

Survey Accessibility in Qualtrics

About Survey Accessibility

When you have respondents who use third-party screen readers (like [JAWS](#)) and you need to meet accessibility standards, it's important to make sure your survey is as accessible as possible. The Qualtrics **ExpertReview** [feature](#) diagnoses your survey, indicates which questions are inaccessible, and gives other recommendations for increased accessibility to help you work towards WCAG 2.0 AA (and Section 508) compliant surveys.

Qtip: Please be advised that survey accessibility is contingent upon a combination of hardware and software, including the use of a modern and supported [browser type](#). For the best possible experience, please make sure to keep your browser and screen reader software up-to-date.

Question Type Accessibility

Not every question is accessible to screen-reading programs. Below are lists detailing which question types are accessible and which are not.

Attention: The [accessibility checker](#) does not evaluate if the look and feel of questions is accessible. Always double-check the contrast, color schemes, and font size in your [rich content editor](#) or [Look and feel](#) when taking color-blind and other visually impaired respondents into account. Ultimately, you are responsible for verifying the accessibility of your own survey.

Accessible Questions

These questions are WCAG 2.0 AA compliant and are recognized as such by the survey checker tool.

- [Descriptive text](#)
- [Multiple choice](#) (all types)
- [Net promoter® score](#)
- [Matrix](#) (only rank order, constant sum, text entry, and profile)

Attention: If your matrix table is not set to [mobile friendly](#), your question will not be compliant.

- [Text entry](#) (all types)
- [Form field](#)
- [Rank order](#) (only text box, graphic, and radio buttons)
- [Side by side](#)
- [Constant sum](#) (only choices, a.k.a text entry)
- [Drill down](#)
- [Timing](#) (the auto advance option is not accessible)
- [Meta info](#)
- [Captcha verification](#) (V2)
- [Slider](#)

Attention: Slider and Bar slider question types meet the contrast ratio requirement for WCAG 2.0 accessibility compliance.

- [File upload](#)

Qtip: The File upload question is WCAG 2.1 accessible.

Qtip: The [New Survey Taking Experience](#) ensures your question theming is accessible and many of these same question types are WCAG 2.1 compliant when using the New Survey Taking Experience. If you haven't enabled this experience for your survey, follow the guidance in [Accessible Survey Themes](#) to make sure your theme is accessible.

Non-accessible Questions

These questions do not meet WCAG 2.0 AA Compliance, and are flagged as such by the survey checker tool.

- [Matrix](#) (likert, bipolar, MaxDiff, and carousel, as well as any matrix table that is drag and drop)

Qtip: The likert matrix question is not WCAG 2.0 AA compliant, but it meets other standards of compliance, including 508. Because it is not WCAG 2.0 AA compliant, ExpertReview will flag this question type as non-compliant.

- [Rank order](#) (Drag and drop and select box)
- [Constant sum](#) (sliders and bars)

- [Pick, group, and rank](#)
 - [Hot spot](#)
 - [Heat map](#)
 - [Graphic slider](#)
 - [Signature](#)
 - [Highlight](#)
 - [Video response](#)
 - [Org hierarchy \(EX\)](#)
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Building Accessible Surveys

In addition to being careful about the [question types](#) you use for your survey, there are a few other options you should include in an accessible survey.

Attention: Since these suggestions can be more subjective, [ExpertReview](#) and [check survey accessibility](#) may not be able to detect them. Ultimately, you are responsible for verifying the accessibility of your own survey.

- Make sure your survey follows all [accessible theming guidelines](#).
- Add [alt-text](#) to all images. Screen readers can read alt-text out loud to visually impaired respondents.

Qtip: For multilingual surveys, make sure to [translate](#) the alt-text for any images in the translation window.

- Choose [accessible survey questions](#). Not all survey questions are accessible question types.

Qtip: If you are using a dropdown question type (such as a [multiple choice](#) dropdown or a [drill down](#)), you should include a description of the number of possible choices in the question text.

- Always double-check the contrast, color schemes, and font size in your [rich content editor](#) or [Look and feel](#) when taking color-blind and other visually impaired respondents into account. For example, red font on a green background would be unreadable to respondents with red-green colorblindness, and a light gray text on a white background can be difficult for other visually-impaired respondents to detect

without a screen-reader. Make sure that the colors of your theme create contrast between the font and the background, and that your font size isn't too small.

