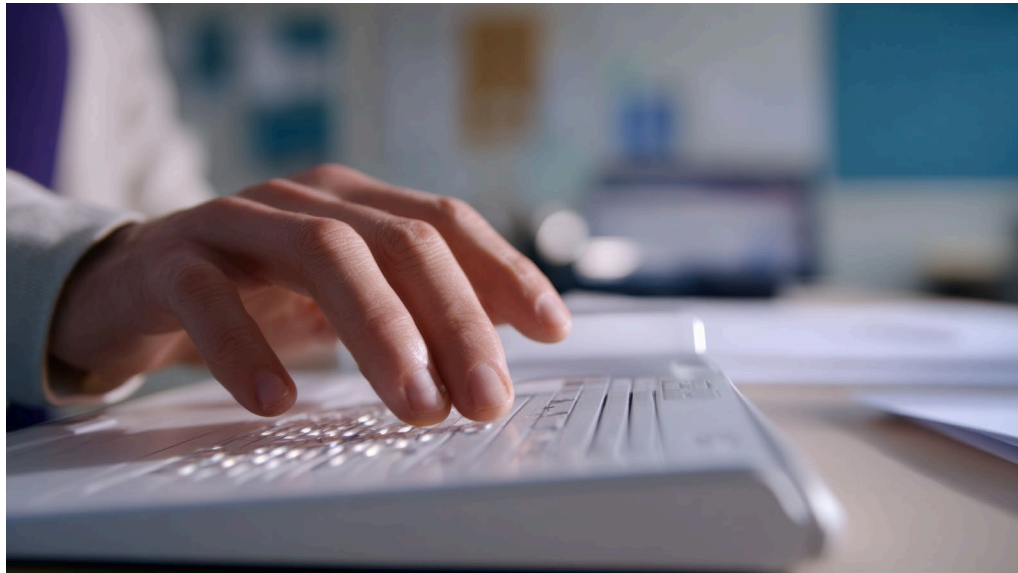
The Invisible Learner

What if one of your learners can't use a mouse, can't see your slide, or can't hear your narration?

Would your course still work?



What Do You *Really* Know About Accessibility?



Could you pass your own course using only a keyboard?

Or with your eyes closed?

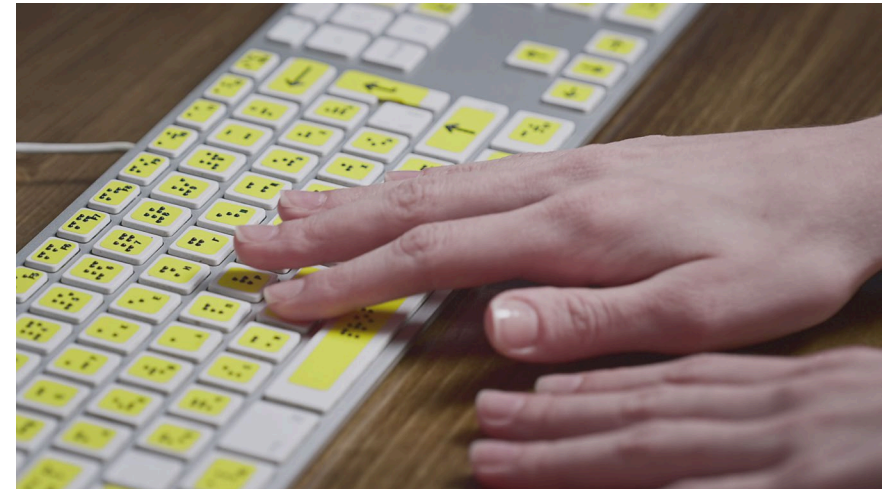
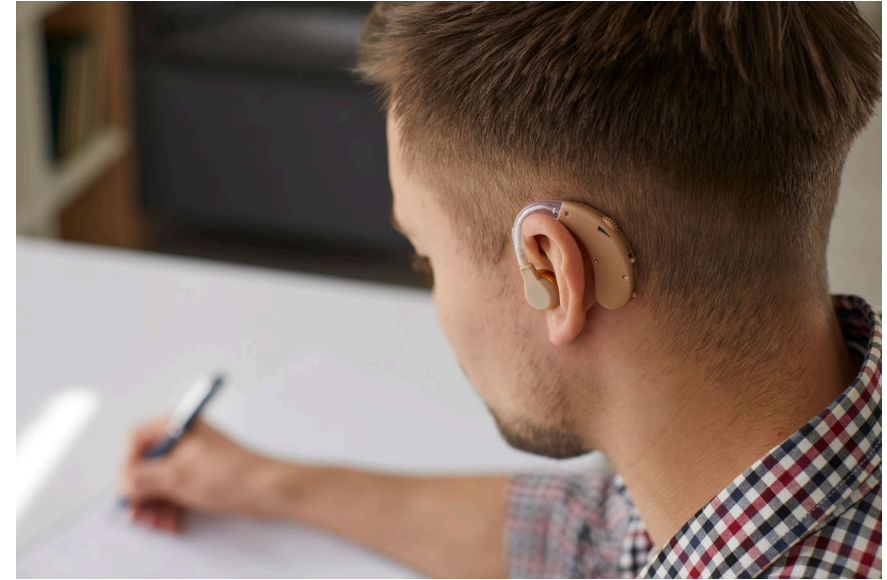
Agenda

