

The tab order of a document

Overview

Someone who is unable to use a mouse may navigate your document using the keyboard. To do this the tab button is used to progress through the document. This will select each object in a pre-determined order.

- If you tab through a document you will notice each item is selected as you work through the tab list.
- You can ensure that the tabs follow a sensible order, especially if you have added pictures or additional text boxes.
- This is especially important in software such as PowerPoint as the slides are created only by adding objects.

Check the tab order of your document

1. On the ribbon click the Home tab.
2. From the 'Select' drop down menu choose 'Selection Pane'.
3. This opens a list of the tab order of all items on that page.

Note that the list reads from the bottom up.

In this example, Rectangle 6 is first in the tab order rather than Title 1 which is third. This is not the correct order.



Change the tab order of your documents

1. With the Selection Pane showing, click on the item that needs to be moved.
2. It will become pink in the Selection Pane.
3. In the Selection Pane you can drag and drop the item into the correct place in the list.

Note that the list reads from the bottom up.

[Microsoft guide to creating accessible documents](#)