

Are your department's web pages accessible to all? ^[1]

April 30, 2024 by [ES and UIS Communications](#) ^[2]

Color contrast refers to the difference between the brightness of the background color and the foreground color of digital content.

Black text on a white background is very high contrast; light grey text on a white background is very low contrast.

CU Light Gray (#A2A4A3) on a white background is an inaccessible color combination.

Color contrast is important because people often have difficulty perceiving content when there isn't sufficient contrast. High-contrast color combinations are easier to distinguish without difficulty and are critical for individuals who have low vision or colorblindness and benefit many others.

The University of Colorado follows the [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\)](#) ^[3] for minimum ratios of contrast for small and large text:

- **Large text**, defined as unbolded text that is 18pt or larger, or bolded text that is 14pt or larger, is required to meet a 3:1 contrast ratio.
- **Small text**, defined as unbolded text that is smaller than 18pt, or bolded text that is smaller than 14pt, is required to meet a 4.5:1 contrast ratio.
- Any meaningful **graphic elements** like a warning icon or a checkmark are also required to meet a 3:1 contrast ratio.

Measuring color contrast

[Color contrast checker](#) ^[4] tools can be used to make sure your content has sufficient levels of contrast. Avoid relying on eyesight alone to verify sufficient color contrast, instead use the [color contrast checker](#) ^[4] tool to make sure.

Did You Know? CU Gold and white are an inaccessible color combination due to a 1.9:1 color contrast ratio, which means it should not be used for normal text, large text, or

meaningful images. Read about [Accessible CU Boulder Color Combinations](#) [5] and visit OIT's Digital Accessibility Office color contrast webpage [6] to learn more.

[accessibility](#) [7]

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[2] <https://www.cu.edu/blog/tech-tips/author/110439> [3] <https://webaim.org/articles/contrast/#ratio>

[4] <https://www.tpgi.com/color-contrast-checker/> [5] <https://www.colorado.edu/accessible-technology/color-combinations> [6] <https://www.colorado.edu/digital-accessibility/resources/content-accessibility-fundamentals/color-contrast> [7] <https://www.cu.edu/blog/tech-tips/tag/accessibility>