

# TOC

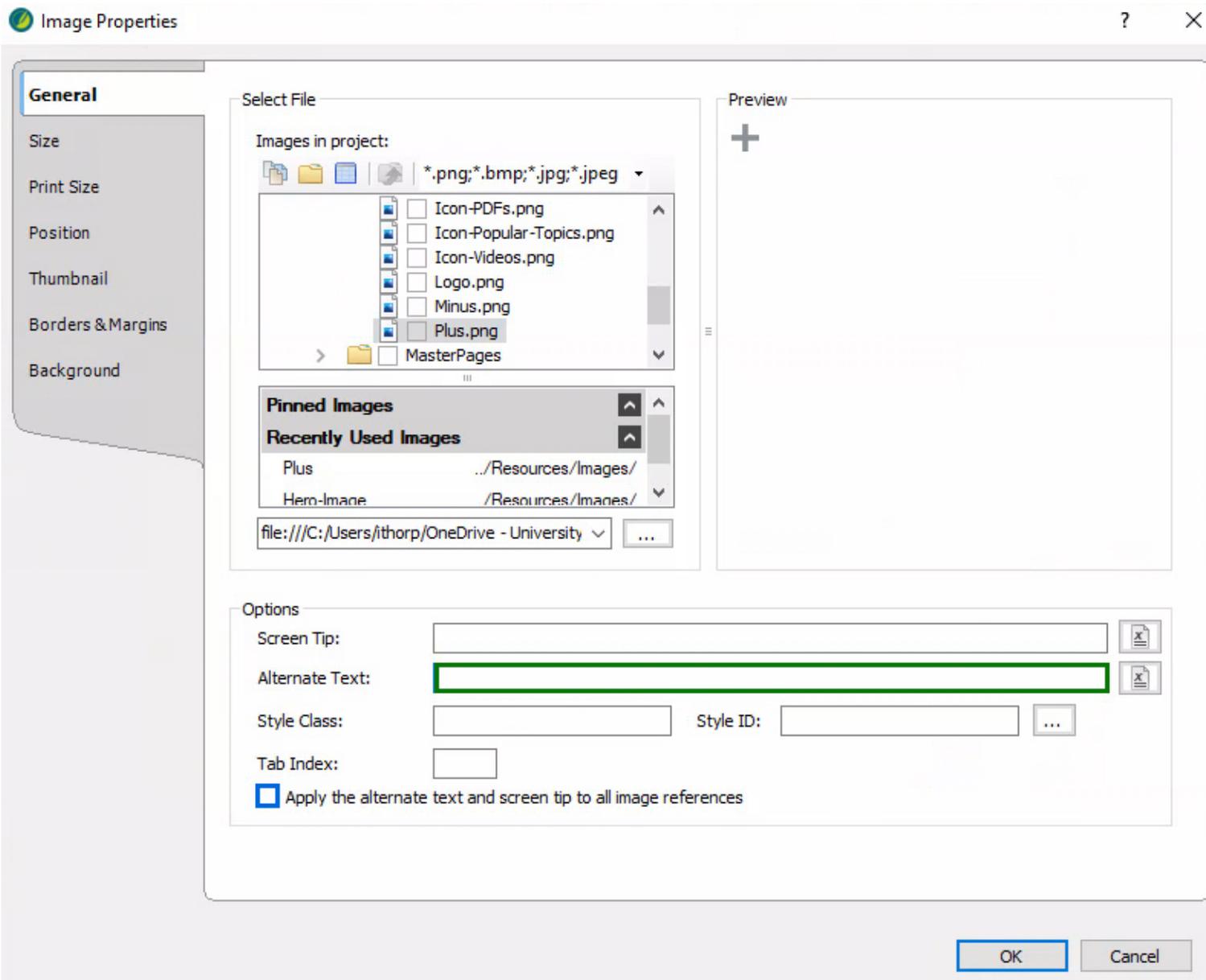
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# Creating Alt Text in Flare

Alt-text, also called alternative text, provides a text-based alternative to images and figures, which aids those with screen readers. It is also helpful for when a webpage doesn't load properly, and alt text also helps in search engine optimization by attaching keywords to the image.

