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Lists

Lists are often overlooked as an accessibility feature, but the ability to move quickly and effectively through long lists of points is a key reading need. Unfortunately, it's still the case that lists are rendered as anything but proper lists, i.e. you'll often see a new paragraph for each item, or manual line breaks to separate entries, etc.

When a reader has to traverse every item in the list one item at a time to get to the end, or listen to the entire list from beginning to end, the problems of bad markup become more pronounced. Properly tagging lists is a small measure that can greatly decrease reader frustration.



Everything that is actually a list should be formatted as a list, even if it's not presented as a list in the source file.



In addition to lists found in the main body of the work, there are a few items which are normally formatted as a list, including:

- [Table of Contents](#);
- [Index](#); and
- [Bibliography](#)

Do not make lists with just manually typed characters like dashes, numbers, asterisks, or graphics as a screenreader may not be able to read the list in the proper order. When bullet or numbered list formatting is used, screenreaders will properly announce the text as being part of a list, and provide a means for the user to quickly navigate between items as well as move in and out of lists.



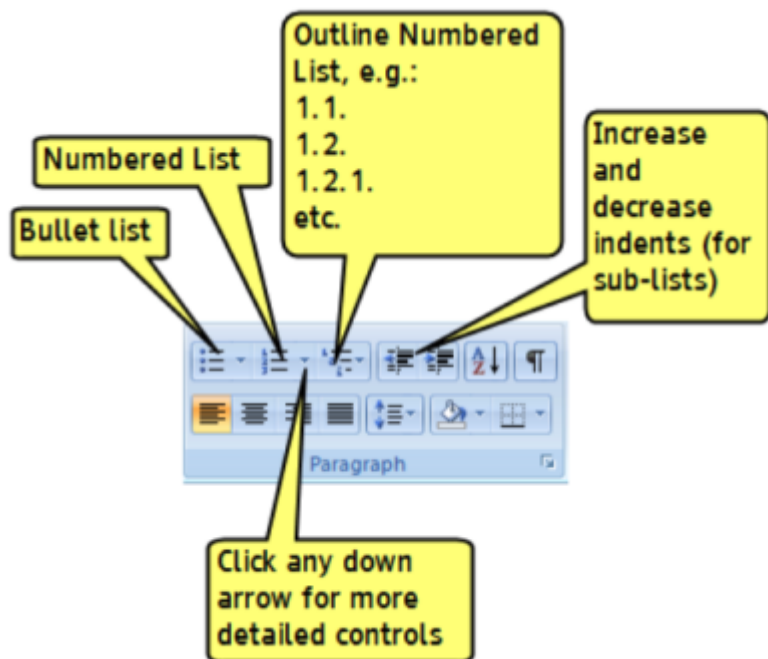
Avoid using lists for either just indent or layout purposes. List elements must not be used for purely presentational purposes.

Create a list in Word

Use the appropriate button in Word's formatting toolbar, i.e. bullet or numbered list.

Only the default list styles will be supported when converting to DAISY. New (Custom) list styles will not be supported.

When you make a list using direct formatting, it will still cause the "List Paragraph" style to appear in the Styles Pane. If modifications are needed (i.e., spacing), do this by Modifying the Style (not by using further Direct Formatting).



Use the correct list type

Using the correct list type is also important as it may be the only cue to the reader whether the order of items is significant. An alphabetical list is not necessarily an ordered list; for example, arranging items is not the same as assigning them a specific order. If you can re-arrange the items without changing the meaning of the list, you've defined an unordered list (i.e. indexes and bibliographies do not lose meaning when re-ordered).

Unordered



For unordered lists, use the bulleted list tool. The icon looks like this:

Optional: for display purposes, you can create an invisible bullet using "define new bullet" and selecting the blank bullet character.

[Example unordered list \(Bibliography\)](#) [Example unordered list with invisible bullet \(Table of Contents\)](#)

Ordered



For ordered lists, use the numbered list tool. The icon looks like this:

[Example ordered list](#)

Definition Lists

In addition to the common types of lists mentioned above, there also exists what we call a "definition list". Definition lists require the use of special DAISY styles.

Definition lists generally consist of term/definition pairs - a term followed by its definition.

