

Digital Accessibility

VASSAR

Welcome

- This session is for Vassar employees who create and update content digitally, including email, web pages, and Google Docs.
- In this session we're diving into the importance of adjusting content to be accessible to all users, with examples and instructions.

Provided by the Web Development and Strategy team within the [Office of Communications](#). You can reach us at webupdates@vassar.edu.



Contents

Digital Accessibility

- Accessibility is Access for Everyone
- Required
- Some Alternative Ways People Read Content with Assistive Technology

How to Make Content Accessible

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- Content Structure
(Title, Headings, and Lists)
- Links
- Images
- Color
- Readability
- Tables

Accessibility is required by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)





Digital Accessibility



Accessibility Requirements include Digital Accessibility

Digital accessibility refers to the inclusive practice of removing barriers that prevent interaction with, or access to websites, content, digital tools and technologies.

Photo credit: [Disabled And Here](#)

Digital Accessibility is Required

The **Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)** requires accessible content including websites, emails, and files.

The best way to be compliant is by following the **Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG)**

WCAG is a set of web standards that aim to make the internet a more inclusive and accessible space for all.

Create content that is:

- easy to navigate, read, and comprehend
- accessed easily—no need to contact someone for a different format
- part of a consistent experience—no “speed bumps” or access barriers

Accessibility Removes Barriers

People who are most susceptible to access barriers are those with:

- Decreased vision
- Different styles of learning
- Literacy
- Language/linguistic challenges
- Cognitive diversity
- Motor or dexterity impairment

The disability is not the barrier.
The barrier is content that isn't accessible.

Accessibility is Access for Everyone

Providing accessible content ensures that everyone, regardless of their abilities, can fully participate in and benefit from the information and services provided online.

We're providing content free from barriers that will work with many devices.



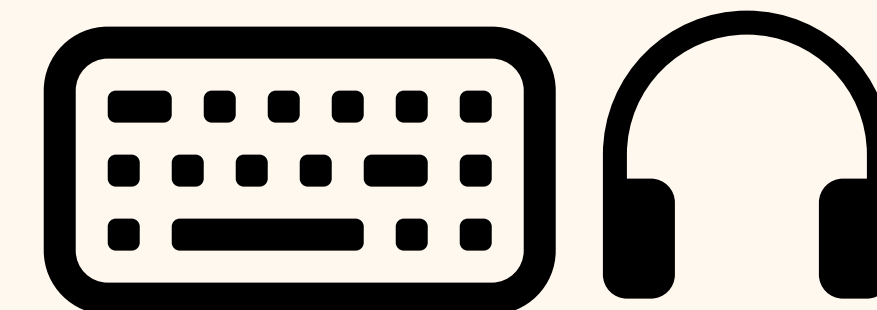
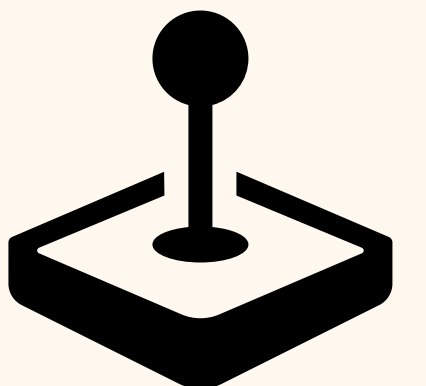
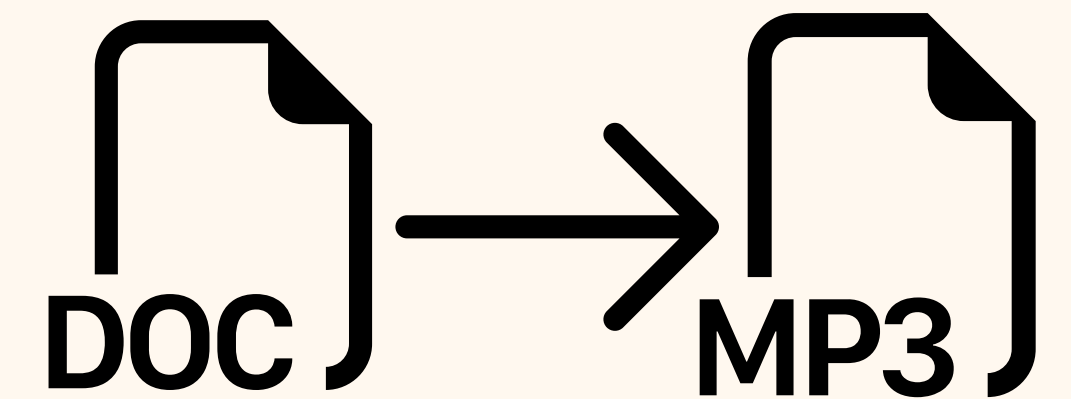
We're going beyond tablets and phones

Assistive technology helps people both with and without disabilities access content.

Assistive Technology

Tools for accessing and interacting with content:

- Document converters
- Screen magnifiers
- Audio feedback when typing
- Braille translator
- Eye gaze and head mouse systems
- Joysticks, buttons, foot pedals
- Text-to speech (computer reads text aloud)
- Screen readers (full access to a system with key commands and computer voice)