1. Right-click on your image and select Image Properties.
2. In the **General** tab, under **Options**, type your alt text.



Note: You can check the box at the bottom, **Apply the alternate text and screen tip to all image references**, to connect this alt text to all uses of this image throughout your project. You can then repeat steps 1 and 2 to return and edit your alt text.

# How to Write Effective Alt Text

Alt text can greatly improve the accessibility of a webpage, but care must be given that it is written usefully for its audience. Some key tips to keep in mind are:

- Alt text should be brief, ideally a few words or sometimes sentences. If you need a longer explanation, you should provide a link to that explanation elsewhere on the page.
- It is not necessary to begin an alt text description with “image of...” as this is redundant.
- Give images that contain information a written description.
- In accordance with HTML5 standards, all images should have an “alt” attribute, but for decorative images, this field can be left blank (alt = “”). Optimally, add decorative images to the background CSS image instead.
- Do not flood alt text with keywords for image search optimization, as this will detract from its intended purpose of helping users.
- When creating alt text, it’s important to capture the spirit of what the alt text is being used in place of. This means that an image with a lot of action or context should have more descriptive text, while say, an image that is just serving as a link can be very simple.

For example, here's an image of Mauna Loa in Hawaii erupting.



Photo by R.W. Decker. - [http://hvo.wr.usgs.gov/gallery/maunaloa/1984/2441061\\_caption.html](http://hvo.wr.usgs.gov/gallery/maunaloa/1984/2441061_caption.html),

Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=3157962>

And here is an example of HTML code with alt text describing it.

```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2 <html lang="en">
3   <head>
4     <title> Types of Volcanos </title>
5   </head>
6   <body>
7     <h1> Shield Volcanoes </h1>
8     <img src = "Mauna Loa.jpg" alt = "Volcano erupting">
9
10
11   </body>
12 </html>
```

This alt text explains that the image is of a volcano erupting, but we can be more specific.

```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2 <html lang="en">
3   <head>
4     <title> Types of Volcanos </title>
5   </head>
6   <body>
7     <h1> Shield Volcanoes </h1>
8     <img src = "Mauna Loa.jpg" alt = "Mauna Loa, the largest shield volcano,
9     erupting">
10
11   </body>
12 </html>
```

This is better, as it captures the context of the image, though the inclusion of “the largest shield volcano” may not be necessary if the web page does not mention it anywhere.

Make sure to give alt text to functional images such as an online store's shopping cart:



Putting “cart” or “shopping cart” is enough.

# What is Alt Text?

Alternate, or alt text, is a text-based replacement for images or figures that increases web accessibility. Developed as part of the HTML 2 standard in 1995, it helps those with screen readers, so that they can understand an image or figure even if they cannot see it. Additionally, alt text can mark images that are links for screen readers, allowing users to move from webpage to webpage more easily. Alt text is also important because if an image on a webpage fails to load, the alt text will be shown instead, so there is at least some indication of what the image is. Another function of alt text is to provide keywords to search engines, which may increase the visibility of a graphic on a webpage.

Here's an image and the accompanying HTML code for its alt text.



By BiH - Own work, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=32973358>

```
1 <!DOCTYPE html>
2 <html lang="en">
3   <head>
4     <title> Images </title>
5   </head>
6   <body>
7     <figure>
8
9
10      <img src = "../images/t-34.jpg" alt = "A t-34 tank sitting in a field">
11   </figure>
12
13   </body>
14 </html>
15
```

This is an example of what alt text looks like in HTML. The attribute begins with "alt =" after the image source, and is followed by a short description of an image.

As web developers become increasingly aware of the importance of usability and accessibility, the prominence of alt text has increased, to the benefit of the web.

Burners-Lee, T. Connolly, D. "Hypertext Markup Language - 2.0." IETF, <https://tools.ietf.org/html/rfc1866>.

# Accessibility Checklist

Similarly to how it can be easy to forget when writing that users may have different experiences and knowledge to you, it is also easy to forget that users may have different needs when it comes to accessibility. This checklist serves as a quick reminder for different accessibility-related concepts.

