

Colour Contrast Analyzer

The Paciello Group International (TPGi)



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Background

The Colour Contrast Analyzer can be used by those who use the keyboard with or without a screen reader or Text-to-Speech tool (TTS).

When using the mouse, we often depend on the eyedropper to identify the foreground or text colour against the background colour.

You can [download the Colour Contrast Analyzer](#)¹ from the Paciello Group International (TPGi). There is a Windows and Mac version. However, this tutorial is for the Windows version only.

There are extra steps when we use the keyboard. This tutorial is on using the Colour Contrast Analyzer for your Word documents. The keyboard method may not work on PDF documents or other image-based content. It will work on PowerPoint presentations.

Getting Colour Information in Word

The first step is to get the information about the background colour and the text in your Word document. For this tutorial, I've created some sandbox text with a light colour for the text and a pale yellow background or shading.

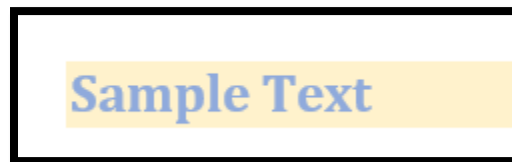


Figure 1 Sample light blue text with light yellow shading as the background.

Select one or all of the letters in the text and press the AppKey to open the context menu.

Press F for Font, which opens the Font dialog.

In the Font dialog, press Alt + C to open the colour palette.

Once the colour palette opens, press M for More Colours.

¹ The Colour Contrast Analyzer from the Paciello Group International: <https://www.tpgi.com/color-contrast-checker/>

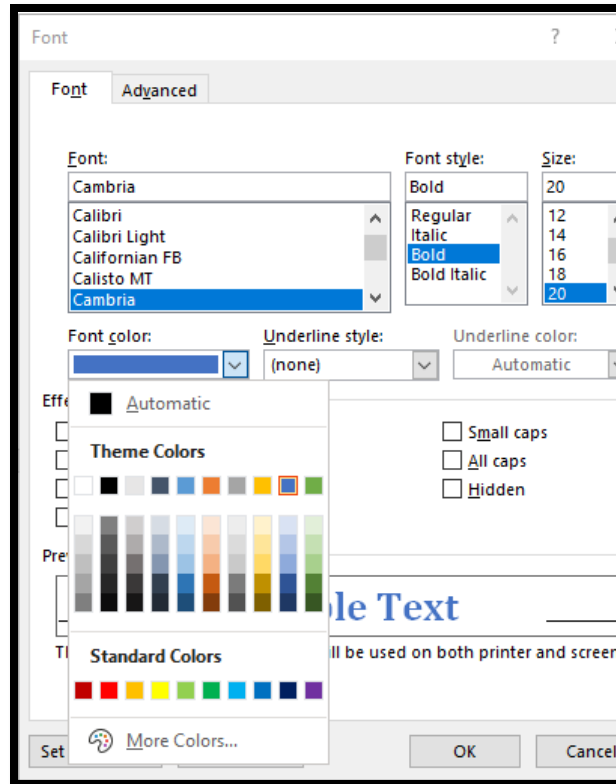


Figure 2 Font dialog showing colour palette expanded.

When the Colour dialog opens, press Ctrl + Tab to move to the Custom tab to find the Hexadecimal and RGB or Red, Green, Blue colour values.

Press Tab until you land in the Red edit box. Using a screen-reader, you will hear “Red” followed by the value. This is an edit box, so if you type a number, it will be entered.

All you want to do is take note of the Red value, press Tab to move to the Green Value and make a note of it and then press Tab to move to the Blue value and make a note of it.

If you want to enter the Hexadecimal number, press Tab until you reach the “Hex” or a Hexadecimal number and note it, including the number sign.

For documents, we generally don’t use the Hexadecimal values because they are web-based values.

Type the RGB values with a space after the commas. For example, the text colour is “68, 114, 196”. When entering the information into the Colour Contrast Analyzer, it doesn’t matter if you add a space between the commas and the next number.

You can copy them into a NotePad document and paste them into the Colour Contrast Analyzer.

