

Canva Accessibility Best Practices

Best Practices for Designing, Exporting, and Preparing Accessible PDFs for Adobe Acrobat Remediation

“Canva improves accessibility, but a final review in Adobe Acrobat is still needed to ensure your PDF is fully accessible.”

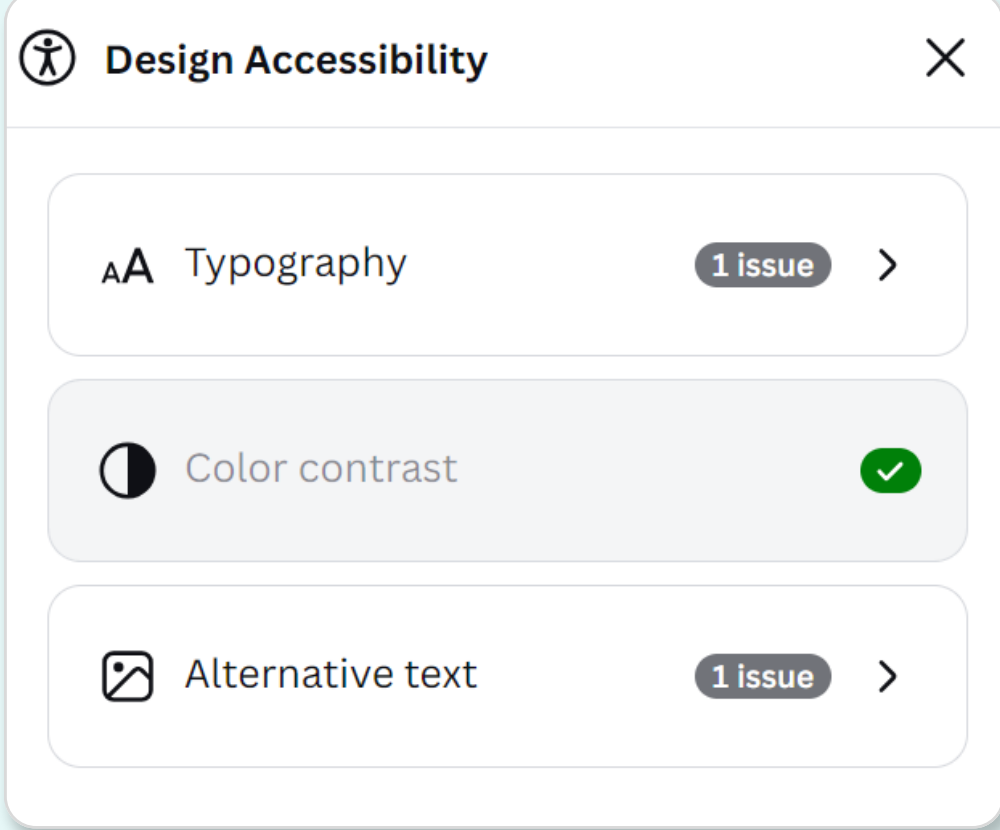


1. ACCESSIBILITY OPTIONS



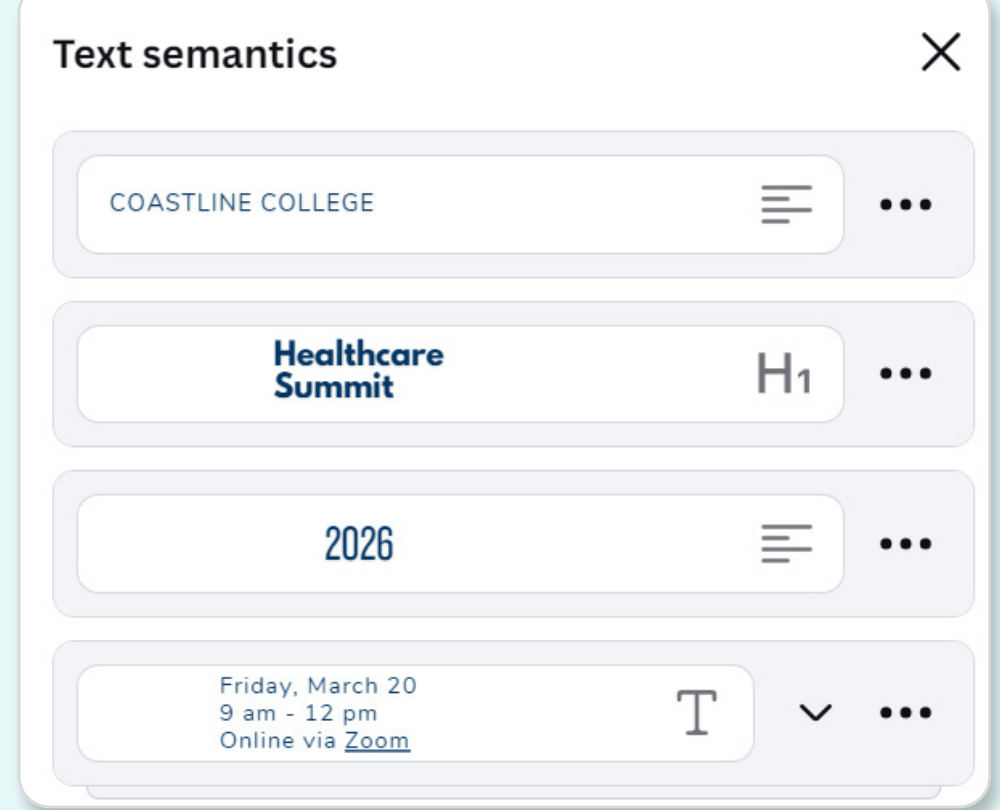
1 Check Design Accessibility

Use Canva's Accessibility Checker to identify common issues such as missing alt text, low color contrast, and improper heading structure. Running this check before exporting can help catch accessibility barriers early.



