

## Grolier ADA Compliance

[General Policy Statement](#)

[ADA Compliance Standards](#)

[Text-only Version Defined](#)

[Specific ADA Compliance Guidelines Followed](#)

[Using Grolier Online with Assistive Technologies](#)

[Accessing the Text-only Versions](#)

### General Policy Statement

Grolier Online has been committed to releasing ADA-compliant versions of all of its encyclopedia databases since 2002 when the *Encyclopedia Americana* was the first database to be upgraded to include an ADA-compliant version. Since then all of Grolier Online's major encyclopedia databases have been upgraded to include ADA-compliant versions: *Grolier Multimedia Encyclopedia*, *The New Book of Knowledge*, and *Enciclopedia Cumbre en Linea*. Additionally *The New Book of Popular Science* is also offered in ADA-compliant format, and the Grolier Online homepages and environments also adhere to the Section 508 guidelines, though no text-only versions have been created.

Given the complex nature of many of the features in our encyclopedias, we have adopted a two-tiered approach for achieving satisfactory levels of compliance. Over the next two years we will be incorporating as many ADA-compliant features as are feasible into the "graphical" (regular) versions of each Grolier Online encyclopedia database; at the same time, to ensure maximum compliance, we have also creating "text-only" versions of each. (See the definition of text-only, below.)

### ADA Compliance Standards

Online has chosen to follow the World Wide Web Consortium's (W3C) Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI) Checkpoints as its standard. This decision was made because the W3C has played a lead role in defining ADA standards for the Internet and has vigorously advocated a high degree of usability for people with disabilities. More information about the W3C can be obtained from their website at <http://www.w3.org/WAI>.

Currently, the text-only versions of Grolier Online's encyclopedia databases conform to Level AA of the W3C Web Accessibility Initiative, which means that they comply with all requirements identified by the W3C as priorities 1 and 2. In doing so, we have also achieved Level AA "Bobby" conformance. This means that the products comply with all of the requirements identified by *Bobby WorldWide* as key priorities in expanding opportunities for people with disabilities.

*Bobby WorldWide*, created by the nonprofit Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST), is a tool for Web page authors that helps them identify those changes necessary to enable users with disabilities to more easily access their Web pages. For example, *Bobby* identifies instances of missing descriptions or forms that are improperly labeled and that do not indicate the keypress that replaces a mouse click. It also indicates links that use repetitive language on the same page and tagging problems (improper use of heights and width, missing titles, etc.) More information about *Bobby WorldWide* can be obtained from their website at <http://www.watchfire.com/products/desktop/bobby/default.aspx>. The Federal Electronic and Information Technology Accessibility Standards, known as Section 508, has also been followed. The relevant Section 508 information is as follows:

On August 7, 1998, President Clinton signed the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, which includes the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998. Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments, as amended by the Workforce Investment Act of 1998, requires that when Federal agencies develop, procure, maintain, or use electronic and information technology, they shall ensure that the electronic and information technology allows Federal employees with disabilities to have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to the access to and use of information and data by Federal employees who are not individuals with disabilities, unless an undue burden would be imposed on the agency. Section 508 also requires that individuals with disabilities, who are members of the public seeking information or services from the Federal agency, have access to and use of information and data that is comparable to that provided to the public who are not individuals with disabilities.

### **Text-only Version Defined**

Although on the advice of our consultants in this field we have chosen to call our ADA-compliant versions text-only, the term is actually a misnomer. Despite the name, these versions contains all the graphic material in the graphical editions-- photographs, illustrations, maps, and flags--with the exception of video, animations, and sound files. These have been excluded while we develop ways to comply better with the standards for these assets, including, for instance, providing narrations for all video and animated content.

The text of the text-only versions is identical to that of the graphical editions. In fact, the text-only version is simply a different view of the same article files seen by users of the graphical edition, engineered and displayed in such a way as to support assistive technologies and the navigational and display requirements of the standard. The specific compliance strategies we have employed in these versions are discussed below.

### **Specific ADA Compliance Guidelines Followed**

## **Site Maps**

The main page of the text-only version is a site map with links to every part of the encyclopedia. Many pages throughout the encyclopedia include toggle links to enable the user to move quickly and easily between the graphic and text-only versions.

## **Keyboard shortcuts**

Keyboard shortcuts commonly supported by alternative Web browsers, as described in the WAI guidelines, along with others defined specifically for use within the encyclopedias, have been included to provide quick navigation.

## **Bypass Links**

Invisible graphic links, with text equivalents, are available on all pages to help the user skip navigation bars or other repeated functions, thereby facilitating direct access to content or other main areas of a page.

## **Limited Use of Graphic Buttons**

Since some users have difficulty reading text on graphic images, and since there is very limited provision in Web browsers for enlarging graphics, thereby allowing the text on the graphic to be readable for those with impaired sight, most links for navigating the encyclopedia have been implemented as text links. This enables the user to increase the size of the font, and therefore the text of the link, as needed.

## **Text Alternatives**

Every graphic image in the encyclopedia has a text alternative. This is accomplished by providing "alt" information for the graphic. Browsers of Web content support "alt" and will therefore display or read this text information for those unable to display or view the image.

## **Table Summaries**

All complex content tables in the encyclopedia have been supplied with text summaries to provide a text equivalent for a table that may be unreadable by some special media browsers.

## **Design Considerations**

Several design factors have been employed to ensure that text-only pages have significant contrast between background and foreground images and text.

## **Style sheets**

Style sheets have been utilized in the ADA-compliant versions, as they allow for a document's structure to play a more significant role in its presentation on the Web, making it easier for assistive applications to render them.

## **Page movement**

Special care has been taken to avoid page movement or flickering to avoid adversely affecting people with photosensitive epilepsy.

## **Pop-ups**

No pop-up pages exist in the text-only versions, as recommended in the case of browsers such as Lynx. Instead, full-size pages display selection lists and full-size images.

## **Using Grolier Online with Assistive Technologies**

The guidelines listed above ensure that our text-only versions can be used by persons with certain disabilities using a standard Web browser. However, some disabilities require that the user adopt an alternative approach to Web use, an approach sometimes quite different from that provided by traditional browsers. A variety of browsers and screen readers specifically designed for persons with disabilities are now available, allowing those with visual impairment or reading difficulties, for instance, to rely on speech output, Braille displays, or screen magnification.

Because Grolier Online has strictly adhered to the ADA compliance guidelines specified above, the text-only versions of the encyclopedias should work consistently across all alternative browsers and screen readers. Additionally, Grolier Online has tested its text-only versions with screen readers such as JAWS as well as text-only browsers such as LYNX. Fonts and images were also enlarged and tested within Internet Explorer to ensure that the products worked well in that environment. The following page on the W3C site contains a good listing of assistive technology readers/browsers:

<http://www.w3.org/WAI/References/Browsing#2>.

## **Accessing the Text-only Versions**

The text-only versions of our encyclopedias can be accessed in three ways:

1. Via a link ("Text-only Version") from the Grolier Online home page, <http://go.grolier.com>. Since the Grolier Online home page is account specific, this link will only appear on the home pages of customers subscribing to an encyclopedia with a text-only version.

2. Via a link ("Text-only Version") from the home page of each encyclopedia database (as titles become available).
3. Via a link from the bottom of each article page in the encyclopedia ("Toggle to Text-only Version").

Grolier Online has long been committed to providing easy access, powerful functionality, and a wealth of content for its users, and this commitment has now been expanded to include ADA compliance. Our ongoing commitment is not only to include ADA-compliant versions of all content but also to monitor the standard as it changes and grows and to incorporate new and improved functionality as it becomes available.