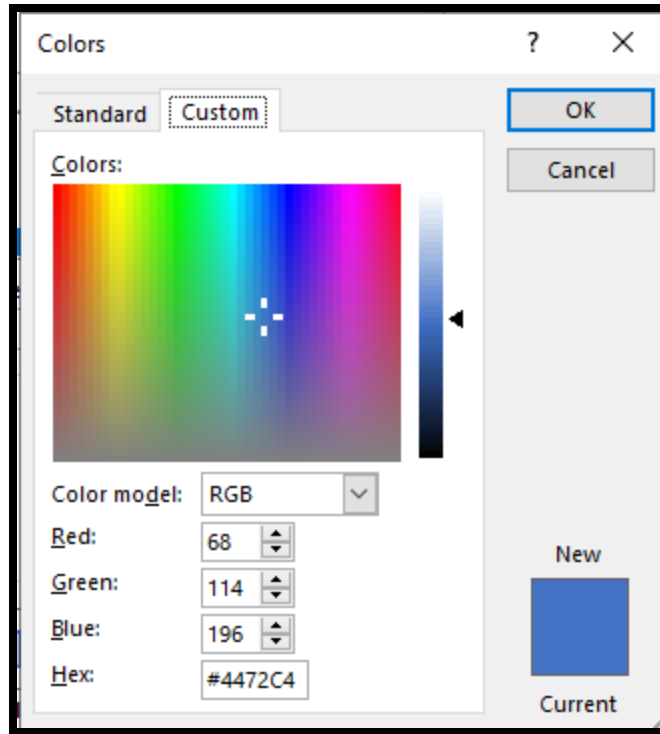


Figure 3 Colour dialog showing the RGB and Hexadecimal colour values.

Press Escape to move back to the document.

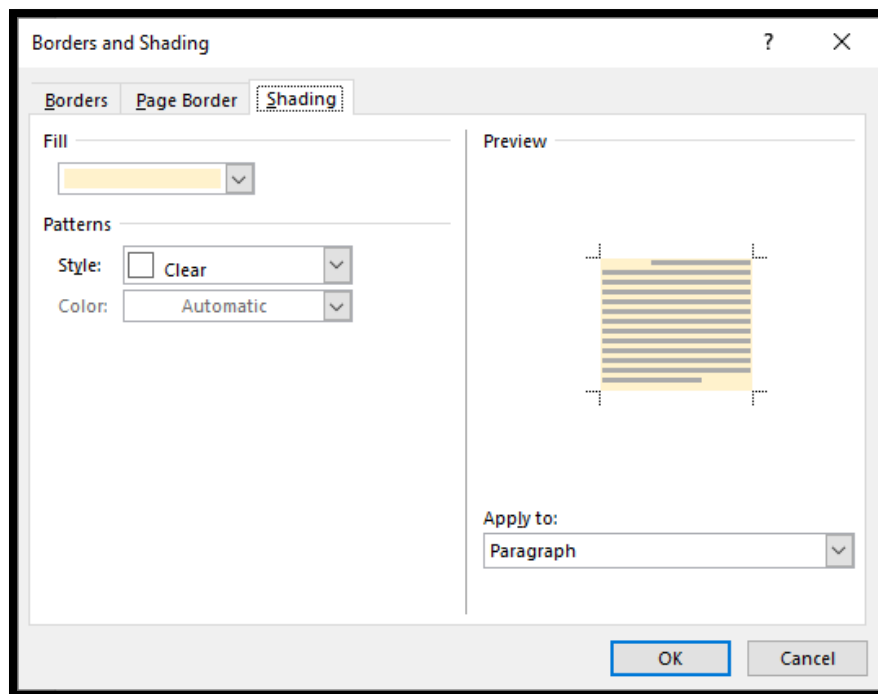


Figure 4 Borders and Shading dialog showing the Shading tab.

With the text still selected, press Alt + H, B, letter O for the Home Ribbon, Borders, Borders and Shading dialog.

When the Borders and Shading dialog opens, press Ctrl + Tab to move to the Shading tab, then press Tab to move to the Colour palette. It is not expanded at this point.

Press Alt + Down Arrow to expand the colour palette, then M for More colours.

Press Tab to move to the Red colour value and note it.

Press Tab to move to the Green colour value and note it.

Press Tab and move to the Blue colour value, and note it.

If you are typing the values, type them with a space between the commas and the number. For example, the background colour would be noted as “255, 242, 204”.

You can copy them into a NotePad document and paste them into the Colour Contrast Analyzer.