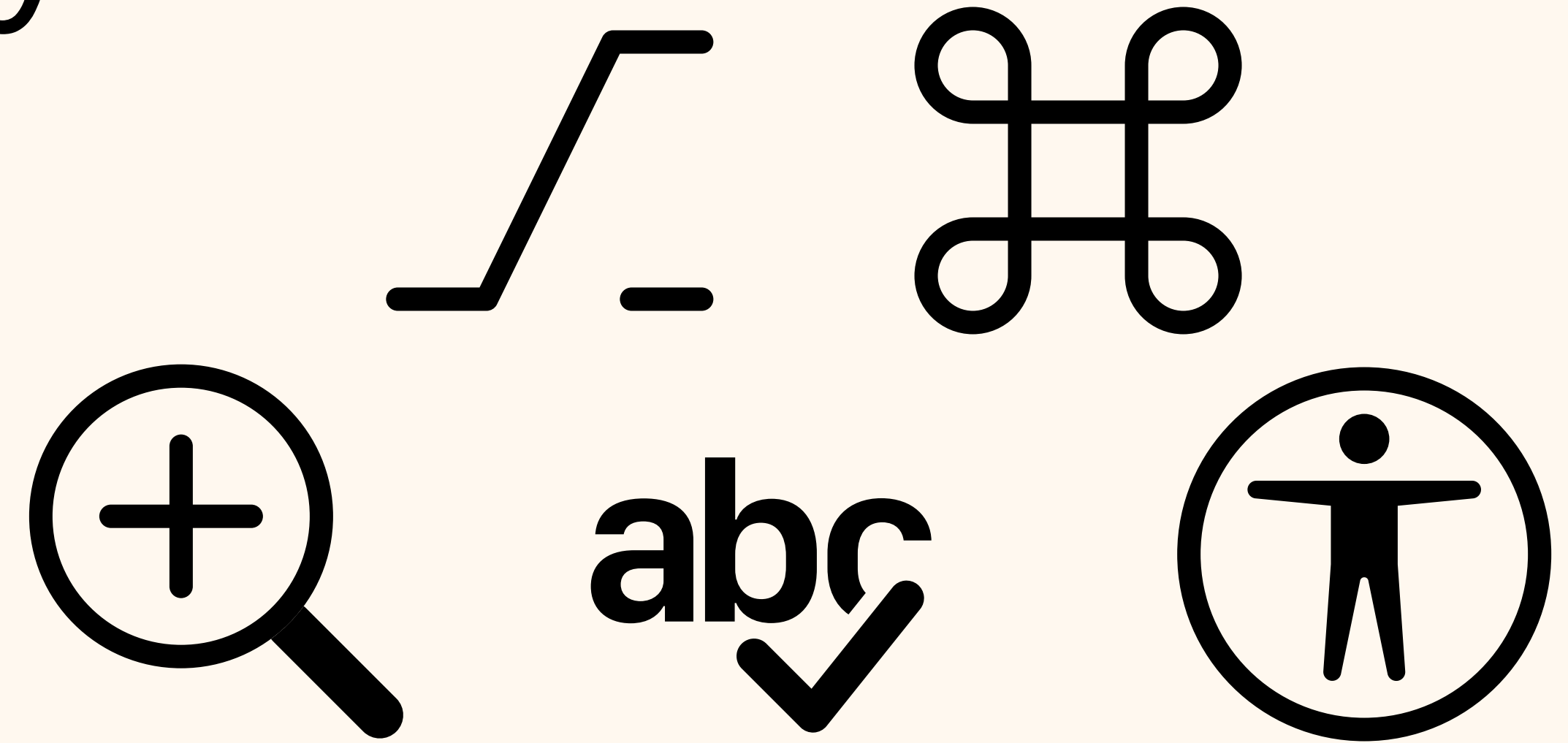
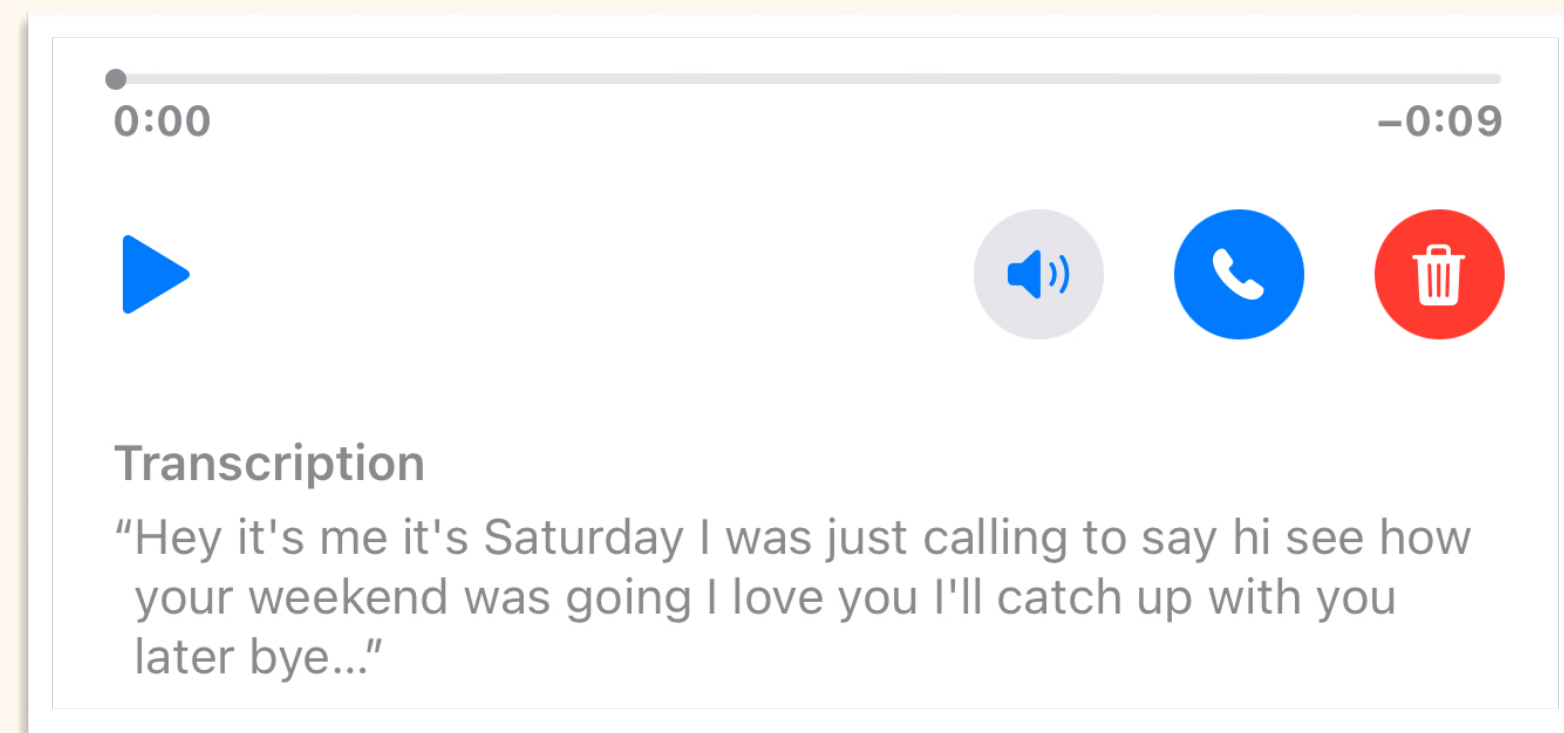
Refreshable Braille Display



Assistive Technology

Assistive technology also includes:

- Keyboard shortcuts
- Cursor size and shape
- Spell checkers and grammar checkers
- Predictive Text
- Visual Voicemail





How to Make Content Accessible



Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- Content Structure
- Links
- Images
- Color
- Readability
- Tables

A large, light blue geometric shape, resembling a parallelogram or a tilted rectangle, is positioned on the left side of the slide. It has a thin blue outline and a lighter blue fill.

