Time Limits

What is it for?

Time limits refer to when a page sets a time limit on doing a certain action. This is often seen while filling in forms, or whilst making a purchase. When using time limits, allow sufficient time for users to complete tasks, read content, or interact with digital interfaces.

To make time limits accessible, Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) 2.2 has a Level A requirement (SC 2.2.1 Timing Adjustable). Users must be able to do at least one of these things: turn the time limit off, change it to at least 10 times its length, or get a warning before it runs out and extend it with a simple action, such as pressing a button. They must have at least 20 seconds to respond to the warning, and be able to extend the time at least 10 times. There are a few exceptions, such as live auctions.

People with cognitive disabilities, and people who use screen readers, often need more time to take in information and finish tasks. A fixed time limit can cause pressure and anxiety. This can break people's concentration and stop them finishing, whether or not they have a disability.

Time limit considerations are most important for:

- Users with motor skills impairments
- Users with cognitive difficulties
- Screen reader users

How to support it

Ensure that any time limits you use can be manually extended. Also ensure that the implementation of those time limits isn't done in a scary or anxiety-inducing manner.

Useful links

- Access Guide: Time limits
- Understanding SC 2.2.1: Timing Adjustable
- Web Accessibility Tips: Give People Enough Time