

InDesign Accessibility

The key to InDesign accessibility is the correct and consistent utilization of Paragraph Styles. Within a style profile, you can predefine fonts, size, spacing, and most importantly, tags.

For most InDesign users, the intuitive way to style text is the same as Microsoft Office; select the font and size in the top menu and begin typing your content. While this may be visually sufficient, the underlying text boxes are not attributed export tags, potentially leaving the content inaccessible to users of assistive technology. Through the use of the Paragraph Styles panel, you can assign style and tag values to individual profiles that can be saved, modified and reapplied throughout the document.

Paragraph Styles

In web pages, content is generally structured by heading level because it's an efficient way to logically organize content that is accessible to both sighted and assistive tech users (visit [WebAim](#) for more information regarding semantic structure and headings). To declare these export tag values, you must create and configure Paragraph Styles. This document includes several predefined profiles that have already been assigned export tag values and have been named accordingly.

Create New Paragraph Styles

1. Create a new text box and apply your desired styles to the text.
2. With the text highlighted, select “Create new style” from the bottom right corner of the Paragraph Style panel (icon 3 of 4) and the text format will be imported to the new profile.

Overrides (+)

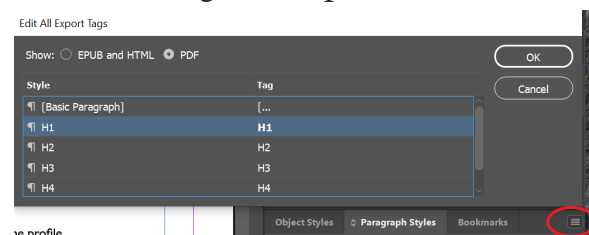
If you change the style of an existing text box without modifying the associated style definition, then Adobe will only apply those changes to the individual text box via override (a plus (+) sign is displayed next to a profile to indicate additional style overrides). If you have applied overrides to a text box that you would now like to be included in the style definition, right click the desired style and select “Redefine Style”. Those edits will now be immediately reflected throughout the document in every instance that style is used.

Export Tags

Tags for PDF export are determined within the Paragraph Style Options window:

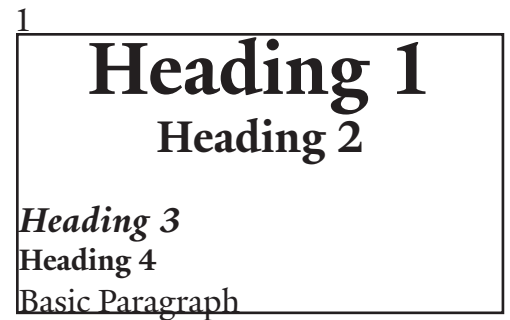
1. Right click on the paragraph style and select Edit “[style name]”
2. Navigate to Export Tagging > PDF > and select your desired tag for the profile

You can also display a complete list of styles and their mapped tags by selecting the ‘More Options’ icon (circled in red) and select “Edit All Export Tags...”



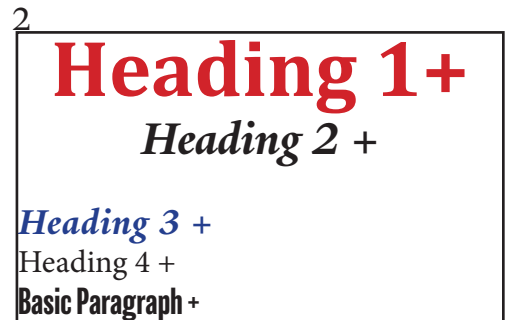
Establishing Style Definitions

This InDesign file contains several preconfigured paragraph styles ready for an accessible PDF export. The default style configurations are displayed to the right (1).



Redefining Style Definitions

The styles to the right have been changed with overrides enabled (2). To append these overrides to the source definition, right click on the profile and select “Redefine Style”.



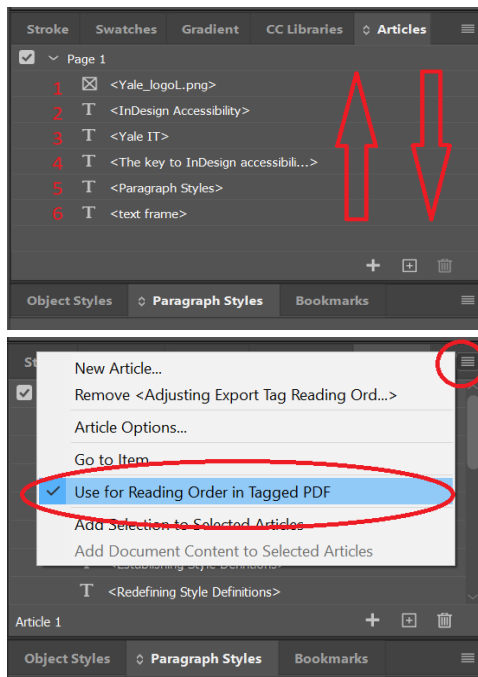
You can also right click and select “Duplicate Style” if you want to use this as a starting point for a new style configuration.

Tag Reading Order

After you’ve attributed tag values to Paragraph Styles and have applied those styles to text, now you have to confirm the reading order for those tags when exported to PDF.