- **Give your images alt text when necessary.** When you're in a rush, it's easy to upload an image and forget about it, but alt text is an important component in making images accessible. [See here for more information.](#)
- **Check your visual hierarchy** - In order to make your content easier to comprehend, both for those with and without disabilities, make sure there is a clear visual hierarchy and flow in your document. A logical hierarchy reduces the cognitive load for users, making your content more accessible. Are your headings larger than their subheadings? Is it clear where the reader should start reading, and where their eyes will go from there? This ties into the next point:
- **Alignment** - In the grand scheme of things, it can be easy to overlook a few pixels here and there of alignment, but it makes a difference in the flow of your document. Make sure your more important headings are further to the left than their subheadings. Images and their captions, along with notes and tips are especially easy to forget about in regards to alignment, so it's worth double-checking those. (explain how they should be indented)
- **Color** - Can your information be understood without relying on color? Otherwise, someone who is colorblind may not be able to understand it. The use of symbols instead of or in addition to color is one possible way to circumvent this issue (image example?) Additionally, make sure your text is readable by creating contrast between the background and the text.
- **Hyperlinks** - Are your hyperlinks visually distinct, both before as well as after they have been clicked? Are your hyperlinks in text form rather than image, unless it's visually obvious, such as a website's shopping cart icon?
- **WAVE** - You can use the [WAVE accessibility checker](#) to quickly see if your web page meets

accessibility standards. It will automatically analyze parts of your web page.

The image shows a screenshot of the WAVE (Web Accessibility Evaluation) tool interface overlaid on a Wikipedia page for the article "Airplane".

**WAVE Interface (Left Panel):**

- Logo: WAVE powered by WebAIM
- Address: <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Airplane>
- Styles: OFF (toggle) ON (toggle)
- Summary: Summary, Details, Reference, Structure, Contrast
- Errors: 27 (with red X icon)
- Contrast Errors: 1 (with red circle icon)
- Alerts: 207 (with yellow triangle icon)
- Features: 187 (with green checkmark icon)
- Structural Elements: 118 (with blue triangle icon)
- ARIA: 92 (with purple square icon)
- View details button

**Wikipedia Page Content (Main Area):**

- Page title: Airplane
- Text: "Aeroplane" redirects here. For other uses, see [Airplane \(disambiguation\)](#) and [Aeroplane \(disambiguation\)](#).
- Text: An **airplane** or **aeroplane** (informally **plane**) is a fixed-wing aircraft that is propelled forward by thrust from a jet engine, propeller, or rocket engine. Airplanes come in a variety of sizes, shapes, and wing configurations. The broad spectrum of uses for airplanes includes recreation, transportation of goods and people, military, and research. Worldwide, commercial aviation transports more than four billion passengers annually on airliners<sup>[1]</sup> and transports more than 200 billion tonne-kilometers<sup>[2]</sup> of cargo annually, which is less than 1% of the world's cargo movement.<sup>[3]</sup> Most airplanes are flown by a pilot on board the aircraft, but some are designed to be remotely or computer-controlled such as drones.
- Text: The Wright brothers invented and flew the first airplane in 1903, recognized as "the first sustained and controlled heavier-than-air powered flight".<sup>[4]</sup> They built on the works of George Cayley dating from 1799, when he set forth the concept of the modern airplane (and later built and

The screenshot also shows various accessibility icons overlaid on the page, such as screen reader, keyboard, and high contrast, indicating the tool's analysis of the page's accessibility.

# Accessibility Explained

Accessibility is a term denoting the ease with which a usable subject matter, from stairs to websites, are able to be utilized, especially taking into consideration those with disabilities. It is an essential component for a society like ours, which places an emphasis on individual liberty and freedom. You may be familiar with certain accessibility options in public, such as handicap parking spaces or ramps to accommodate wheelchairs.



The International Symbol of Access, or handicap sign as it is commonly called.