Here's what we'll cover:

1. Why Accessibility Matters
2. WCAG Principles (Quick Overview)
3. Storyline Accessibility Basics
4. Hands-on Demo
5. Accessibility Challenge
6. Troubleshooting & Q&A
7. Resources & Next Steps

Why Accessibility Matters

- Accessibility = usability for everyone
- 1 in 4 adults in the U.S. lives with a disability
- Inclusive design benefits all learners, not just those with disabilities
- It's also a compliance requirement (WCAG, Section 508)



Common Barriers in eLearning

- Mouse-only navigation
- Missing alternative text
- Low color contrast
- Auto-playing or uncaptioned media
- Inconsistent focus order
- Confusing custom interactions

WCAG in a Nutshell

POUR Principles:

- Perceivable – Information available to all senses
- Operable – Works with all input methods
- Understandable – Clear and predictable
- Robust – Compatible with assistive technologies

Live Demo: Storyline Accessibility Features

Demo Focus	Key Takeaway
1. Keyboard Navigation	Use Tab, Enter, Arrow keys properly.
2. Focus Order Tool	Arrange a logical navigation flow.
3. Alternative Text	Describe purpose, not appearance.
4. Color Contrast	Maintain readable text-to-background ratios.
5. Closed Captions	Add captions using Storyline's built-in tools.
6. Accessibility Testing	Test with keyboard & screen readers.
7. WCAG Checklist Recap	Summarize compliance items.

Setup for Hands-On Practice

1. **Download the practice file:** [Storyline Accessibility Features Practice](#)
2. **Open Articulate Storyline** and have the project ready
3. **You can follow along** or just observe.

Keyboard Navigation

 [Open the Sample Course to Test Keyboard Navigation](#)

- Ensure all interactive elements work with Tab, Enter, and Arrow keys
- Use triggers for keyboard navigation where needed
- Test the tabbing sequence to verify focus order

Keyboard Testing

Interaction	Keystrokes	Notes
Navigate to interactive elements	Tab - navigate forward Shift + Tab - navigate backward	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Keyboard focus indicators must be present.• Navigation order should be logical and intuitive.
Link	Enter - activate the link	
Button	Enter or Spacebar - activate the button	

 [View WebAIM's guide to keyboard navigation best practices](#)

READING ORDER

Screen readers read text boxes

Select the correct PPE for entering the patient room.

Gloves

Gown

Mask

Submit

TAB ORDER

Tab key is for **interactive elements**

Select the correct PPE for entering the patient room.