Content Structure

Title, Headings, and Lists

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe. Ingredients: 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened. 3/4 cup granulated sugar. 3/4 cup packed brown sugar. 2 large eggs. 1 teaspoon vanilla extract. 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour. 1 teaspoon baking soda. 1/2 teaspoon salt. 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips. Instructions: Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C). Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in the vanilla extract. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until well combined. Fold in the chocolate chips until evenly distributed throughout the dough. Drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving space between each cookie for spreading. Bake in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown. The centers may still look slightly undercooked, but they will continue to set as they cool. Allow the cookies to cool on the baking sheets for a few minutes before transferring them to wire racks to cool completely.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened.
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar.
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar.
- 2 large eggs.
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.
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Instructions

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with a title

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(bulleted or
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Structure Improves the Quality of Your Content.

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Use the Styles menu to provide the best and most consistent results.

Avoid creating your own formatting, such as indenting with tabs, using dashes for bullets, etc.

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Instructions

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).

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Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

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Instructions

Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).

Set the Title and Headings

For each line you want to style:

1. Place your cursor anywhere in the sentence.

2. Select the Style from the menu.

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Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

1 cup butter, softened.

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Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).

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1 cup

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Ingredients

3/4 cup granulated sugar.

3/4 cup packed brown sugar.

2 large eggs.

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Instructions

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Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

1 cup butter, softened

3/4 cup white sugar

3/4 cup brown sugar

2 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla extract.

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour.

1 teaspoon baking soda.

1/2 teaspoon salt.

2 cups semisweet chocolate chips.

Instructions

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Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

If needed,
Expand the Menu

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Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.

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4. Beat in the eggs one at a time, then stir in the vanilla extract.
5. In a separate bowl, sift together the flour, baking soda, and salt.
6. Gradually add the dry ingredients to the wet ingredients, mixing until well combined.
7. Fold in the chocolate chips until evenly distributed throughout the dough.
8. Drop rounded tablespoons of dough onto the prepared baking sheets, leaving space between each cookie for spreading.
9. Bake in the preheated oven for 8 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are golden brown.

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Assistive Technology

Screen Readers can pop a list of only the headings on the page.

Elements List

Type:

☐ Links

☒ Headings

☐ Form fields

- Ingredients
- Instructions
- Basic Equipment

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- ✓ Content Structure
 - Links
 - Images
- Color
- Readability
- Tables



Links

1. Underline for links only
2. Meaningful link text

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Basic Equipment

- **Mixing Bowls:** At least two, preferably of different sizes (one for dry ingredients, one for wet).
- **Measuring Cups and Spoons:** For measuring ingredients accurately.
- **Wooden Spoon or Electric Mixer:** For creaming butter and sugar together.
- **Spatula:** For mixing and scraping down the sides of the bowl.
- **Baking Sheets:** For baking the cookies. Non-stick or lined with parchment paper.
- **Parchment Paper or Silicone Baking Mat:** To line the baking sheets.
- **Cooling Rack:** To cool the cookies after baking.

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Avoid using underline.
Reserve underlining for links only.

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Use **bold** or *italics* instead of underlining digital content.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

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Share

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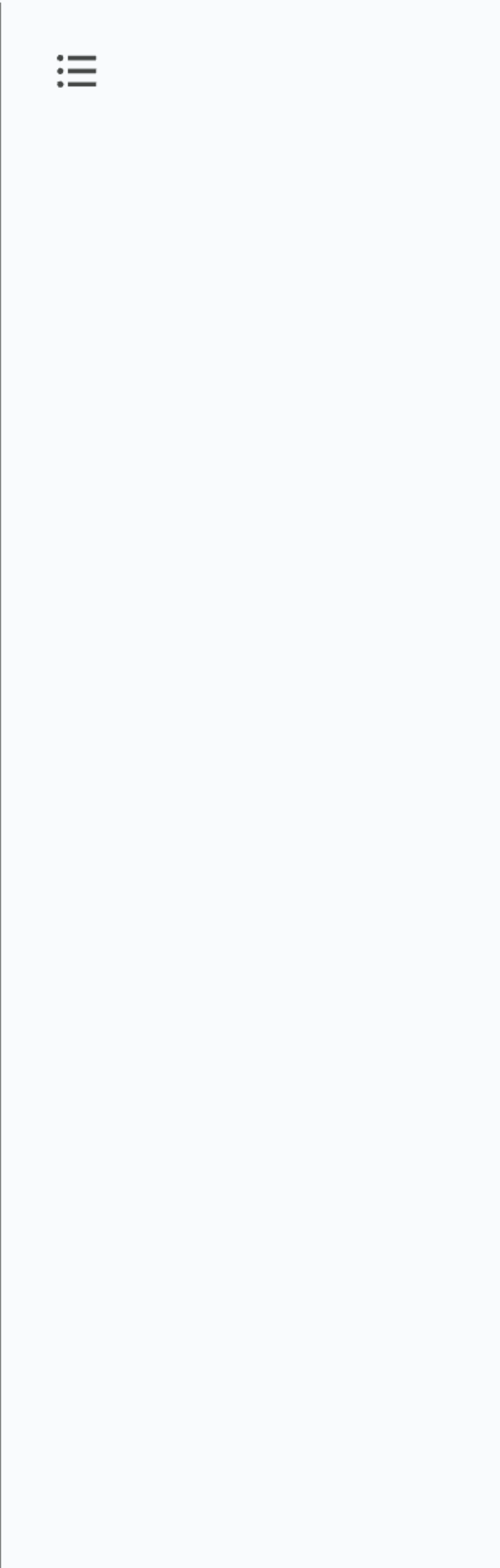
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Editing