These have been hard-fought victories. In 1973, Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act was passed, banning discrimination of those with disabilities in regards to receiving federal funds. In the 1980's, attempts were made to deregulate Section 504, which took a strong effort from disability advocates to be defeated. In 1988, [the Americans with Disability Act \(ADA\) was passed](#), which was the first law to ban private companies from discriminating against those with disabilities. The battle for accessibility continues today, including online. In 2019, the Supreme Court declined to rule on a lower court case that found the ADA applies not just to the accessibility of physical storefronts, but their [online presence as well](#).

The concept of accessibility intersects with the internet in an interesting way. The internet has the potential to give those with disabilities an immense amount of freedom, such as being able to shop from home. This is only possible when developers implement accessible design however; otherwise those with disabilities will not be able to fully benefit from the web. Additionally, a rising tide lifts all boats in regards to accessibility; those with temporary disabilities will benefit, and even those without any disability will

benefit as well. For example, those with concussions may not be able to process information easily, and will benefit from a more streamlined document. When users web pages fail to load images properly, they will still be able to read the alt text depicting what the images are.

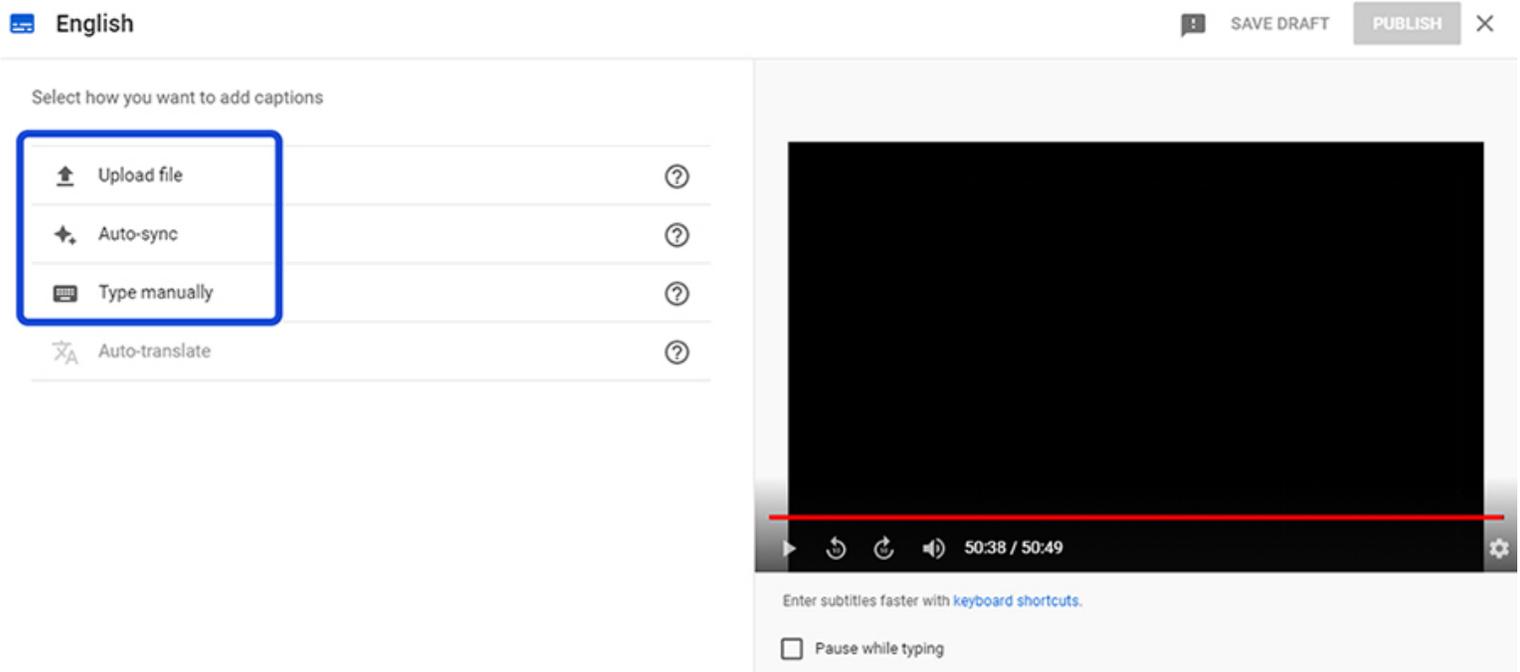
Accessibility is not difficult to implement, which is all the more reason it should be commonplace. See [here](#) for a checklist of accessibility options to keep in mind when creating content for the web.