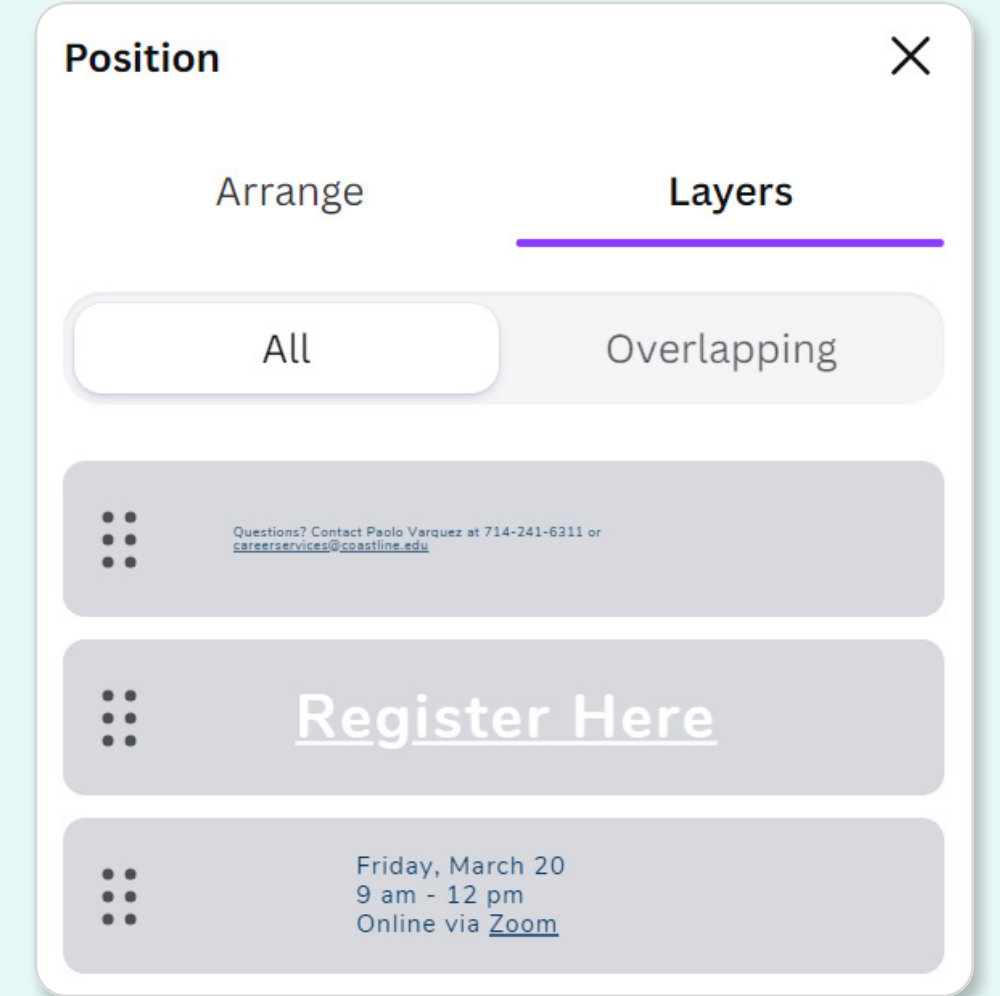
2 Edit Text Semantics

Assign proper text semantics such as headings, subheadings, and paragraphs. Semantic structure helps screen reader users understand and navigate the content more efficiently.



3 Navigate By Layer Order

Enable "Navigate by Layer Order" to ensure content is read in the intended sequence. Canva reads layers from the bottom up, so the bottom layer is read first by assistive technologies. Arrange your layers accordingly to preserve the correct reading order when exporting an accessible PDF.