Gloves

Gown

Mask

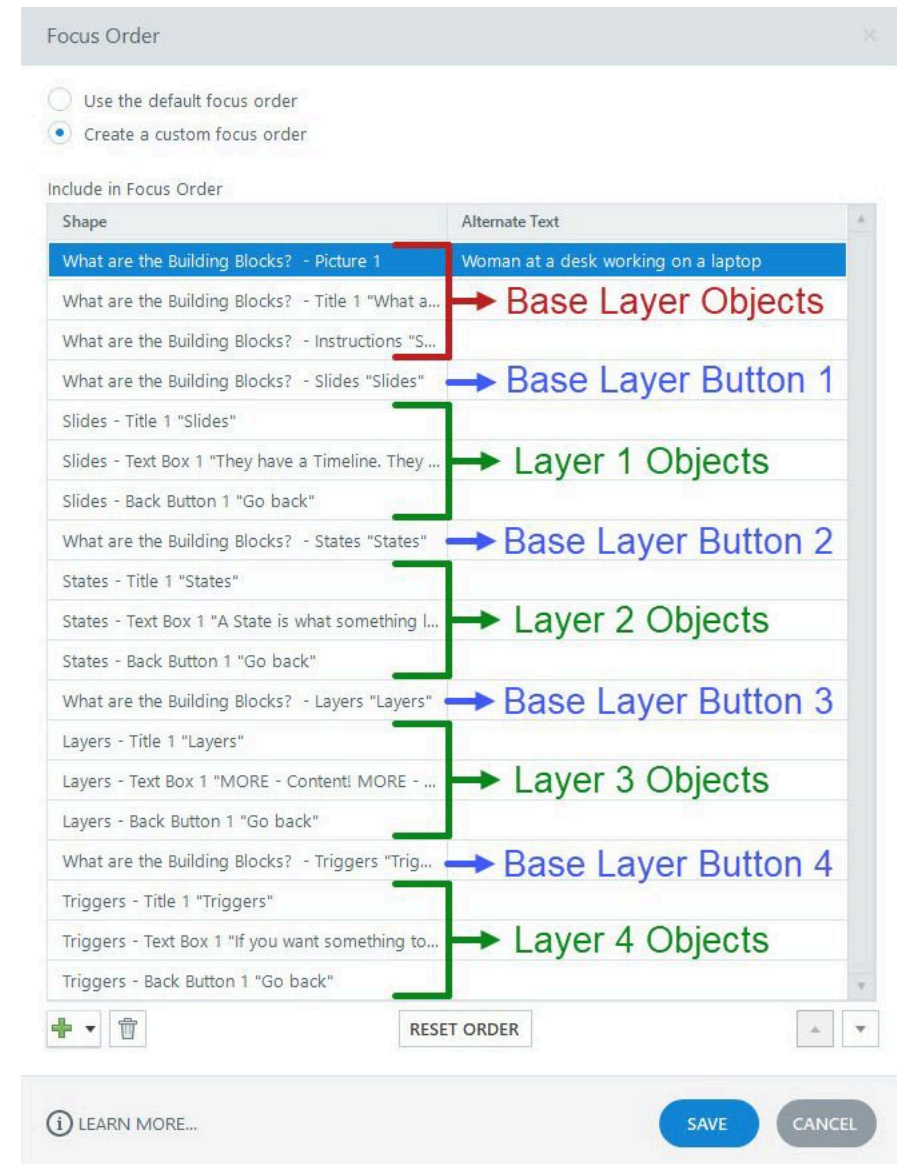
Submit

2: Control the Focus Order

- Use the Focus Order tool to set logical navigation flow
- Reorder and rename objects for clarity
- Avoid hidden or decorative items in focus order

 [View Storyline 360: Customizing the Focus Order of Slide Objects](#)

 Learn more: [What is Focus Order in Accessible eLearning?](#)



Focus Order

Use the default focus order
 Create a custom focus order

Include in Focus Order

Shape	Alternate Text
What are the Building Blocks? - Picture 1	Woman at a desk working on a laptop
What are the Building Blocks? - Title 1 "What a..."	Base Layer Objects
What are the Building Blocks? - Instructions "S..."	
What are the Building Blocks? - Slides "Slides"	Base Layer Button 1
Slides - Title 1 "Slides"	
Slides - Text Box 1 "They have a Timeline. They ..."	Layer 1 Objects
Slides - Back Button 1 "Go back"	
What are the Building Blocks? - States "States"	Base Layer Button 2
States - Title 1 "States"	
States - Text Box 1 "A State is what something I..."	Layer 2 Objects
States - Back Button 1 "Go back"	
What are the Building Blocks? - Layers "Layers"	Base Layer Button 3
Layers - Title 1 "Layers"	
Layers - Text Box 1 "MORE - Content! MORE - ..."	Layer 3 Objects
Layers - Back Button 1 "Go back"	
What are the Building Blocks? - Triggers "Trig..."	Base Layer Button 4
Triggers - Title 1 "Triggers"	
Triggers - Text Box 1 "If you want something to..."	Layer 4 Objects
Triggers - Back Button 1 "Go back"	