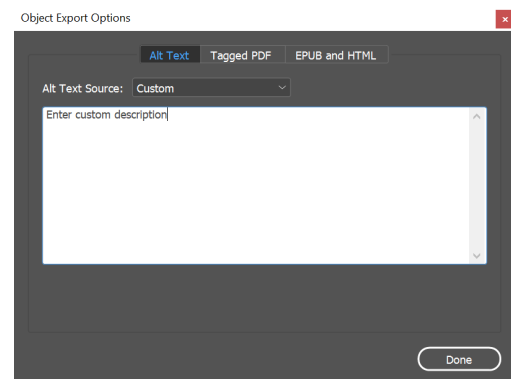
To determine reading order, navigate to the **Articles** tab the menu panel. Everything in the Articles list will be read in the order it is listed (the “Use for Reading Order...” option must be enabled). To add all page items to the Article list, select Ctrl and click on the (+) icon.

To **Artifact** an object or text box, remove the item from the Articles list by selecting the trash icon. Items removed from the Articles list will not be read by assistive devices when exported to PDF.



Alternate Text

To attribute alternate text values to objects/text boxes, right click on the object and select “**Edit Export Options**”. Navigate to the Alt Text tab and enter a custom alternate descriptions for the object.



Images & PDF Reading Order Issues

Even when included in the Articles panel, images can often be excluded from the article order unless additional settings are applied. There are 2 ways to ensure that images are in the correct reading order:

1. *Configuring object exports to apply tags ‘based on object’*
2. *Anchoring images to text*

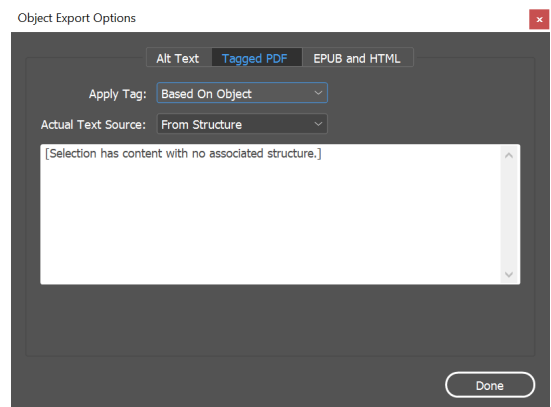


1. “Based on Object” Export Tags

A common issue with the Articles panel will cause images to export without applying the selected Article title/tag. This causes the image to be appended to the bottom of the tag list in Acrobat.

To correct the object’s export tag;


1. Right click on the object and select **Object Export Options**
2. Navigate to the Tagged PDF tab and under Apply Tag, select “**Based on Object**”



The image tags should now be exported in the correct order as previously determined in the Articles panel.

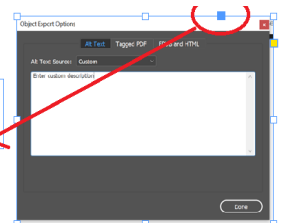
2. Anchoring Images to Text

The easiest way to determine the reading order of an image is to anchor the object to a neighboring text box.

To place an anchor, use the selection tool to click-and-drag the solid blue box to the desired reading position. When complete, the blue box should be replaced with an anchor graphic and the object will no longer be listed in the Articles panel. 

Alternate Text

To attribute alternate text values to objects/text boxes, right click on the object and select “**Edit Export Options**”. Navigate to the Alt Text tab and enter a custom alternate descriptions for the object.



Note: the tag of the anchored object will be placed within the tag of the associated item when exported to PDF.

Tables			
To create accessible tables in InDesign, select Insert Table from the Table tab. A new window will appear where the user can designate the number of rows, columns and headers. Once entered, the mouse cursor can be used to select the table's size and position.	To adjust the relative scale, hold the Ctrl key and use the selection tool to select a white corner and drag to resize the entire table.	Note: any future changes to the table's size will also proportionately scale the size of the table cell content.	Note: ensure the [Basic Paragraph] style is selected when editing because the table tag will be placed within a parent tag of the selected paragraph style.



Tables (repeating header - per frame)			
Sometimes data tables can be extremely long and can extend across multiple pages. Fortunately, there is an accessible method that allows users to split tables across multiple frames while still remaining under a single <table> tag.	To thread a table to a new frame, create a table that exceeds the size of the frame it is contained in. Select the red box (+) and with the new cursor, select the desired location for the new frame.	Any data cell content that leaks beyond the constraints of the first frame will be pushed to the first data cell of the new frame.	To repeat headers on every new frame/page, navigate to the <i>Table</i> tab > <i>Table Options</i> > <i>Table Setup...</i> > <i>Headers & Footers</i> > <i>Headers</i> and select the desired frequency.

Bookmarks

1. Select Window > Interactive > Bookmarks
2. Use the Selection tool to designate where the bookmark will be placed on the page and select the (+) icon within the Bookmarks tab

Use the bookmarks tab to rename and rearrange the bookmark hierarchy as needed.

Export to Adobe Acrobat (PDF)

When exporting InDesign files to PDF, users must use the Adobe Export function to maintain accessibility.

Ensure the following settings are enabled within the Export Adobe PDF window:

1. Compatibility: "Adobe 6 (PDF 1.5)"
2. Options: "Create Tagged PDF" is checked
3. Include: "Bookmarks" & "Hyperlinks" are checked
4. Advanced Tab > Accessibility Options > Display Title > "Document Title"