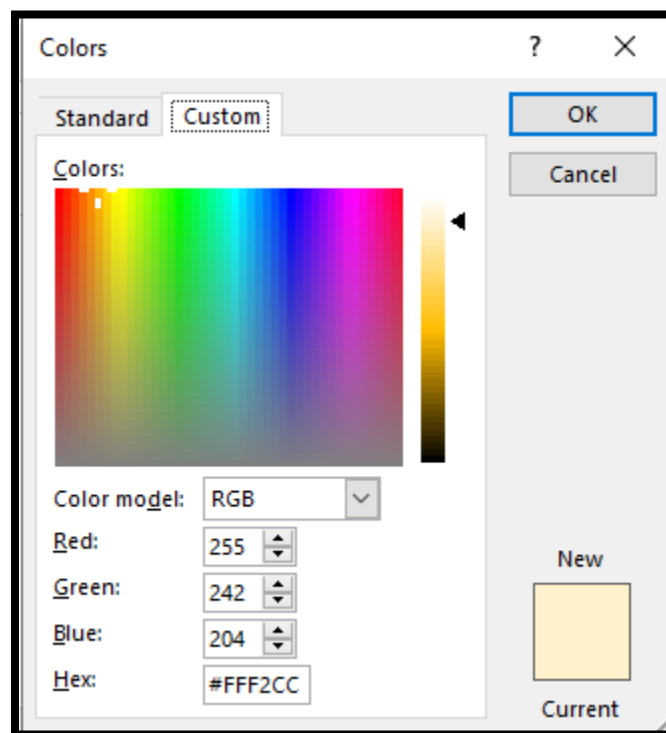


Figure 5 Colour dialog in the Borders and Shading dialog showing the shading or background colour.

Colour Contrast Analyzer

Once you have noted the text or foreground colour and the background colour, go to your desktop and launch the Colour Contrast Analyzer.

You can use the keyboard with the Colour Contrast Analyzer, and it does work with a screen reader. In this example, I've changed the default "Hex" values to RGB values because that is what I usually work with when dealing with colour in documents.

If you are working on a web page in Word, you might want to get the Hexadecimal values instead of the RGB values.

When you get to the values drop down, press Alt + Down Arrow to see the options. After choosing one, press Enter.

Press Tab to move to the edit area where you can type in the values, in this case, the RGB values. When you land in the edit area, press the End key to remove the selection, then use the Left Arrow to move the cursor to just before the right paren.

Use the Backspace to remove the current values entered and type in the values for the text/foreground from your notes. It doesn't matter if there are spaces between the commas and the numbers.