- If you are adding [validation](#) to a question, including request response and force response, then you should indicate that the question has special requirements in the question text.

Example: For example, if you've enabled force response on a question, add "this question is required" to the question text.

- Take care when copying/pasting text from other sources because copied HTML can cause issues with screen readers. If HTML issues arise, try [strip formatting](#).

Qtip: When pasting content, you can paste using CMD + Shift + V (on Mac) or CTRL + Shift + V (on PC) to paste your content with no formatting.

- Do not include [labels](#) in any of your question types, as these will not be visible to screen readers. Labels in NPS questions ("Not at all likely" and "Extremely likely") are not visible to any screen readers so as not to bias respondents.

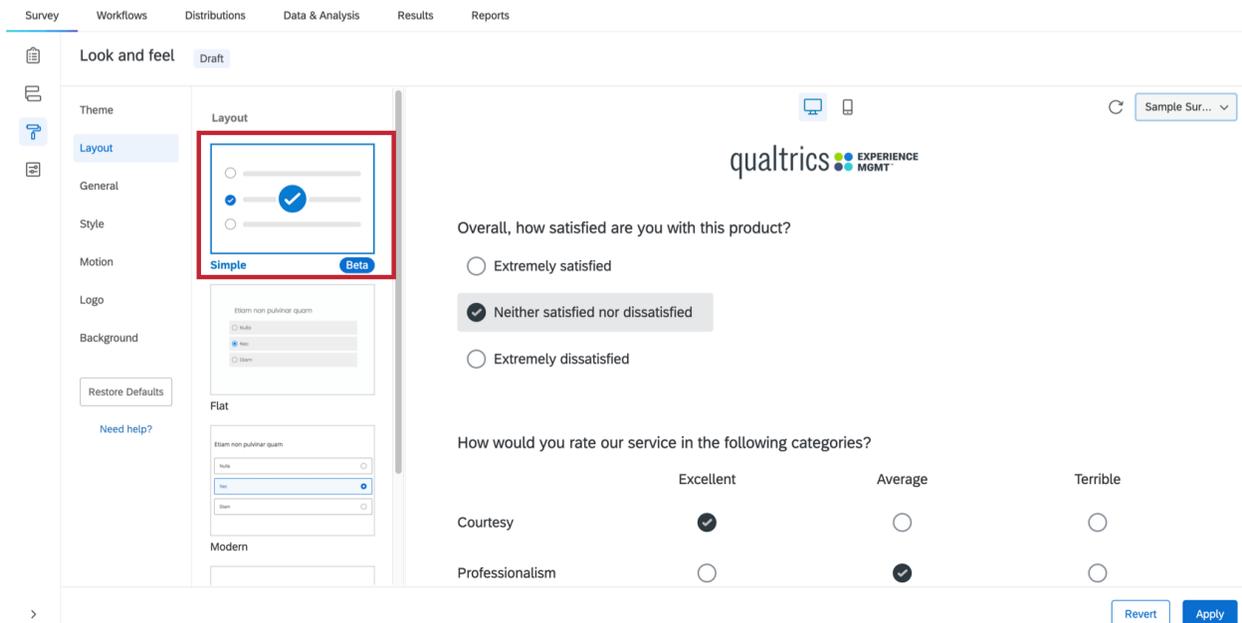
Accessible Survey Themes

To ensure an accessible theme, you can have a Brand Administrator [create a theme](#) for your license to use. Below are tips for creating accessible survey themes, broken out by the different sections of the survey theme editor. These options are the same, regardless if you're making these changes in the [Admin Themes tab](#), or in the [Look and feel](#) section of a specific survey.

Alternatively, you can use a theme from the Qualtrics library. These themes will be available for you to choose in the [Look and feel menu](#) of your survey. Any accessibility issues with your theme should be forwarded to the [themes team](#) through your [Brand Administrator](#).

Theme Layout

To have the most accessible survey (with a visible focus indicator that is not only indicated by color), you must use the [New Survey Taking Experience](#).



Qtip: Note that some [features are not compatible with the New Survey Taking Experience](#). If you need to use an accessible question type not available with this layout, you can revert to the old experience.