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 - <https://a.co/d/2RTLSCP>
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Examples of what to avoid

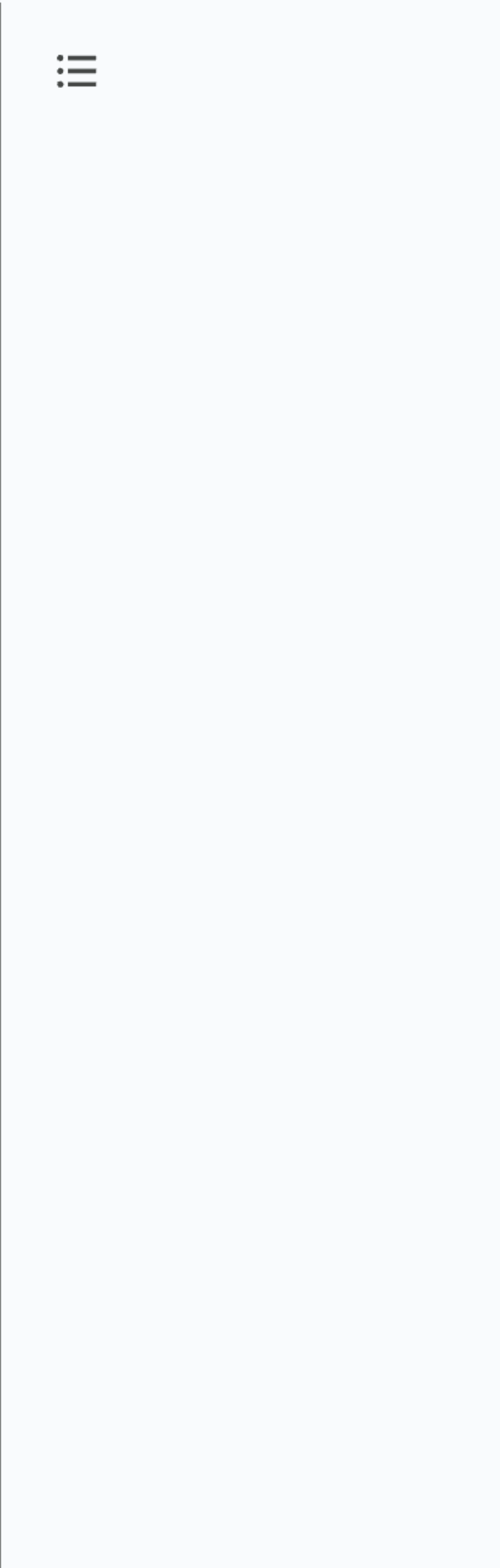


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Avoid using the full URL/
link for link text





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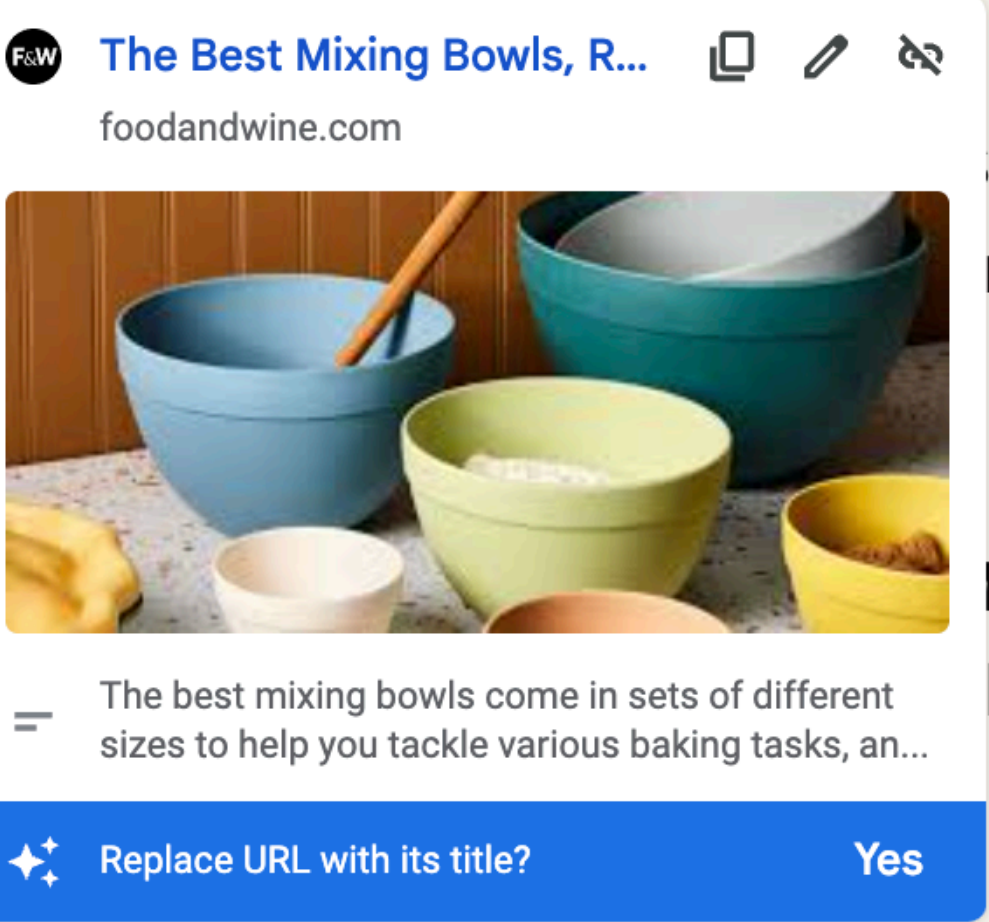
Avoid using the full URL/
link for link text

Avoid “Read more” or
“Click here”



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- **Parchment paper:** To line the baking sheets.
- **Cooling rack:** For cooling the cookies.