For example, a glossary of terms would be a definition list:

```
mango: tropical fruit with sweet golden flesh
lychee: tropical fruit with deep red leathery skin and clear white flesh
carambola: star shaped tropical fruit with tart lemon-pineapple flavour
rambutan: egg-shaped tropical fruit similar to lychees with leathery skin
covered in soft red hairs
```

There are two definition list styles in the [NNELS Template](#):

- Definition Data (DAISY)
- Definition Term (DAISY)

Both styles are used together to create a definition list. When creating a definition list, we follow these steps:

1. Select all the text that comprise the list (terms and values) and apply the **Definition Data (DAISY)** style.
2. Select each definition term (i.e. mango, lychee, etc.) and apply the **Definition Term (DAISY)** style.

That's it. This will give us the below output in XML:

```
<dl>
  <dt>mango</dt>
  <dd>tropical fruit with sweet golden flesh</dd>
  <dt>lychee</dt>
  <dd>tropical fruit with deep red leathery skin and clear white flesh</dd>
  <dt>carambola</dt>
  <dd>star shaped tropical fruit with tart lemon-pineapple flavour</dd>
  <dt>rambutan</dt>
  <dd>egg-shaped tropical fruit similar to lychees with leathery skin
covered in soft red hairs</dd>
</dl>
```

Definition lists are not restricted to glossaries of terms. We use them for all term-description groups. Term-description groups may be names and definitions, questions and answers, categories and topics, or any other groups of term-description pairs.

For example, a list of cast members should be marked up as a definition list:

Cast

Rita: Jennifer Copping

Borghejm and Old Woman: Gloria May Eshkibok
Alfred: Gerry Mackay
Asta: Caitlin McFarlane
Wolfie: Richard Russ

Creative Team

Director: Stephen Drover
Production Designer: Drew Facey
Lighting Designer: Conor Moore
Sound Designer: James Coomber
Associate Director: Corey Payette
Stage Manager: Collette Brown
Assistant Stage Manager: Noelle Sediego
Production Manager: Becky Low
Technical Director: Robin Richardson

With the application of the definition list styles, this results in the below XML output:

```
<h2>Cast</h2>
  <dl>
    <dt>Rita</dt>
    <dd>: Jennifer Copping</dd>
    <dt>Borghejm and Old Woman</dt>
    <dd>: Gloria May Eshkibok</dd>
    <dt>Alfred</dt>
    <dd>: Gerry Mackay</dd>
    <dt>Asta</dt>
    <dd>: Caitlin McFarlane</dd>
    <dt>Wolfie</dt>
    <dd>: Richard Russ</dd>
  </dl>
<p>Creative Team</p>
  <dl>
    <dt>Director</dt>
    <dd>: Stephen Drover</dd>
    <dt>Production Designer</dt>
    <dd>: Drew Facey</dd>
    <dt>Lighting Designer</dt>
    <dd>: Conor Moore</dd>
    <dt>Sound Designer</dt>
    <dd>: James Coomber</dd>
    <dt>Associate Director</dt>
    <dd>: Corey Payette</dd>
    <dt>Stage Manager</dt>
    <dd>: Collette Brown</dd>
    <dt>Assistant Stage Manager</dt>
    <dd>: Noelle Sediego</dd>
    <dt>Production Manager</dt>
    <dd>: Becky Low</dd>
    <dt>Technical Director</dt>
```

```
<dd>: Robin Richardson</dd>
</dl>
```

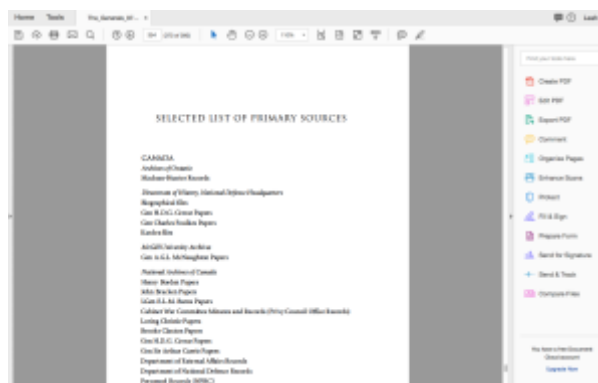
As mentioned above, definition lists should also be used for Q & A or interviews within a text. For example, in the following text, the first line (Q) should be Definition Term style, and the second line (A) should be Definition Data style:

Q: Did you fight any other battles during the course of the war?

A: No. I hiked east two days, hitched a ride near Cross Lake and ended up back in my hometown in southern Alabama.

Q&A

Q: Should this list be formatted using H2 and H3 for the countries and institutions, and Lists for the collections? Or should I used nested lists for all elements?



A: Yes, using H2 for Canada, with the underlying content a nested list, seems like a logical structure.

WCAG 2.0 — H48: Using ol, ul and dl for lists or groups of links

WCAG 2.0 - H40: Using description lists

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