File > Accessibility

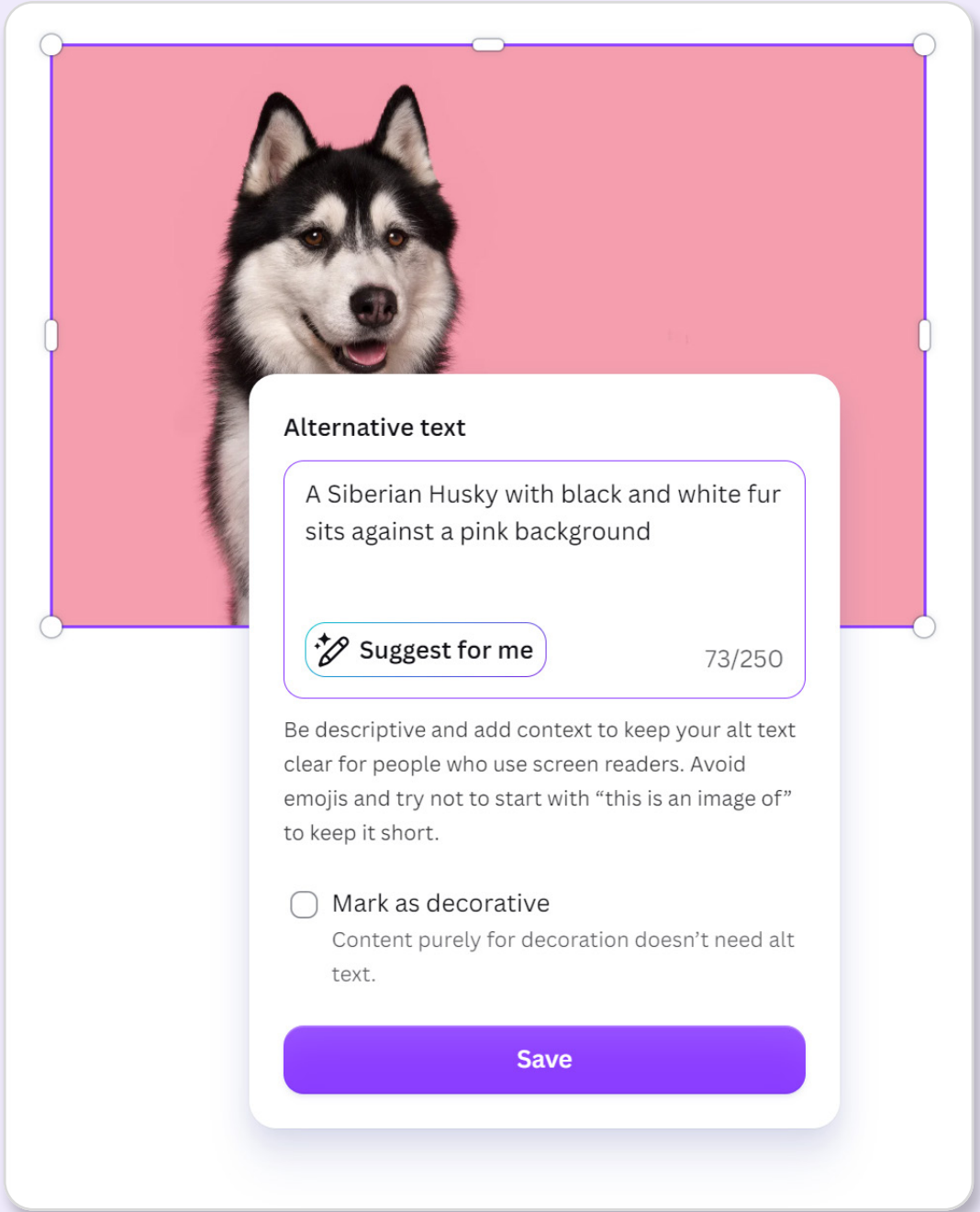


2. IMAGES & ALT-TEXT

1 Writing Alt-text

Provide concise descriptions that communicate the purpose and meaning of an image. Focus on information that is important to understanding the content rather than describing every visual detail.

Example:
"Student using a laptop to complete an online course."

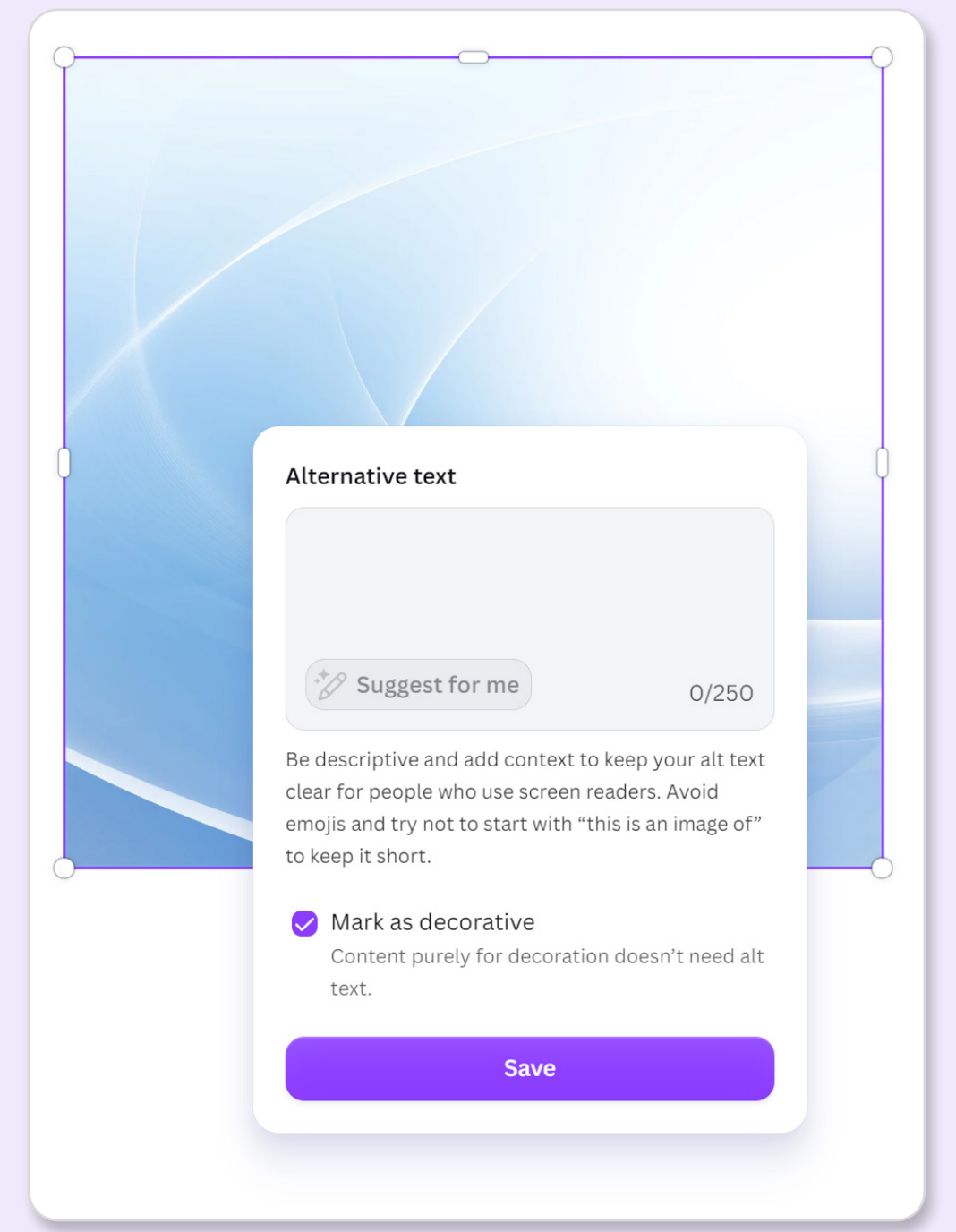


2 Marking As Decorative

Images that do not convey important information should be marked as decorative. This prevents screen readers from announcing unnecessary content and creates a better user experience.