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Basic Equipment

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 - [The Best Mixing Bowls, Recommended by a Pro Baker](#)
 - <https://a.co/d/2RTLSCP>
- **Measuring Tools:** <https://a.co/d/2RTLSCP> 🌐 📄 ✎ 🔒 Measuring ingredients accurately.
- **Wooden Spoon or Electric Mixer:** For creaming butter and sugar together.
- **Spatula:** For mixing and scraping down the sides of the bowl. [Click here.](#)
- **Baking Sheets:** For baking the cookies. Non-stick or lined with parchment paper.
- **Parchment Paper or Silicone Baking Mat:** To line the baking sheets.
- **Cooling Rack:** To cool the cookies after baking.

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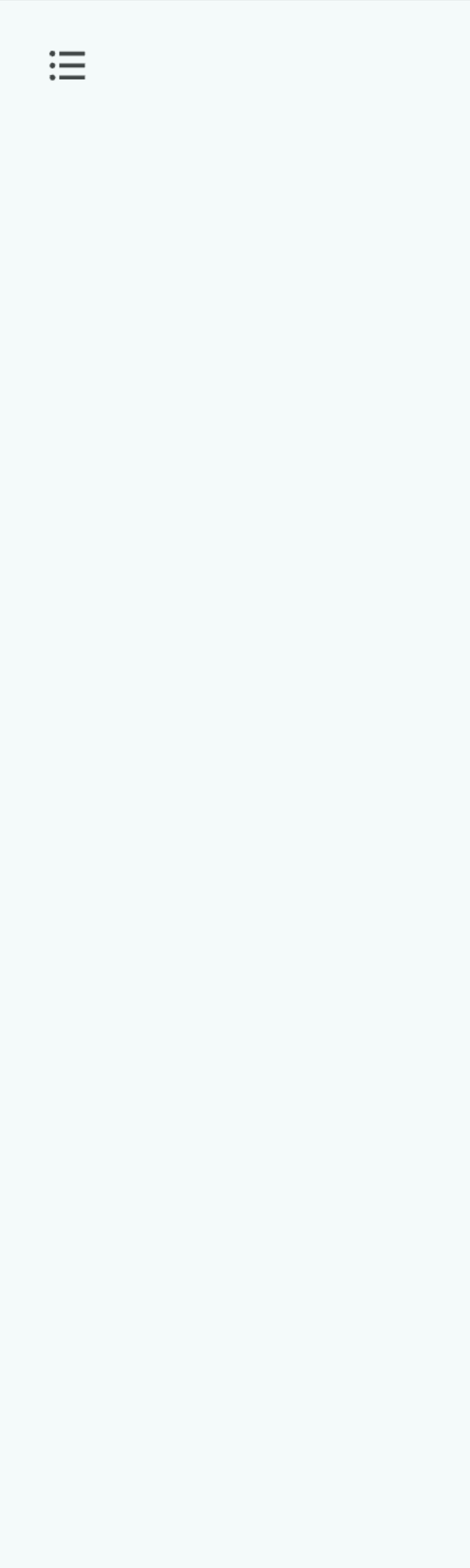
g sheets.