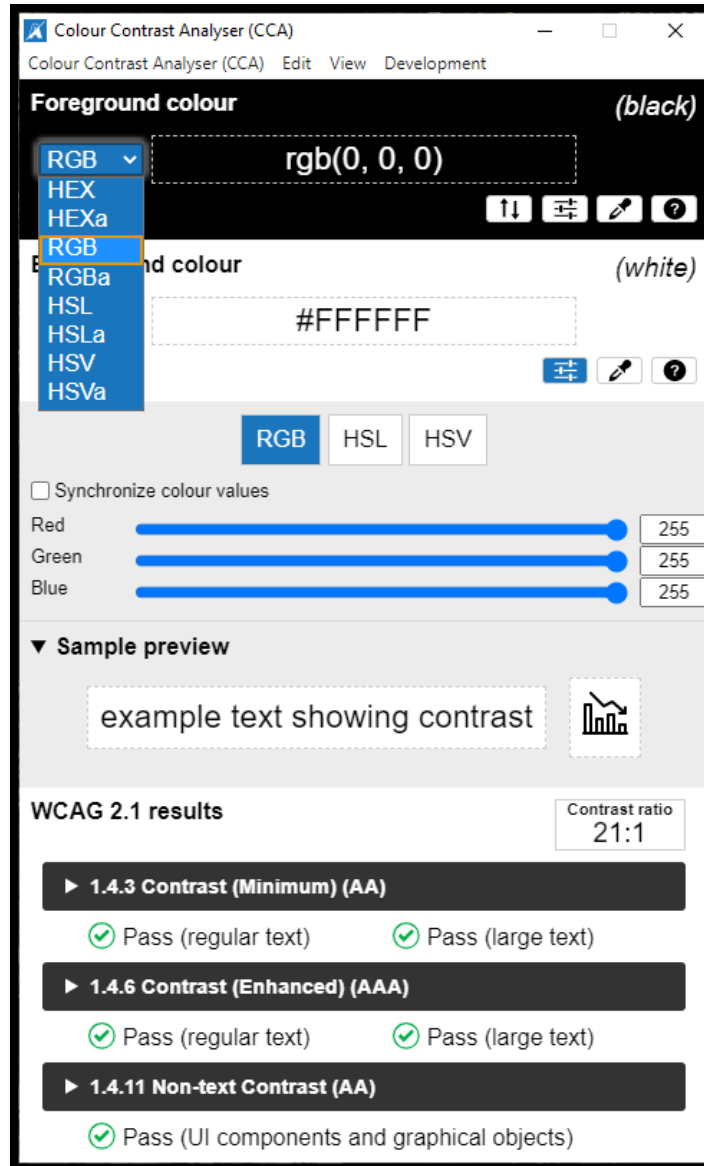


Figure 6 Colour Contrast Analyzer dialog showing the expanded values options.

Once the values are entered for the text/foreground, press Tab to move through the icons for the eyedropper and other tools until you land on the values options drop-down for the background colour. Make sure that the values are the same in terms of both being RGB or being Hexadecimal. It is less confusing.

Once the values options are set to be the same as the text/foreground, in this example, RGB, press Tab to move into the edit area where you can enter the background colour values.

Press the End key to remove focus from the text, then press the Left Arrow to move the cursor just before the right paren.

Press the Backspace to remove the RGB values currently entered and replace them with the background values from your notes.

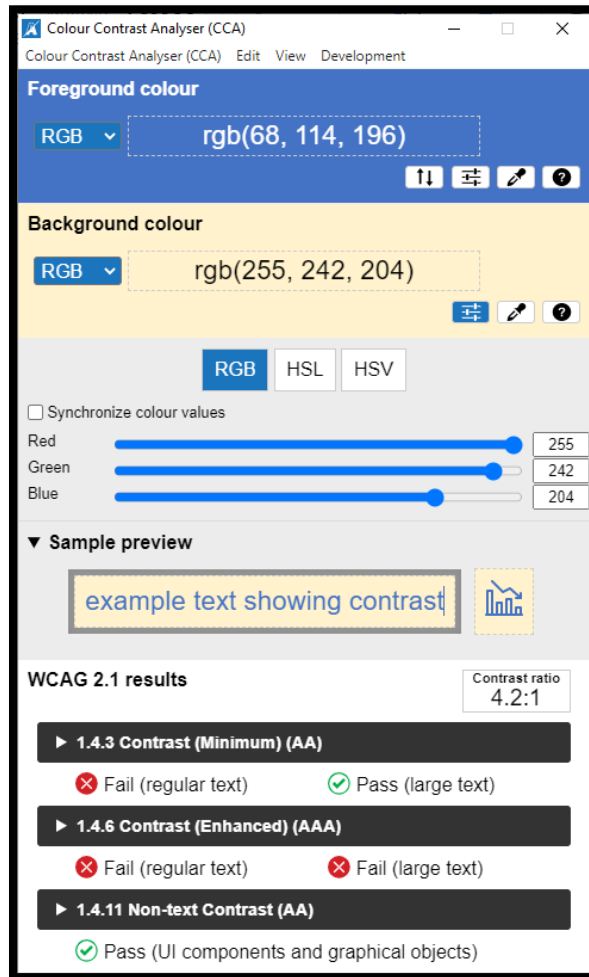


Figure 7 Colour Contrast Analyser dialog showing the results of the colour contrast check: a failure.

As soon as you enter the background colour information, the results are available.

Press Escape to exit edit mode and then press the Down Arrow to begin moving through the results if you are using a screen-reader. There are headings in the dialog to get you to results faster.

I used the JAWS screen reader for this tutorial and accessed all of the information in the Colour contrast Analyzer dialog.

Contact information

You can [contact Karen McCall](#)² if you have any questions about this tutorial.

² Contact Karen McCall: info@karlencommunications.com

There is a lot of free stuff on the website and older tutorials.

Newer tutorials are in the [Microsoft Office Tutorials and Resources](#)³ “course” at Teachable, and these too are free.

³ Microsoft Office Tutorials and Resources “course” on Teachable: <https://karen-mccall.teachable.com/p/microsoft-office-tutorials-and-resource-documents>