Examples of decorative images:

- Background patterns
- Decorative icons
- Visual flourishes



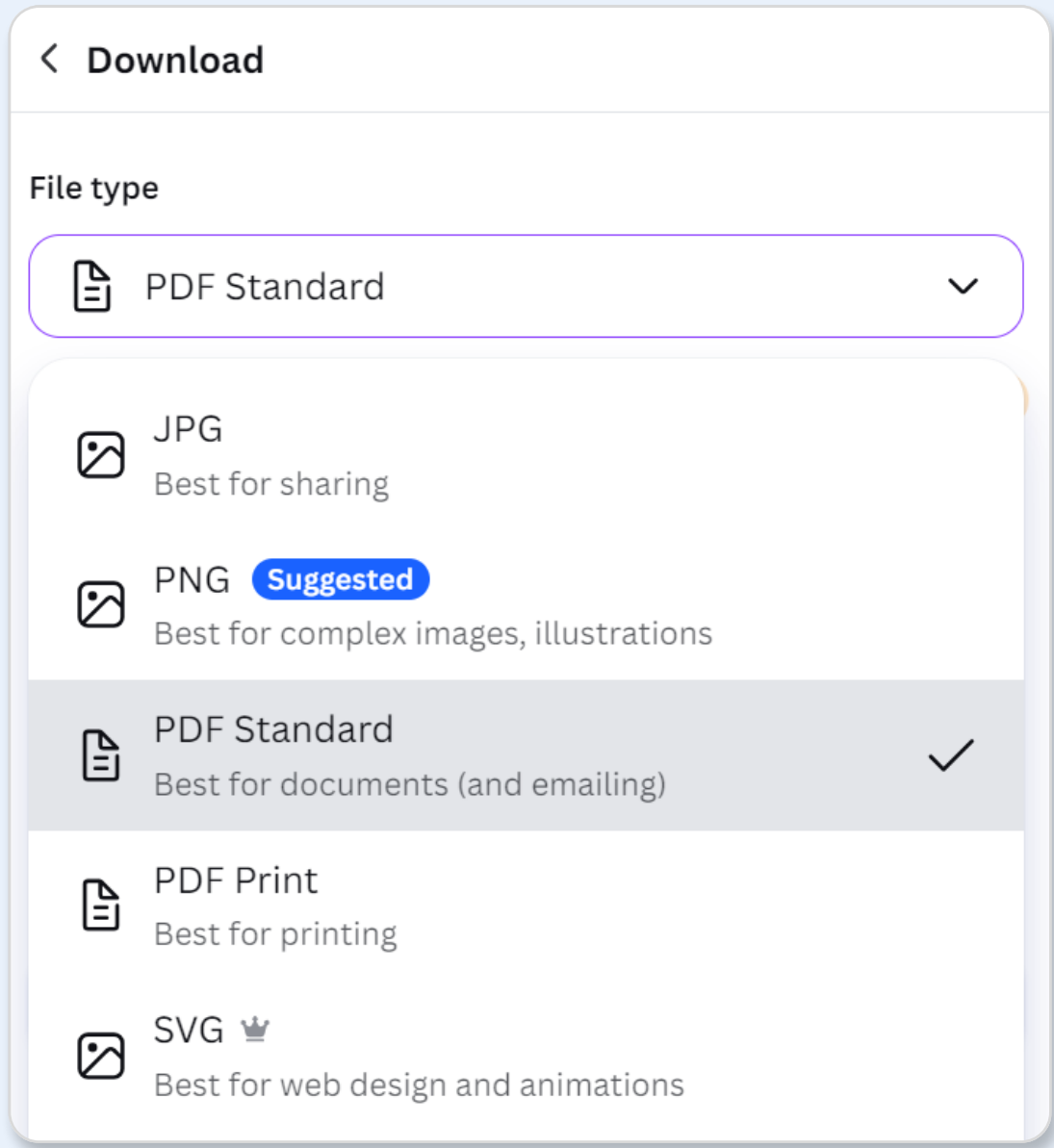
Right Click Image > Alternative Text



3. PDF EXPORT

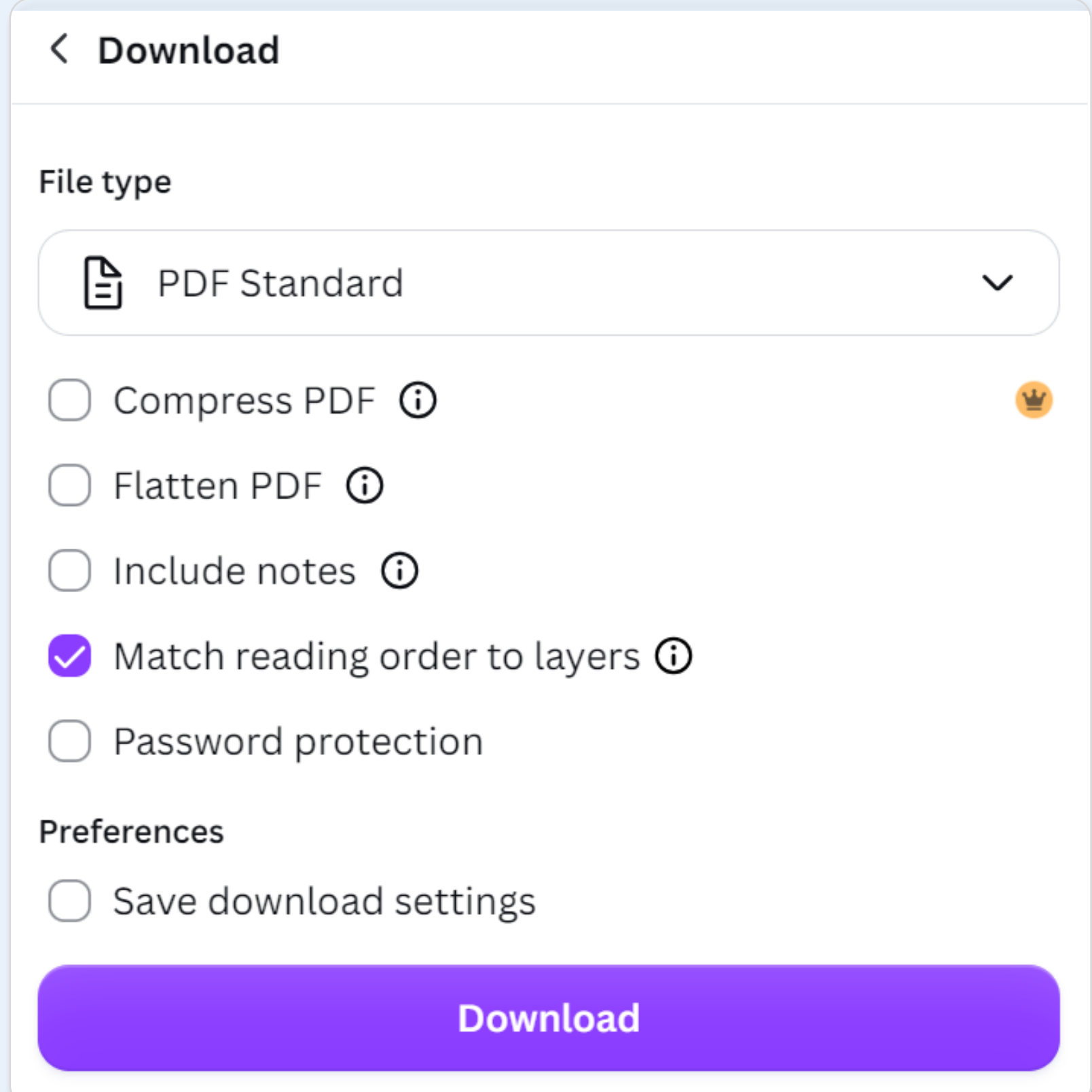
1 File Type: PDF Standard

Export as a Standard PDF rather than a print-focused PDF whenever possible. Standard PDFs preserve accessibility features and support screen reader compatibility.