= / favorite mixing bowl set

Q https://a.co/d/2RTLSCP

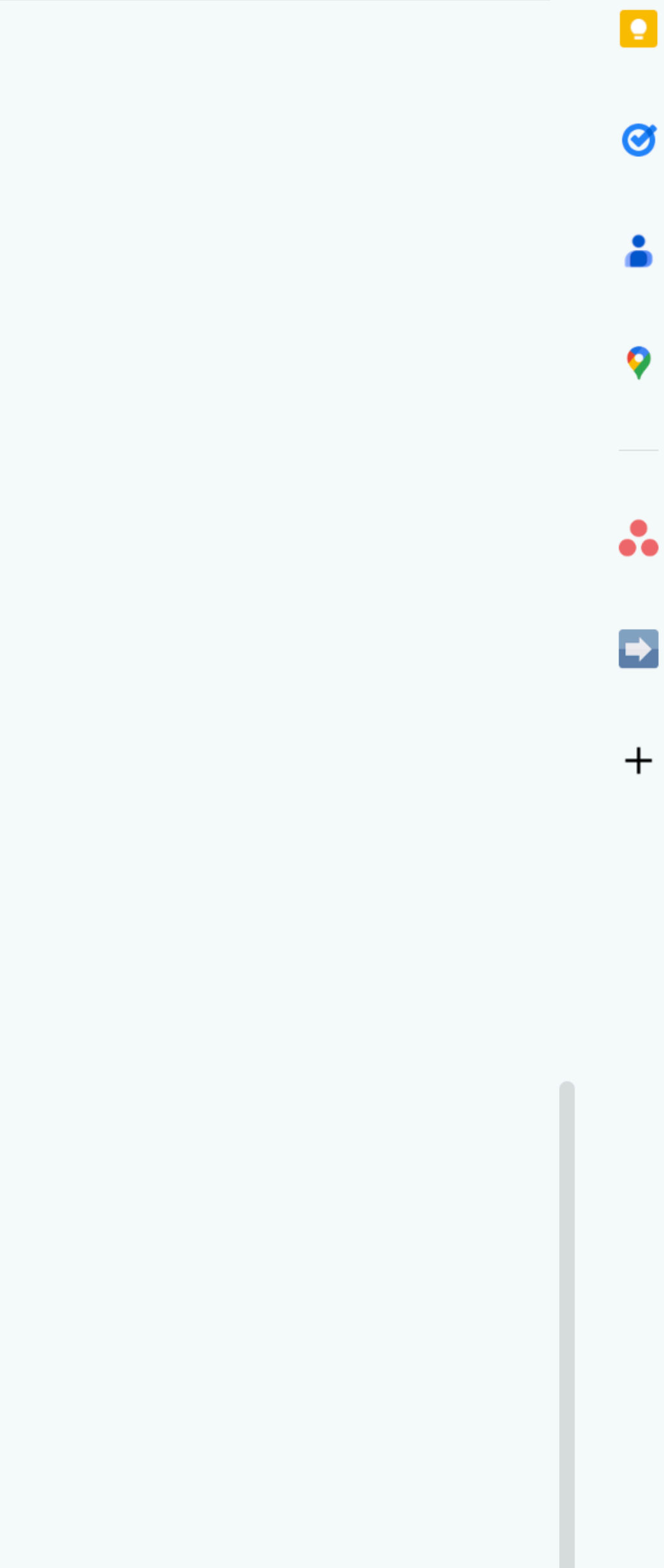
Apply

↪ https://a.co/d/2RTLSCP



Basic Equipment

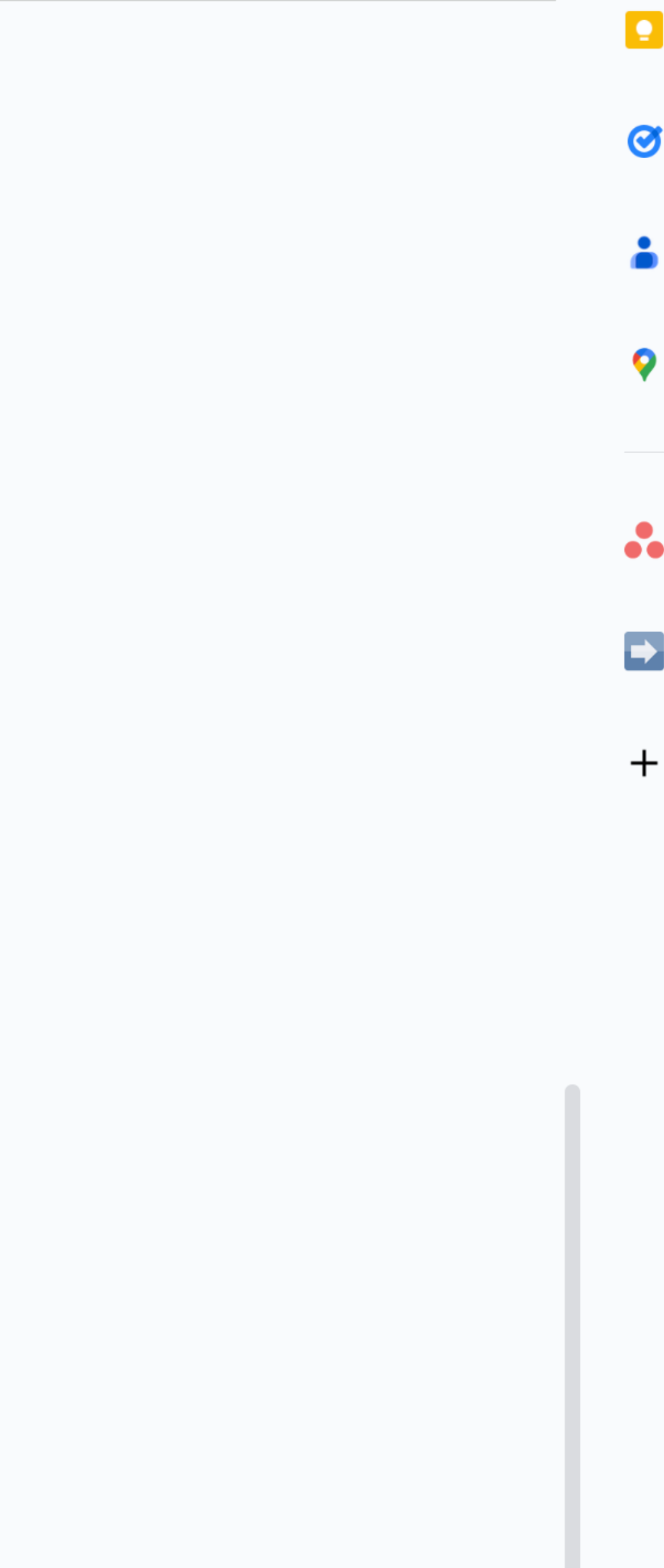
- **Mixing Bowls:** At least two, preferably of different sizes (one for dry ingredients, one for wet).
 - [The Best Mixing Bowls, Recommended by a Pro Baker](#)
 - [My favorite mixing bowl set](#)
- **Measuring Cups and Spoons:** For measuring ingredients accurately.
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125%

Normal text

14

B I U A

Editing

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- **Parchment Paper or Silicone Baking Mat:** To
- **Cooling Rack:** To cool the cookies after baking

Assistive Technology

Screen Readers can provide a list of links on the page.

Elements List

Type:

☒ Links

☐ Headings

☐ Form fields

☐ Buttons

[The Best Mixing Bowls, Recommended by a Pro Baker](#)

[My favorite mixing bowl set](#)

[Mixing Techniques](#)

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- ✓ Content Structure
 - Color
 - Readability
 - Tables
- ✓ Links
 - Images



Images

1. All images need “alt text”
2. Avoid text in images

All Images Need Alt Text

Alt Text is alternative text describing what is in the image for someone who can't see it.

It's different than what you'd write for a caption.



Caption

Trevor Babb
Photo: Peter Brunelli

Alt Text

Person in glasses wearing a long sleeve gray shirt playing the guitar.



Sample Page

The Department of Music regularly presents concerts, master classes, and workshops by visiting artists and ensembles as well as by members of the faculty. All events are free and open to the college community, and most are also open to the public.



Sample Page

The Department of Music regularly presents concerts, master classes, and workshops by visiting artists and ensembles as well as by members of the faculty. All events are free and open to the college community, and most are also open to the public.

Image: An overhead view of three musicians performing: a pianist, a violinist, and a horn player.

About Music Concerts & Events

All events not otherwise noted take place in the Skinner Hall of Music's Mary Anna Fox Martel Recital Hall and are open and free to the public. Individuals with disabilities requiring accommodations should contact the Office of Campus Activities at [\(845\) 437-5370](tel:(845)437-5370). Skinner Recital Hall is equipped with a LOOP Hearing System. The loop will offer improved clarity for persons with hearing loss who wear telecoil —or T-coil—equipped hearing aids.

Programs are subject to change. For further information and up-to-date details on all Vassar College Department of Music concerts, please call [\(845\) 437-7294](tel:(845)437-7294) or revisit this page. Latecomers will be seated at the performers' discretion. All

How to Craft Alt Text

- Write Alt Text to describe what you see in the image, in context with the content it appears with.
- Don't specify race or gender unless provided by the subject.
- Keep the text concise (no more than about 150 characters.)
- Don't start the Alt Text with "Image" or "Picture".
Screen readers announce "Image" before the Alt Text automatically.
- Always add a period at the end of Alt Text.
It will prevent a screen reader from combining it with the next sentence.
- Always add Alt Text—don't leave it blank.

