

Create accessible links in Microsoft Office

Overview

When a screen reader encounters a link written out in full such as <https://vle.aston.ac.uk/> the text will be read out letter-by-letter which is confusing, time consuming and unnecessary to those listening, especially if the link is very long:

https://map.aston.ac.uk/urd/sits.urd/run/SIW_YCLR.start_url?7E2B04CE592B4791EAZjoJn27Wzs2s2nnkB3xYxcR6OJBgHwXqGtS3DOW-RmvVKxFvPPBVCD2tvg4i6Bns5N5HxGwOOxOVnxPhKyS-OZXkowMgXiLK6dHla4K6O5cjPWavxsdleySP1iRWRkkmN3Jbg9C2CYo_W_8ZE7UpDElCiOjSL4p2z174wyrXVKsUKc7Ro_KYjtMR9iLH4-qsnZtoy_ZS-59M_7EW5WXLag5ZxFGSE1siNHuvS0vHoacjix155NNGCqAo-4YwA

This does not convey where the link will lead to either sighted or non sighted readers.

You can change the text that is displayed for the link, the link itself is hidden behind this text, [Aston University Blackboard](#). This is more meaningful to those using a screen reader and to sighted readers.

Composing link text

The link text should tell the user where the link is going. Avoid using common, non-descriptive phrases such as 'learn more' or 'click here'.

Those using a screen reader may skim read your document by asking the screen reader to read out only all the links. Take these two links:

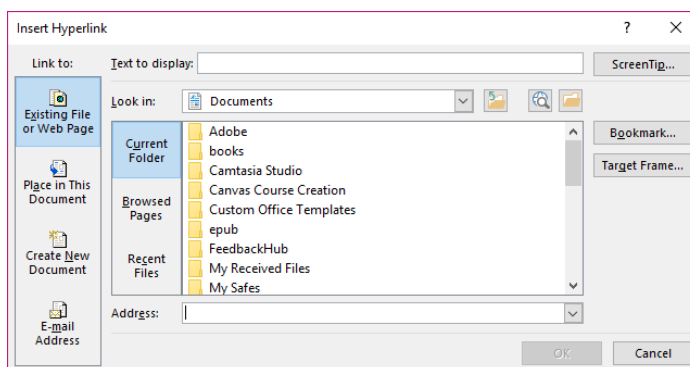
- For more information, [visit the IT Training website](#)
- For more information on IT training, [click here](#)

The link 'Visit the IT Training website' is more meaningful than 'click here', especially if that phrase is used repeatedly in a document containing lots of links.

How to add descriptive text to a link

Descriptive text is added to links in the 'Insert Hyperlink' dialog box.

1. In your document write out the descriptive phrase that will be the display text.
2. Select this text.
3. Right click on the highlighted text and choose Insert Hyperlink or Link from the menu.
4. In the 'Text to display' field you will see the text written in the document, this can be edited as needed.
5. Add your link in the 'Address' field.
6. Click OK.
7. You will now see your description of where the link will lead and the link itself is hidden behind.



[Microsoft guide to creating accessible documents](#)