

Appendix A: Best Practices for Easy Read

What is Easy Read?

Easy Read is a way to show written information. It uses simple words and short sentences. The font is big. There is lots of white space. There are clear sections with headings. Information is in bullet points.

Easy Read uses images as well as words. Images are photos, graphics or other visual information. Images are used next to the words. Images support the message in the words. This format makes information easy to understand.

This format also makes Easy Read documents simple to recognize.

Is Easy Read the same as plain language?

No, plain language is different from Easy Read.

Plain language is based on the text or words. Plain language can be presented in many different formats. It can look like any kind of standard writing. It can use images or not. It does not use images in the same way as Easy Read.

But plain language and Easy Read do have some things in common.

What do Easy Read and plain language have in common?

Both use similar ways to make information easy to understand. Both use the following approaches.

- Use simple, everyday words.
- Keep sentences and paragraphs short.
- Explain unfamiliar or technical words.
- Use titles and headings.
- Use bulleted lists.
- Allow for lots of white space.
- Include a table of contents or glossary or both.
- Test the material with the intended audience at every stage.



How to structure an Easy Read

There are no strict rules about how to create an Easy Read document. But there are some important guidelines. They are described below.

Length

- Keep it short.
 - Documents should be 16 pages or less.
 - Documents should have a maximum of 1,600 words.
 - Each page should be no more than 100 words.
 - Pages should be numbered.
 - It should be short enough to use in 15 minutes.

Tone and approach

- Use an approachable, friendly tone.
- Start with an introduction.
- Be clear about what the document is about.
- Be clear about who it is meant for.
- Put the most important information first in each section.
- Use short paragraphs, about 3 sentences long.

Layout and structure

- Put the images in a column on the left.
- Put the text that goes with the image in a column on the right.
- Use 1 image next to each paragraph of text.
 - Images should be 5 to 6 cm (centimetres) in size.
 - Each page should have about 4 or 5 images.
- Keep everything aligned left.

- Use size 30pt font for headings.
- Use at least size 16pt font for body text. Larger font sizes like 18pt or 21pt are even better.
- Be consistent with formatting. For example, use the same way to highlight unfamiliar words. A glossary can be used. The word can be bolded. Or the word can be defined in a text box close by. Use the same format each time.

How to check the quality of an Easy Read document

Only the intended audience can say if an Easy Read document meets their needs. It is essential to involve members of the intended audience. They need to be involved when the document is being made and when it is being reviewed.

Learn more about Easy Read

Learn more about Easy Read at these links.

- [Photo Symbols](#)
- [Inclusion Europe](#)

IMPORTANT NOTES

Easy Read documents should be tested in many ways. They need to be tested for accessibility. They need to be tested with screen readers. They need to be tested with other assistive technology. Files like PDFs need to be accessible. Other parts of the document also need to be tested, like the colour contrast and the font.