Alt Text for Decorative Images

Put the word “decorative.” as the Alt Text.

Note: If there is an option to check, “Mark as decorative” or instruction to leave Alt Text empty, do not use this option.

It unfortunately does not produce useful behavior. Simply put the word "decorative" as the Alt Text.

decorative.



Visiting Campus

Vassar students are surrounded by an environment designed to spark something amazing—a place where greatness can spring to life.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened.
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar. |
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar.
- 2 large eggs.
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour.
- 1 teaspoon baking soda.
- 1/2 teaspoon salt.
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips.



Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper or silicone baking mats.
3. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy.

3. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy.

Ingredients

-
- A photograph of seven chocolate chip cookies arranged on a white, scalloped-edge plate. The cookies are golden-brown with visible dark chocolate chips. The plate is set on a light-colored wooden surface. There are red and blue geometric shapes (a triangle and a square) overlaid on the image, likely for design purposes.

For each image:

- 1/2" margin Fix position on page

e baking mats.

3. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the softened butter, granulated sugar, and brown sugar until light and fluffy.

- > Size & Rotation
- > Text Wrapping
- > Position
- > Recolor
- > Adjustments

Accessed by screen readers for people who might have trouble seeing your content.

The finished cookies: golden brown with
crispy edges and soft in the center.

Advanced options



I give you "cat noir"

Alt text: black cat basking in dramatic lighting, in black and white



2 comments

Avoid Text in Images

- Crafting alternative text can be complicated.
- Separate text and images.
- Include all text in the page content.

Separate Text from Images

- Avoid using images of posters as content.
- Include text, as text, with a simple image.

Latine Heritage Month Kickoff

Sep. 16, 2024, 5:00–6:30 p.m.

Location: Villard Room, Main Building

“Unidos bajo el mismo camino”

All are welcome to join the ALANA Center in collaboration with the Latine Students Union, Ritmo, Students of Caribbean Ancestry and Student Growth & Engagement for a special evening celebration to kick off Latine Heritage Month. It will be a joyous time to be in community with one another, celebrating with lively performances, hearing from engaging speakers, actively participating in activities, and indulging in cultural food/beverages.



Counseling Service Staff



Wendy Freedman



Natalia M.M. Potter



Alison (Ali) Krause



Robin Shutinya



Vinny Dehili

VASSAR COLLEGE COUNSELING SERVICE

Academic year: 9am-5pm (845) 437-5700

<https://offices.vassar.edu/counseling-service/>
counseling@vassar.edu



Elene Garay Nicholas



Ben Hindell



Carly Shumaker



Sarah Abarbanel



Jess Diaz

Counseling Service staff can be reached at [\(845\) 437-5700](tel:8454375700). See below for additional contact information.

Counseling Service Staff



Image: A collage including text and staff headshots. All text and image descriptions are included below.

Counseling Service staff can be reached at [\(845\) 437-5700](tel:8454375700). See below for additional contact information.

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- ✓ Content Structure
 - Color
 - Readability
 - Tables
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Images



Color

1. Check for sufficient contrast
2. Avoid relying on color

Check for Sufficient Contrast

- Color is a barrier for the visually-impaired, including color-blindness.
- When indicating something with color, also include text.



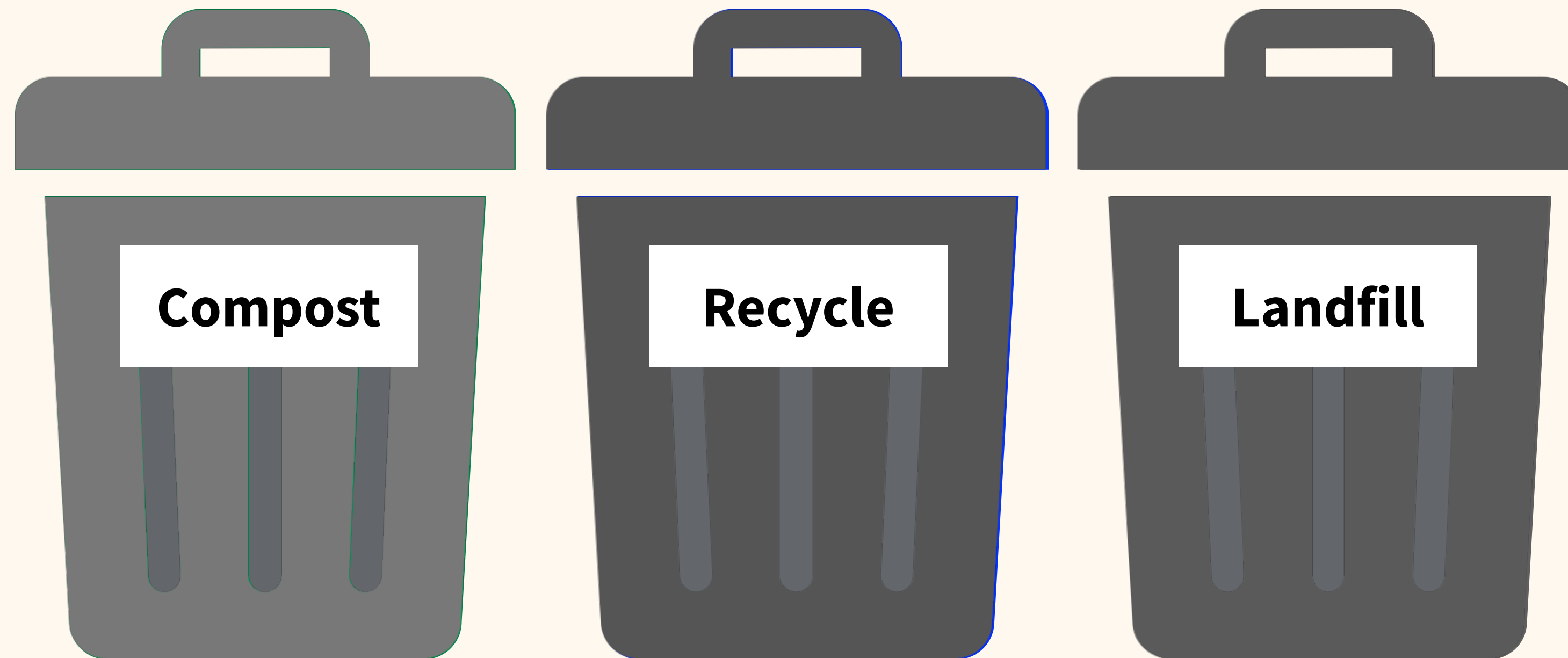
Check Contrast with Black & White

- Some programs can preview printing in black & white.
- There are contrast-checkers available online.
- You may be able to mitigate some contrast issues by adding text.



