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# Add alt text to images in Microsoft Word [1]

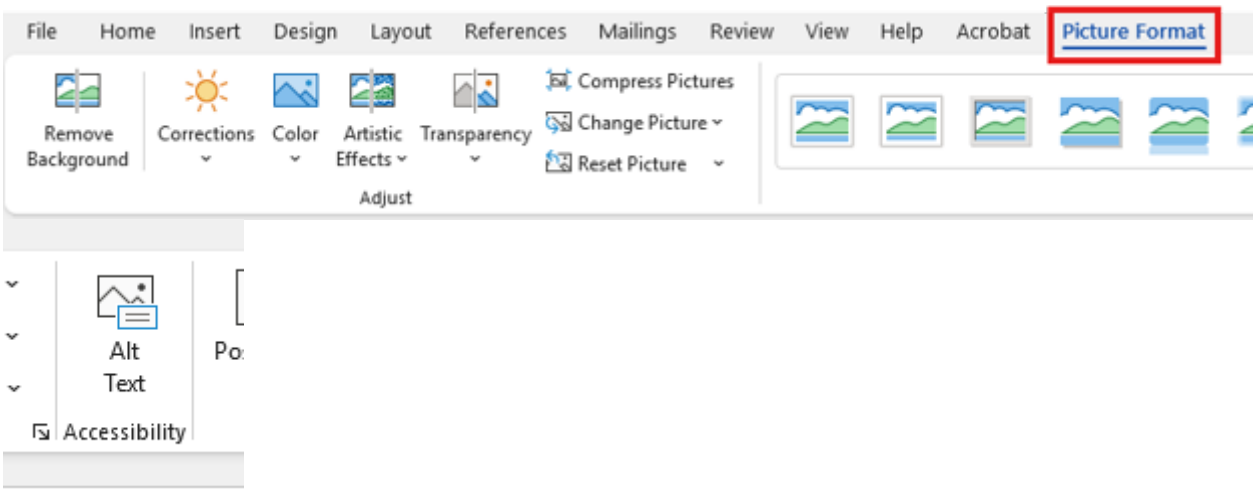
June 16, 2026 by ES and UIS Communications [2]

Images and graphs can visually enhance a document. However, many people rely on screen readers and other assistive tools to navigate their daily work. That's why every image in your document should include alt text, or alternative text.

Without alt text, screen readers skip images and readers miss essential context.

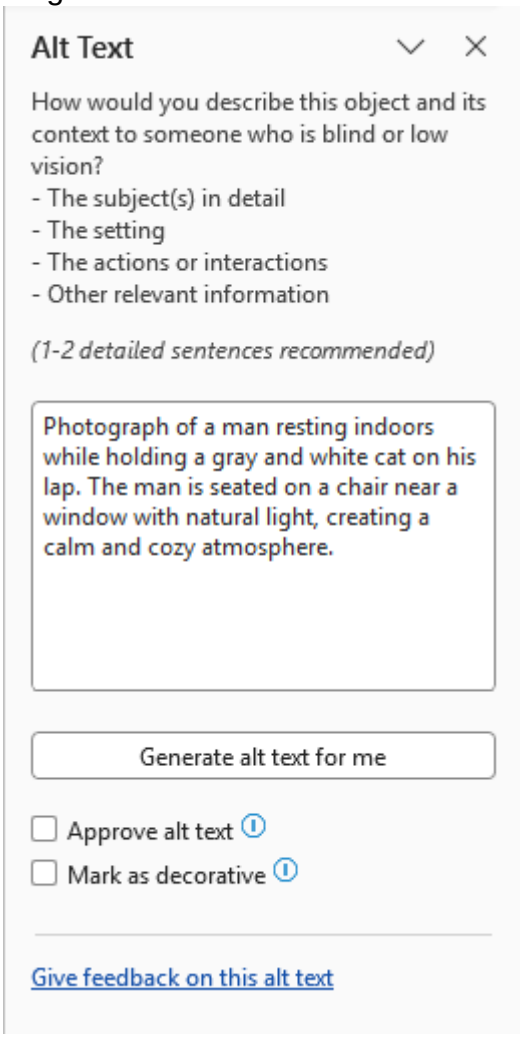
## Add alt text

1. In Word, open the Alt Text panel using one of these methods:
   - Select the image. Then select **Picture Format** from the ribbon and choose **Alt Text**.




   - Right-click the image and select **View Alt Text**.
2. In the Alt Text pane, type a brief description of the image — often a few words, and no

longer than 1-2 sentences




NOTE: Word can auto-generate alt text. If you use this option, review the description to confirm it is accurate before saving.

3. If the image is decorative and contains no meaningful information, check **Mark as Decorative**. Screen readers will announce the image as decorative, so readers know they aren't missing important information

**NOTE:** Alt text is saved with the Word document, not the image file — so if you use the image elsewhere (in an email, on a website, or in another program), you'll need to add alt text again in that context. It does carry over when you export the document as an accessible PDF [3].

Learn more about writing alt text and other accessibility practices at the CU Boulder Digital Accessibility Office website [4].

Microsoft [5], accessibility [6]
**Display Title:**
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No

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