

WCAG 2.1 AA Quick Reference

The core accessibility requirements, translated into shop terms

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The European Accessibility Act points to WCAG 2.1 at level AA as the practical standard for accessible websites. The criteria can read as abstract, so this reference restates the main ones in terms of a working shop. It is a summary to guide your work, not a substitute for a full audit against the standard.

Requirement	What it means for a shop
Colour contrast	Text meets 4.5:1 against its background (3:1 for large text), so prices, buttons and body copy stay readable.
Keyboard operable	Every action — menus, filters, add-to-basket, checkout — works with the keyboard alone, with no keyboard trap.
Visible focus	The element currently in focus is clearly highlighted as a user tabs through the page.
Text alternatives	Product images and icons carry meaningful alt text so screen-reader users know what they are.
Labelled form fields	Address, payment and search fields have clear, programmatic labels, not just placeholder text.
Error identification	Form errors are named in text and, where possible, come with a suggestion for fixing them.
Semantic headings	Pages use a logical heading structure so the layout can be navigated by assistive technology.
Language of page	The page declares its language so screen readers pronounce content correctly.
Resize & reflow	Content resizes and reflows without loss of function, including on small or zoomed screens.
Status messages	Updates such as "added to basket" or stock warnings are announced to assistive technology.

This is a condensed guide to selected WCAG 2.1 AA criteria, not the full standard. Test with real assistive technology and consult the published guidelines and your obligations under the Accessibility Act.