# Implementing Closed Captions in YouTube Videos

There are several different options to add closed captions to your YouTube videos that you may have embedded on your page, allowing those who are deaf or hard of hearing to still access the video. You can upload a subtitles file from your computer, type the spoken text and use YouTube to automatically sync the subtitles, or manually edit the timestamps yourself.

1. Sign in to your YouTube account if you haven't already.
2. Navigate to [studio.youtube.com](https://studio.youtube.com)
3. Select **Subtitles** on the left hand side.
4. Click on the video that you wish to add subtitles to
5. Select which language you wish to add subtitles for.
6. Select **Add** under the **Subtitles** column.

.Here you will need to decide what type of subtitles you wish to give your video.



The screenshot shows the YouTube Studio interface for adding subtitles. At the top left, there is a language selector set to "English". At the top right, there are buttons for "SAVE DRAFT" and "PUBLISH". Below the language selector, the heading "Select how you want to add captions" is displayed. There are four options listed:

- Upload file (highlighted with a blue box)
- Auto-sync
- Type manually
- Auto-translate

Each option has a question mark icon to its right. To the right of the options is a video player showing a black video frame. Below the video player, there is a progress bar at 50:38 / 50:49. Below the progress bar, there is a text prompt: "Enter subtitles faster with [keyboard shortcuts](#)." and a checkbox labeled "Pause while typing".

## Uploading a file

1. Select **Uploading a File**.
2. Select **Upload File**.
3. Choose whether you are uploading a file with or without timing.
4. Select your subtitles file in the file explorer.
5. Click **Publish** to finish.

## Auto-Sync

1. Select **Auto Sync**.
2. Click **Play** on your video.
3. Start typing your subtitles. YouTube will attempt to automatically align them.
4. Click **Publish** to finish.

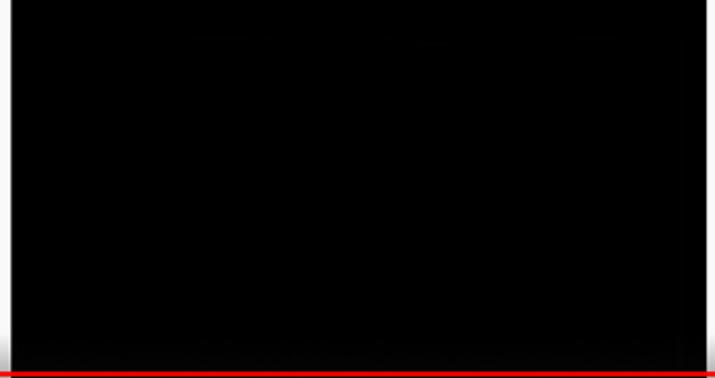
## Typing Manually

1. Select **Typing Manually**.
2. Select the timestamps you want your text to appear in.
3. Type your text.
4. Click "**Caption**" to add more lines of captions.
5. Click **Publish** to finish.

Tip: For **Auto Sync** and **Typing Manually**, you can select the box **Pause While Typing** to stop the video while you type.

Select how you want to add captions

- Upload file ?
- Auto-sync ?
- Type manually ?
- Auto-translate ?



50:38 / 50:49

Navigation icons: play, previous, next, volume, settings

Enter subtitles faster with keyboard shortcuts.

Pause while typing

# Adding Downloadable Fonts to your Project

Primarily an issue for HTML5 outputs, not all users have the same fonts installed on their devices. This will download the font with the webpage for users without the font, though it may slow the download slightly.