General Tab

- The [progress bar](#) is not currently accessibility compliant. In order to indicate progress in your survey, you can adjust the [question numbers](#) to the left of the question to indicate, for example, Question 1 of 10, Question 2 of 10, etc. To show these numbers, go to [survey options](#) and turn on **Question numbers**. The [check survey accessibility](#) feature calls this suggestion “Enable survey option to show export tags,” since “export tags” is another term for “question numbers.”
- If your compliance regulations require an h1 header, include a survey [header](#) and wrap the following HTML around your header text:

```
<h1>Header Text</h1>
```

Qtip: Make sure you add this in the [HTML view of the rich content editor](#).

- If you want to add a logo to your survey, add it as a header or footer in the General tab, and add [alt-text](#) to the image. Screen readers can read alt-text out loud to visually impaired respondents.

Qtip: For multilingual surveys, make sure to [translate](#) the alt-text for any images in the translation window.

Style Tab

- In the Style tab, set the **Foreground Contrast** to High.
- Ensure that the **Primary Color** has high enough [contrast](#) with the [focus indicator](#).

Qtip: If you are unable to see the focus indicator with the New Survey Taking Experience, adjust your Primary and Secondary Color in the Style tab.

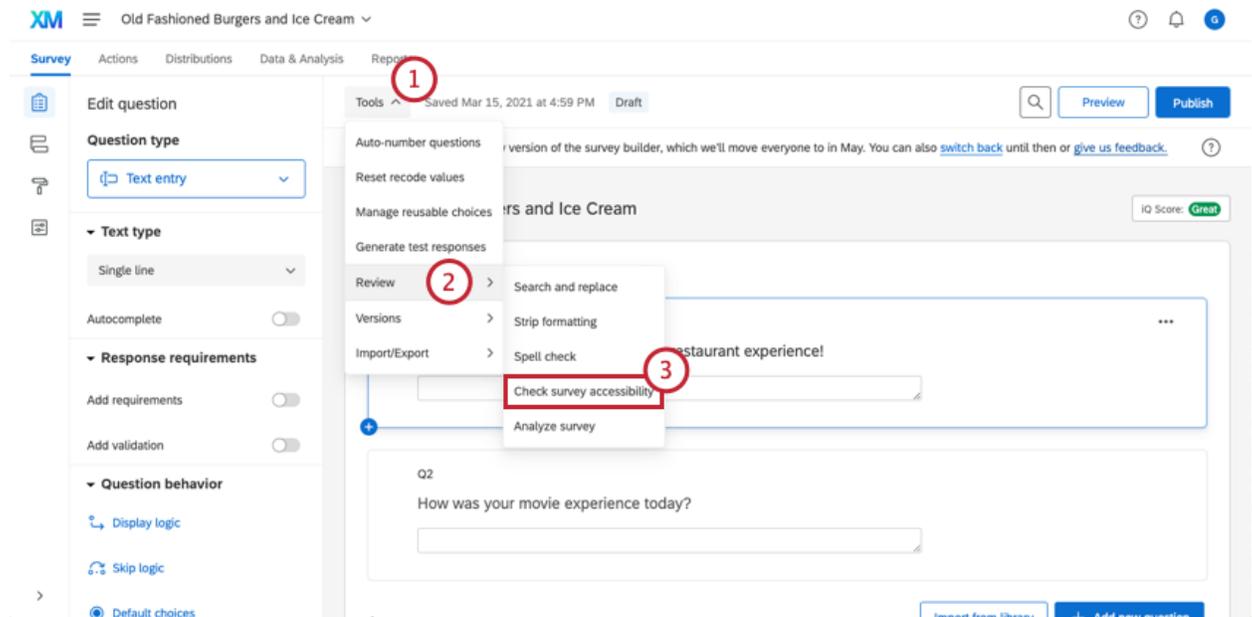
Motion Tab

- In the Motion tab, ensure that **Autoadvance on Questions** is not enabled.
- The “None” [page transition](#) is the best for accessible surveys.