+ [trash] RESET ORDER

i LEARN MORE... SAVE CANCEL

Customizing the Focus Order

1. Open the slide you want to customize in [Slide View](#).
2. Go to the **Home** tab on the Storyline ribbon and click **Focus Order**.
3. When the Focus Order window opens, select the option to **Create a custom focus order** in the upper left corner.
4. To change the focus order of an object, select it, then use the **Up/Down** arrows in the lower right corner or drag it to move it to a new location in the list. (Storyline 360 will highlight the selected object on the slide with a red outline, so it's clear which object you're editing.)
5. When you're finished, click **Save**.

 [View Storyline 360: Customizing the Focus Order of Slide Objects](#)

3: Add Alt Text

- Provide alternative text for images, buttons, and shapes
- Describe the purpose, not the appearance
- Mark decorative images appropriately

 [View Storyline 360: Adding Alternative Text for Screen Readers](#)

Alt Text Best Practices

- Keep it short, usually 1-2 sentences. Don't overthink it.
- Consider key elements of why you chose this image, instead of describing every little detail.
- No need to say "image of" or "picture of."
- But, do say if it's a logo, illustration, painting, or cartoon.
- Don't duplicate text that's adjacent in the document or website.
- End the alt text sentence with a period.

Photographs

- For photographs consider the specifics included in the image, such as names, proper nouns, locations, or action words.
- Consider why you have chosen that particular image and what you hope it will convey to your audience.



 [Learn more: Write helpful Alt Text to describe images](#)