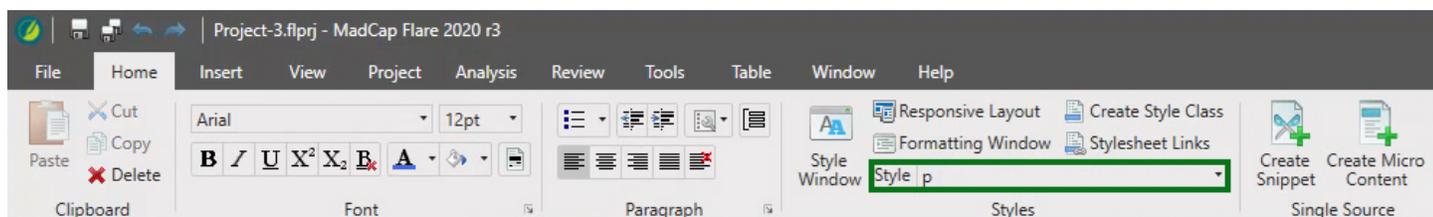
1. Download your desired font to your computer if you don't have it already.
2. Create a folder in your Resources folder titled "Fonts".
3. Drag or copy and paste your desired font to this folder.
4. Right-click your CSS file and select **Open With** and then **Internal Text Editor**.
5. Insert this code to the top of your stylesheet: **@font-face {font-family: 'yourfontname'; src: url (../Fonts/yourfontname.ttf);** (Replace "yourfontname" with the actual name of the font.)
6. Under your desired heading types in the code, add **font-family: your font's name;** or add it to the list of already existing fonts if applicable.

# Creating and Managing Font Styles in Flare

Few tools in Madcap Flare have the potential to save you as much time as the Styles options, to the point where you should use it whenever possible. Styles are useful because they give certain types of text set parameters, allowing you to update all instances of that style at once. Perhaps you decided that rather than having a green title, your title should be blue. If you try to manually change this in all documents, it is very easy to miss a page, and it can be very time consuming.

## Select a style from the Styles menu.

1. Click in your document where you want to add your style.
2. On the **Home** tab, click the drop-down bar next to **Style**

