InDesign A11y Basics

ADWebKey

Headings

Instructing InDesign to tag headings upon export to PDF

- Create a Paragraph Style for each of the heading levels you have in use
- Right click a Paragraph Style and select 'Edit Paragraph Style' or from the flyout menu in the top right corner of the Paragraph Styles window select 'Style Options'
- In the Paragraph Style Options window, select 'Export Tagging' from the menu on the left hand side
- In the PDF section select the appropriate tag / heading level from the 'Tag' drop down menu

Images

Giving informative images alternative text

- Select the image
- Open the 'Object' menu and select 'Object Export Options'
- From the 'Alt Text Source' drop down box select 'Custom'
- Enter your alt text in the box below

Tagging non-informative images as Artifacts

- Select 'Tagged PDF' at the top of the Object Export Options box
- From the 'Apply Tag' drop down box, select 'Artifact'
- Make sure all blocks of background colour, background images etc. are tagged as artifacts also as they're easy to forget
- If you are using the 'Articles' panel for reading order then anything you don't place in an article will automatically be tagged as an Artifact.

Tables

- Once a table is created, select the rows to be assigned as Header Rows
- Ensure all header rows are highlighted then right click within the highlighted section
- Select 'Convert to Header Rows'

- If that option isn't available and you see 'Convert to Body Rows' in it's place, then those Header Rows are already assigned
- With the table selected, go to the Table menu > Table Options and select Table setup
- Under 'Headers and Footers' in the Repeat Header drop down box, select 'Every Text Column'

Reading Order

- Reading order in the exported PDF document is informed by the order objects are placed in the articles panel (top to bottom) and their stacking order in the layers panel (bottom to top). The layers panel also affects the way content will reflow.
- By default the articles panel is empty and the reading order needs to be constructed manually
- Open the Articles panel by selecting 'Articles' from the 'Window' menu
- Drag and drop content into the articles panel in the order it is intended to be read
- Objects can be shuffled around within the articles panel as required
- In a large document it is advantageous to create multiple articles to keep things organised
- From the flyout menu in the Articles window ensure 'Use for Reading Order in Tagged PDF' is selected. This is very important, as the exported PDF will not read correctly without it
- In the layers panel objects need to be ordered from bottom to top, with the first object in the reading order at the bottom of the layer.

Document Info

Adding Metadata

- From the File menu select 'File info'
- Enter a Document Title and Author in the corresponding boxes

Running Headers and Footers

- Creating a running header or footer
- Provide page numbers for sighted users
- Do not include either of these in the reading order

Bookmarks

- Open the bookmarks panel from the Window menu
- Individually highlight the headings and use the '+' button to create a new bookmark for each one
- Ensure your heading levels are nested within one another. It is possible to do this by dragging and dropping the different bookmarks within the bookmark panel. However, it is easier to do it as you go.
- To nest bookmarks as they are created, make sure you highlight the higher level bookmark in the bookmarks panel before creating your new bookmark. For example, if you are creating a bookmark from an H2 heading, highlight the H1 heading in the bookmarks panel, then create the new bookmark. The H2 will automatically be nested under the H1 in the bookmarks panel.
- If your document is using a lot of heading levels it is probably not necessary to create bookmarks for more than the first two or three levels. Too many bookmarks can become a hindrance.

On Export

- Select export from the File menu
- From the format drop down box, select 'Adobe PDF (Interactive)'
- In the Export to Interactive PDF window, make sure the 'Create Tagged PDF' and 'Use Structure for Tab Order' options are selected.
- Go to the Advanced options and set 'Display Title' to 'Document Title'
- Set the appropriate language for your document