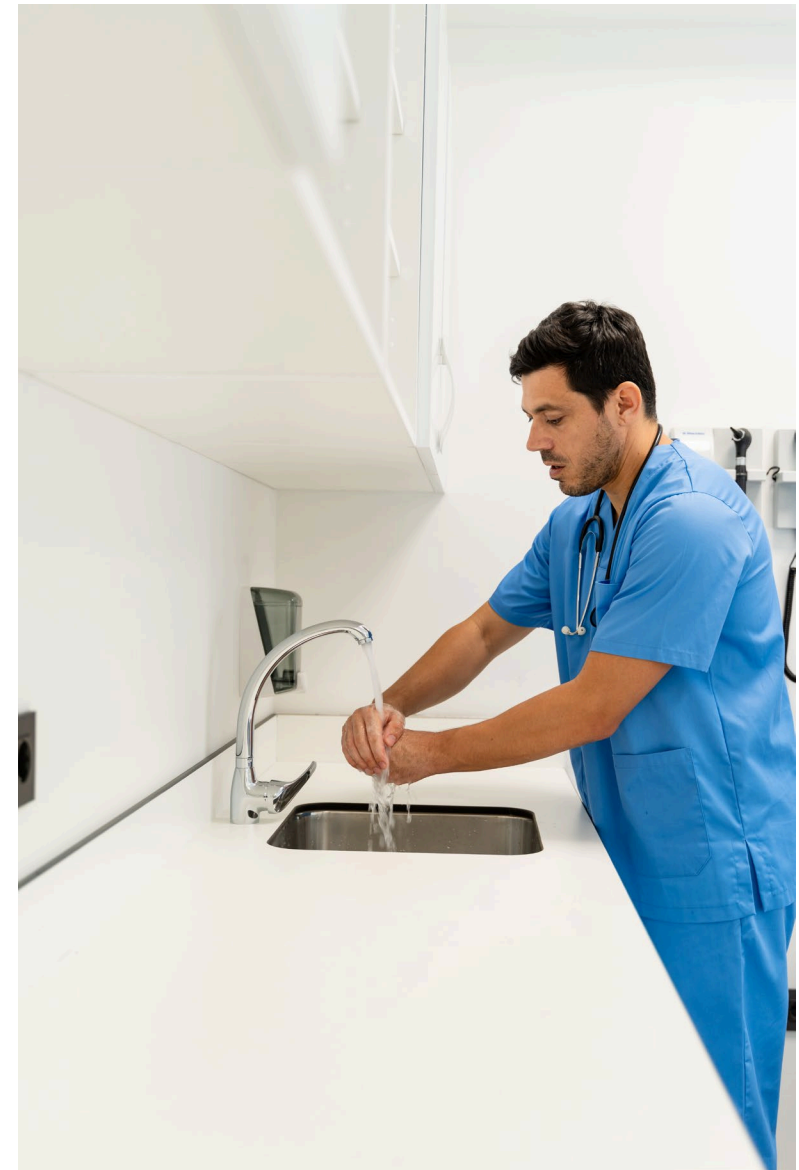
Example

A person washing his hands in a sink.

Give more context:

A clinician washing his hands in a patient room.

 [Learn more: Write helpful Alt Text to describe images](#)



Alt Text for Buttons

- Be concise but clear about the action the button performs.
- Avoid redundant details like "button" or "icon" unless necessary.
- Focus on the function (closing the current layer) rather than the appearance.



Alt text:

“Close this pop-up” or
“Return to the main slide”

Alt Text Suggestions for Buttons:

- **"Close Layer"**
- **"Close this pop-up"**
- **"Close this window"** (if it functions like a modal window or pop-up)
- **"Return to the main slide"** (if the layer overlays the base slide and this clarifies its function better).

Buttons that open layers or links

If these buttons open links, you can specify their function more precisely:

- **Opens a new window:** “Access additional resources in a new window“
- **Downloads or opens a specific file type:** "Access related policies in a PDF"

Download
PDF

Read more

Topic 1

Color Contrast

- **Definition:** Contrast is the use of difference to draw attention.
- **Why it matters:** Emphasizes key elements, improves readability.
- **Common uses:**
 - Text vs. background
 - Font weight and color
 - Size variation

🔗 Use tools like [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)

Contrast

High Visibility

Low Visibility

Contrast Example – Text vs. Background

CONTRAST

CONTRAST

Low contrast:

Light gray text on white background

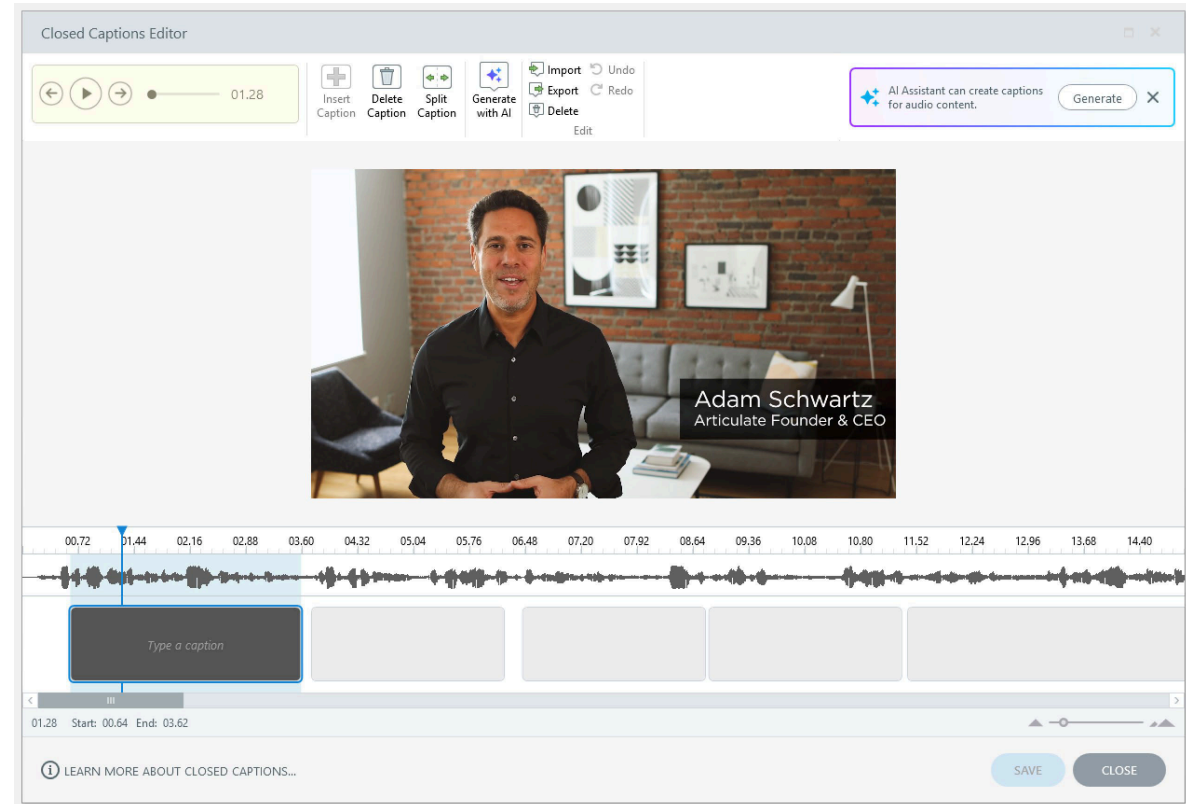
Contrast Example – Text vs. Background Color

