

Alt Text

Static Images Providing Content

- A short-written description of an image's content or function, read aloud by screen readers in place of the image itself.
- Use alt text when an image conveys information, data, or function (a diagram, chart, button icon, etc.)
- Not needed for purely decorative images. Mark those as decorative images.

Captions

Video with Audio

- Synchronized on-screen text of spoken dialogue plus relevant non-speech sound (e.g., "phone rings"), timed to the video.
- Use captions when a video has an audio track — lectures, guest speakers, embedded YouTube clips.
- Required for live video too, not just recorded.

Audio Description

Visual Content, No Audio

- A narrated track, inserted into pauses in dialogue, describing important visual information the dialogue does not already cover.
- Use audio descriptions when a video shows something essential that no one describes aloud — an on-screen equation, a silent demonstration, a diagram appearing on slide.

Not needed if the speaker already narrates everything visually important.

Transcripts

Audio Files Only

- A full text version of everything spoken read at the student's own pace instead of played back in real time.
- Use transcripts when Content is audio-only (a podcast assignment) or video-only with no soundtrack.
- As a best-practice companion to captions on longer lectures — supports searching, note-taking, and students who process text better than audio.