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Avoid communicating solely with color.

- Color is a barrier for the visually-impaired, including color-blindness.
- When indicating something with color, also include text.

**Example of
what to avoid**



Event RSVP

Name

First Last

Email

Comments / Dietary Needs

Paragraph ▼ **B** *I* ☰ ☷ “ ☰ ☷ ☷ ☷ 🔗 🔗 📄

Avoid communicating solely with color.

- Color is a barrier for the visually-impaired, including color-blindness.
- When indicating something with color, also include text.

Add text when
indicating
something with
color.

Event RSVP

Name *(Required)*




First Last

Email *(Required)*

Comments / Dietary Needs

Paragraph ▼

B *I* ☰ ☰¹/₂/₃ “ ☰ ☰ ☰

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

✓ Content Structure

✓ Links

✓ Images

✓ Color

- Readability

- Tables



Readability

1. Easy to read
2. Easy to navigate

Is your document easy to read?

- **Keep content simple.**
 - Avoid lengthy text and complex words.
- **Spell out acronyms the first time they are used.**
 - Undergraduate Research Summer Institute (URSI).
- **Reserve all-caps for acronyms (and avoid Small Caps)**
 - All-capitalized text is harder to read.
 - Assistive Technology (especially with voice) have mixed results.
- **Make adjustments as appropriate for your content.**
 - Consider suggestions carefully when using automated tools for spelling, grammar, and readability (spell check, [Grammarly](#), etc.)

Is your document easy to navigate?

Content structure improves readability.

Headings, lists, and links can be used to navigate content.

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

Ingredients

- 1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar.
- 3/4 cup packed brown sugar.
- 2 large eggs.
- 1 teaspoon vanilla extract.
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour.
- 1 teaspoon baking soda.
- 1/2 teaspoon salt.
- 2 cups semisweet chocolate chips

Instructions

1. Preheat your oven to 375°F (190°C).
2. Line baking sheets with parchment paper.
3. In a large mixing bowl, cream together the butter and brown sugar until light and fluffy.

Elements List

Type:

☐ Links

☒ Headings

☐ Form fields

☐ Buttons

Ingredients

Instructions

Basic Equipment

Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- ✓ Content Structure
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Images
- ✓ Color
- ✓ Readability
 - Tables



Tables

1. Use for tabular data only
2. Requires labels and headings

Tables are for Tabular Data Only

- All tables need designated **headers** (also known as **labels**) for every column.
- Headers/labels can also be applied to rows.

	Heading for Column B	Heading for Column C
Heading for Row 1	Value	Value
Heading for Row 2	Value	Value
Heading for Row 3	Value	Value

Ingredient	U.S. Customary	Metric
Unsalted Butter, Softened	1 cup (2 sticks)	227 grams
Granulated Sugar	3/4 cup	150 grams
Packed Brown Sugar	3/4 cup	150 grams
Eggs	2 large	about 100 grams (50 grams each)
Vanilla Extract	1 teaspoon	5 milliliters
All-Purpose Flour	2 1/4 cups	280 grams



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Normal text



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**B***I*UA

- Wooden Spoon or Electric Mixer: For creaming butter and sugar together.
- Spatula: For mixing and scraping down the sides of the bowl.
- Baking Sheets: For baking the cookies. Non-stick or lined with parchment paper.
- Parchment Paper or Silicone Baking Mat: To line the baking sheets.
- Cooling Rack: To cool the cookies after baking.

Ingredient Conversion

- **1 cup (2 sticks) unsalted butter, softened:** 227 grams
- **3/4 cup granulated sugar:** 150 grams
- **3/4 cup packed brown sugar:** 150 grams
- **2 large eggs:** about 100 grams (50 grams each)|
- **1 teaspoon vanilla extract:** 5 milliliters
- **2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour:** 280 grams
- **1 teaspoon baking soda:** 5 grams
- **1/2 teaspoon salt:** 3 grams
- **2 cups semisweet chocolate chips:** 340 grams



Content Adjustments and Best Practices

- ✓ Content Structure
- ✓ Links
- ✓ Images
- ✓ Color
- ✓ Readability
- ✓ Tables



Avoid PDF

1. Does it have to be a PDF?
2. Docs are accessible

PDF Documents

- **Does it have to be a PDF?**
 - Choose web pages or Google Docs over PDF files.
- If you do need a PDF from your document, **Download or Export as PDF**—don't Print as PDF
 - If you start with an accessible doc and export it you will have a more accessible PDF.
- If you have a PDF from an outside source, you may need help to make it accessible. Send a request and the PDF to webupdates@vassar.edu.



Resources

Resources

Guides

- [Service Desk Page on Web Accessibility](#)
 - [Creating Accessible Documents](#)
 - [Accessibility for the Web](#)
 - [Communications Digital Accessibility](#)
- [Vassar Style Guidelines](#)

Contrast Checker

- [Colour Contrast Analyzer](#) (Desktop software)

Compliance Standard

- [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines \(WCAG\) 2.1, Level AA](#)

Assistive Technology

- [Resource page on the accessibility office website](#)
 - [SensusAccess document conversion](#)
Requires [vassar.edu](#) email address
- Dictation/Speech recognition instructions
 - [Mac](#) | [Windows](#)
- Screen Readers
 - Mac: [VoiceOver](#), and [more accessibility features](#)
 - Windows: [NVDA \(Non-Visual Desktop Access\)](#)

Using a phone blind

Anthony S. Ferraro

Advocate, skater, musician, and more

<https://linktr.ee/asfvision>

See also:

- [How I use my Phone Blind playlist](#)
- **A Shot in the Dark**
Documentary about his senior year attempting to become the first blind NJ State Champion. ([Official Trailer](#))





Questions