Which one has
better contrast?

Which one has
better contrast?

Closed Captions

- Use Storyline's built-in Closed Caption editor
- Import or manually add captions
- Sync captions with audio and video timelines



 **View Storyline 360 Resource: [Creating and Editing Closed Captions with the Built-in Editor](#)**

Creating Closed Captions for Your eLearning Videos

💡 If You Have Adobe Creative Cloud

- You can **easily create closed captions using Adobe Premiere Pro**. It's included in your Creative Cloud subscription.
- Premiere automatically transcribes your video and lets you edit, style, and export captions as open or closed.

🔗 Learn more: [Adobe Premiere Pro Captions and Subtitles Guide](#)

If You Don't Have Adobe Creative Cloud

There are **free or low-cost tools** that make captioning simple:

- **YouTube Studio** – Upload your video and use *Auto-Captions* to generate text, then download the .SRT file.
- **Kapwing Subtitle Maker** – Auto-generate captions or add them manually, then export as video or .SRT.
- **Amara** – Free, web-based caption editor great for team collaboration.

Best Practice for Closed Captions

- 1. Limit line length:** Try to keep each line to 32 characters or fewer (including spaces) for optimal readability.
- 2. Add line breaks:** Break the text into shorter, more manageable segments.
- 3. Break at natural pauses:** Use commas, periods, or conjunctions to determine where to split lines.
- 4. Avoid text running across the screen:** If the text extends too far, it becomes harder to read quickly.

Example for Closed Captions

✘ Before Line Breaks:

In this course, you will learn what Hand Hygiene is and why it matters. You'll see how our organization is committed to infection prevention.

✔ After Line Breaks:

Segment 1:

In this course, you will learn what Hand Hygiene is and why it matters.

Segment 2:

You'll see how our organization is committed to infection prevention.

Test Accessibility

- Test with keyboard navigation and screen readers ([JAWS](#), [NVDA](#))
- Use high contrast mode
- Ensure course is fully functional without a mouse

Stay WCAG Compliant

Checklist:

- ✓ Keyboard accessible
- ✓ Alt text complete
- ✓ Logical focus order
- ✓ Sufficient color contrast
- ✓ Captions on all media
- ✓ Tested with assistive tech

Accessibility Challenge (Hands-On)

Apply what you've learned!

Challenge:

- Add alt text to 3 objects
- Adjust focus order
- Adjust color contrast
- Add captions to one slide
- Test tab order

Troubleshooting & Q&A

- Tab skips an object → Check object visibility in Focus Order
- Screen reader says 'button, button' → Rename objects
- Audio lacks captions → Add via Player > Captions
- Low contrast? → Add overlay or adjust colors

Resources & Wrap-Up

- [WCAG 2.1 Guidelines](#)
- **Articulate Community:** [All About Accessibility](#)
- [Storyline 360 Accessibility Maturity Plan](#)
- [WebAIM Contrast Checker](#)
- [NVDA \(Free Screen Reader\)](#)
- **Deque University:** [Web Accessibility Checklist](#)

Thank You!

- Thank you for joining!
- You're now equipped to make eLearning more inclusive and compliant.
- Continue learning and advocate for accessibility in every course!