Using the Check Survey Accessibility Tool

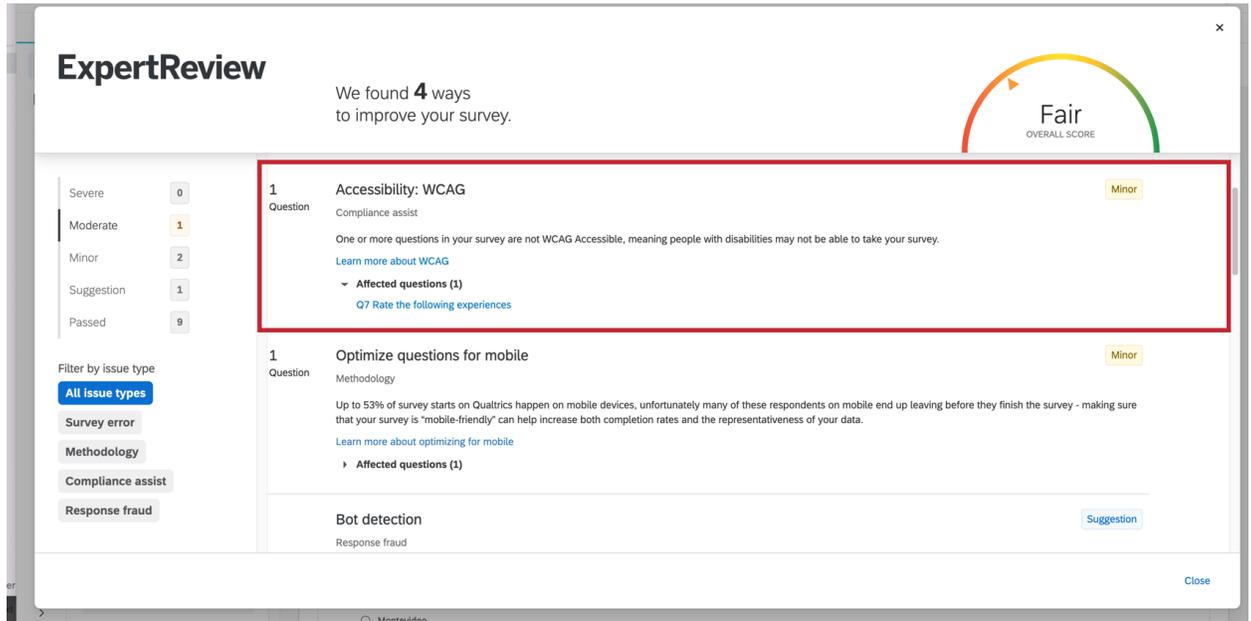
Qtip: [ExpertReview](#) will provide many of the same suggestions, plus additional advice on improving your survey’s quality.

1. In the **Survey** tab, click **Tools**.



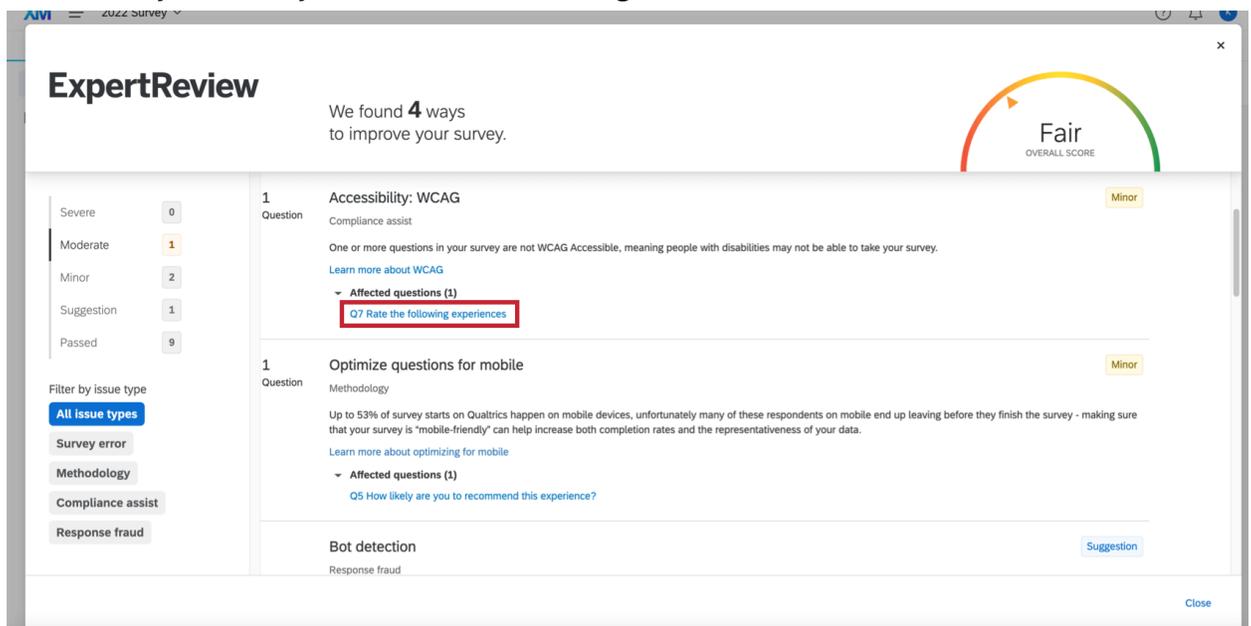
2. Select **Review**.
3. Click **Check survey accessibility**.