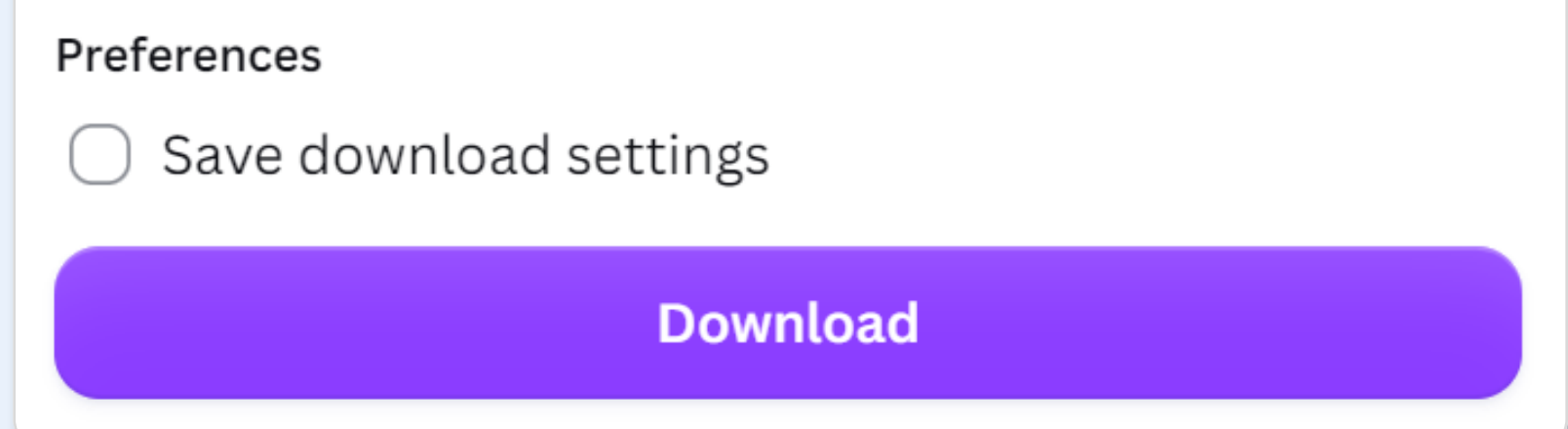
2 Do Not Flatten PDF

Avoid flattening the PDF during export. Flattened PDFs convert content into images, making text difficult or impossible for assistive technology to access.



3 Match Reading Order to Layers

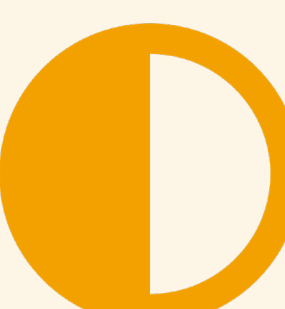
In the PDF export options, make sure "Match Reading Order to Layers" is checked. This ensures the reading order you created in Canva is preserved in the exported PDF.



Share > Download > PDF Standard



THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND



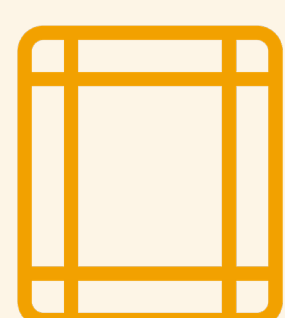
Contrast Ratio

Use sufficient color contrast between text and its background to improve readability. Aim to meet contrast requirements of 4.5:1, especially for body text and important information.



Font Size and Type

Choose clear, easy-to-read fonts and avoid overly decorative typefaces. Use a font size that is large enough to be read comfortably on both desktop and mobile devices.



Margins & White Space

Maintain consistent page margins and leave enough white space around text, images, and other content to improve readability and reduce visual clutter.



ACCESSIBILITY SUCCESS CHECKLIST



Run the Accessibility Checker



Check Layer Order



Verify Heading Structure



Match Reading Order to Layers



Add Alt Text to Images



Export as a Standard PDF

THE ACCESSIBLE PDF WORKFLOW



Design with Accessibility in Mind



Check Accessibility



Add Alt Text & Semantics



Set Layer Order



Export as Standard PDF



Review & Remediate in Adobe Acrobat



Publish & Share



COASTLINE
COLLEGE