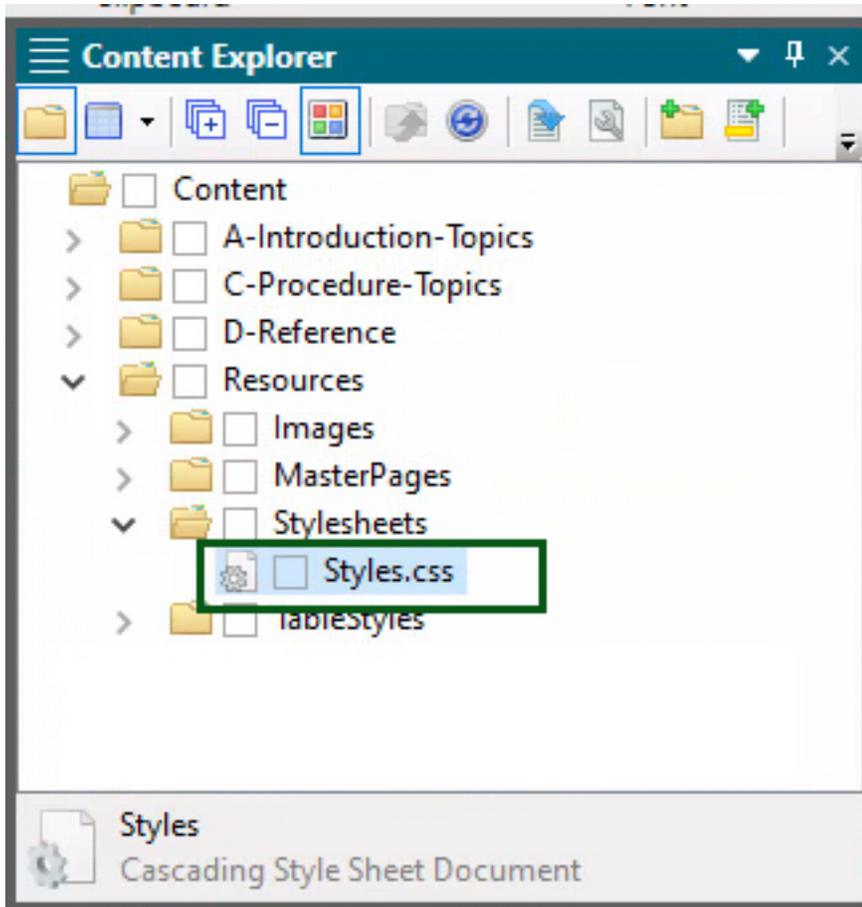


3. Select your style from the list.

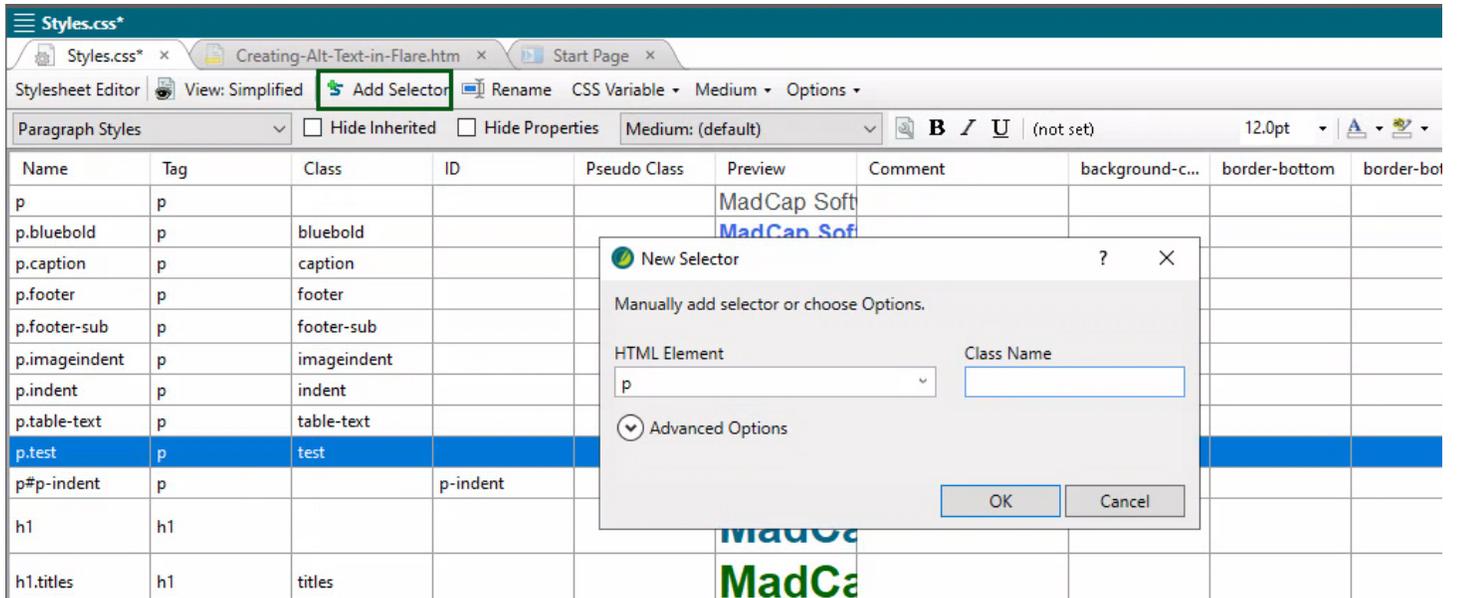
Note: To select a style that only applies to certain words in a section such as bolding, highlight the text you wish to apply the style to before opening the menu. Otherwise, the style applies to the entire paragraph.

## Creating a new style

1. Double click the styles CSS file in your Content Explorer.



2. Select **Add Selector**. The New Selector menu opens.



3. Select which basic element you want to make a derivation of under **HTML Element**.
4. Give a name to your new style. It will appear as [whichever HTML Element you choose].yourname in the CSS styles list.
5. Double click anywhere on your new style in the CSS styles list, except under the Comment column. The **Properties** window opens.
6. Adjust the style to your liking.