4. Examine the list of potential problems and the recommendations for making your survey more accessible in the **Accessibility: WCAG** section.



Qtip: Click **Affected questions** to see all questions that may not meet accessibility standards.

5. Click directly on the suggestion in the list to have the system jump you to the location in your survey that needs to be changed.



Qtip: Most suggestions will usually take you to your [Survey Options](#) or [Look and feel](#). There are also additional suggestions we have described in the [Survey Configuration](#) section.

6. Select **Close** when you are finished reviewing suggestions.
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Common WCAG-Compliant File Formats

When considering **WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) compliant file formats** in the context of Qualtrics and digital accessibility, the focus is not just on the file format itself, but on how the content within those files is structured to be accessible to all users, including those using assistive technologies.

1. **HTML**

- Properly structured HTML is inherently accessible when semantic elements, alt text, ARIA labels, and correct heading structures are used.

2. **PDF (Portable Document Format)**

- PDFs can be WCAG compliant if they are tagged for accessibility, include alt text for images, use proper reading order, and have searchable/selectable text.

3. **DOCX (Microsoft Word)**

- Word documents can be made accessible by using headings, alt text, table headers, and accessible color contrast.

4. **CSV/TSV (Comma/Tab Separated Values)**

- These are plain text formats and are accessible if the data is structured logically (e.g., with clear headers). They are also compatible with screen readers.

5. **TXT (Plain Text)**

- Plain text files are accessible as long as the content is logically organized.

6. **MP3 (Audio)**

- Audio files are accessible if accompanied by transcripts or captions.

7. **MP4 (Video)**

- Video files should include captions and audio descriptions to be accessible.
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Key Points for WCAG Compliance

- **The file format alone does not guarantee accessibility.** The content must be structured and tagged appropriately (e.g., alt text for images, logical reading order, proper use of headings).
 - **For Qualtrics surveys and data imports:**
 - Use CSV or TSV for data files, as these are accessible and compatible with screen readers.
 - For media, use MP3 for audio and MP4 for video, ensuring transcripts and captions are provided.
 - For documents, use accessible PDF or DOCX if sharing supplementary materials.
 - **CSV/TSV** are the recommended formats for importing data and are accessible if headers and data are clear and logical.
 - **MP3** is the recommended audio format for uploading to Qualtrics, as it is widely supported and accessible when paired with transcripts.
 - **For images and media in surveys:** Always provide alt text and captions as needed.
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How does Qualtrics ensure that support documents in PDF are WCAG compliant?

Qualtrics is committed to accessibility and follows best practices to ensure that its support documents, including PDFs, are WCAG compliant. Here's how Qualtrics approaches this:

1. Proactive Accessibility Design

Qualtrics takes a proactive approach by designing all new work—including support documentation—with accessibility in mind from the very beginning. This means accessibility is built into the foundation of their products and resources, rather than being an afterthought or only addressed when issues arise.

2. Assessment Against WCAG Standards

All Qualtrics products and resources, including support documents, are assessed against the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG), specifically aiming for WCAG 2.1 AA

compliance. This ensures that documents are accessible to users with disabilities, including those using assistive technologies.

3. Transparency and Certification

Qualtrics publishes Voluntary Product Accessibility Templates (VPATs) that detail the testing and certification of their accessibility efforts. These documents provide transparency about how Qualtrics meets accessibility standards, including for support materials.

4. Continuous Improvement

Qualtrics regularly updates its accessibility practices and resources, prioritizing areas with the broadest reach and impact. This includes ongoing improvements to documentation and support materials to maintain and enhance accessibility.

5. Resources and Tools

Qualtrics provides resources and tools to help users check the accessibility of their own materials and surveys, reflecting the same standards applied to their official documentation.
