



Image Descriptions: A Guide

Alternative text (alt text) is a brief description added to images on web content to ensure accessibility for individuals with visual impairments. Screen readers use alt text to describe images to users, enabling them to understand the content and context of the images. Alt text is essential for creating inclusive and accessible social media content.

Top Tips for Writing Effective Alt Text

- 1. Be Concise but Descriptive:**
 - Provide a clear and brief description of the image, focusing on the essential elements. Aim for 125 characters or fewer.
 - Example: "A person in a wheelchair using a ramp to enter a building."
- 2. Include Relevant Information:**
 - Highlight the key details that convey the purpose or context of the image. Avoid unnecessary details that do not add value.
 - Example: "City council meeting schedule for July 10, 2024."
- 3. Include Humor:**
 - Alt text does not always need to be dry. If there is humor communicated in the image, it should be communicated in the alt text.
 - Example: Image Description: A Cat Wearing Sunglasses and Sipping Coffee. OK Alt Text: "Cat wearing sunglasses." Good Alt Text (with humor): "Cool cat sips coffee, contemplating life choices."
- 4. Avoid Redundancy:**
 - Do not repeat information already present in the surrounding text or image captions. Alt text should complement the existing content.
 - Example: If the caption reads "Mayor giving a speech," alt text might be "Close-up of the mayor speaking at the podium."
- 5. Use Proper Punctuation:**
 - Proper punctuation helps screen readers to pause and breathe, making the description easier to understand.
 - Example: "A group of people at a park, enjoying a sunny day."
- 6. Skip "Image of" Phrases:**
 - Screen readers automatically announce that it is an image, so there's no need to start with "Image of" or "Picture of."
 - Example: Instead of "Image of a cat sitting on a windowsill," use "Cat sitting on a windowsill."
- 7. Consider the Context:**

- Ensure the alt text aligns with the context in which the image appears. The description should make sense within the content of the post.
- Example: If the post discusses community events, the alt text for an image of a park should relate to the event.

8. Use Keywords Wisely:

- Incorporate relevant keywords naturally, as they can help with search engine optimization (SEO) without compromising readability.
- Example: "Sunset over Salt Lake City skyline, with mountains in the background."

Example of Alt Text Use in Social Media

Post Text: "Join us for the annual community picnic this Saturday! Enjoy fun activities, great food, and live music."

Image: A photo of families and children enjoying various activities in a park.

Alt Text: "Families and children participating in activities at a community picnic in the park."

Resources

- [How to add alt text to Facebook images](#)
- [How to add alt text to Twitter images](#)
- [How to add alt text to Instagram images](#)
- [How blind people navigate Instagram \(a video\)](#)

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References

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