# Font Styles

A font sets the tone of your writing; it is the “voice” of your words. Generally you will want your font style to convey a neutral tone, so that readers focus on the meaning of your words as objectively as possible. Default fonts in word-processors such as Times New Roman and Arial are generally good for this. To be specific, a typeface encompasses all of the different fonts of a grouping, for example the Times New Roman typeface has bold and italic fonts of the letters as well. The words **font** and **typeface** are often used interchangeably however.

## Serif versus sans serif

You will need to make a decision about whether to use a serif or a sans serif font. The letters in a serif font are a little more visually complex, with accents, or serifs, added. Times New Roman is a classic example of a serif font. Sans serif fonts, as the name implies, lack these serifs. Serif fonts have a more traditional feel, while sans serif fonts feel more modern and are more common online than in print.



A Tale of Two T's: the T on the left is from Times New Roman, with its serif edges, while the T on the right is in Arial, which lacks the extra accents.

## Stylistic Fonts

Using a different font style can help to convey visual hierarchy by distinguishing headings, especially titles, from body text. Stylized fonts are useful for short phrases or headings to set a particular mood to

follow, but are difficult to read for extended periods. These are special cases, and sticking with a more standard font is rarely a bad choice.

**This looks cool but is hard to read**

## **Font Compatibility**

It's important to keep in mind that not everyone may have a particular font installed on their device. In such cases, fonts may default to a particular common one if you have not specified an alternative font for the user. See [here](#) for details on how to include a downloadable font in your project so that you don't need to worry about your font displaying incorrectly. Keep in mind: if a user has to download a new font as a web page loads, it may slow the loading slightly.

# Fonts and Visual Hierarchy

Creating a consistent **visual hierarchy** is an important part in making your page readable. It allows users to absorb information quicker by clearly defining the order to read, and the general subject matter they will be reading about. Having clearly defined section headings help users better skim your page to find relevant information, and is especially important for users who have cognitive difficulties with complex hierarchies. The title of pages typically has the largest font size, denoting its importance. As explained here, this is often the best place to make use of a more stylistic font style to give your work a specific mood or tone, but it is by no means necessary, and is entirely context dependent. If you are unsure whether to use a more stylistic font or not, it is generally better to play it safe so as to not be distracting to readers.

**Subheadings** are an interesting intersection in visual hierarchy. Your work may have many or few layers of subheadings, but they should be distinct from the body text and from the other layers. Using smaller font sizes, but still larger than body text, for each new layer of subheading is the most straightforward implementation. You can also use color to differentiate subheadings, as long as this is not the only method of distinguishing subheadings. See here for more information on color in accessibility.

Within body text, you can **bold** words to make them stand out more. This is especially useful when defining key words or terms, and helps with skimming as well. You can italicize or underline words as well, but these are often not as widely used as bolding, especially underlining since it can make your text look like a hyperlink, which can be especially frustrating to users with low vision who rely on underlines to tell where hyperlinks are. Make sure to use the Font Styles section so that you can easily change all instances of a given style at once; manually editing all instances of, say, a word being bolded in one color to another color would be a nightmare! Here is a guide if you are unsure how to do so.

# About the Author

Hello! I'm Ian Thorp, an English graduate of the University of Massachusetts Amherst, with a certificate of specialization in Professional Writing and Communication. I thoroughly enjoy reading and writing; stories, especially written ones, have captivated me my entire life. I'm no stranger to math either, and originally majored in computer engineering. Through numerous great teachers and professors, as well as my own reading, I have learned how to write in a way that lets me explain content for others. I was the recipient in 2020 of the Celeste M. and John F. Loughman Memorial Scholarship, and in 2021 I just recently was awarded the Charles Moran Best Text award for my essay the previous year.

In my free time I like to run and hike, as well as theorize about the connections between modernist literature and modern manga.

Feel free to get in touch with me, my email is [iant4242@gmail.com](mailto:iant4242@gmail.com) and my linkedin is [here](#).



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