Accessible Data Tables in PDF Documents

State of Iowa

May 2025

MSF&W

Headers rule

- Checks for column and row headers
- Column and row headers provide labels for each data cell
- Table content is not tabular if headers are not applicable

Layout Tables

If tables have been used for layout, but the content is not tabular data, pull the tags (<P>, <L>, etc.) out of the table and delete the empty containers (<Table>, <TR>, <TH>, <TD>).

Regularity rule

- Check that data tables contain the same number of columns in each row, and rows in each column.

- A "complex data table" has cells that span multiple rows or columns, making the table irregular.
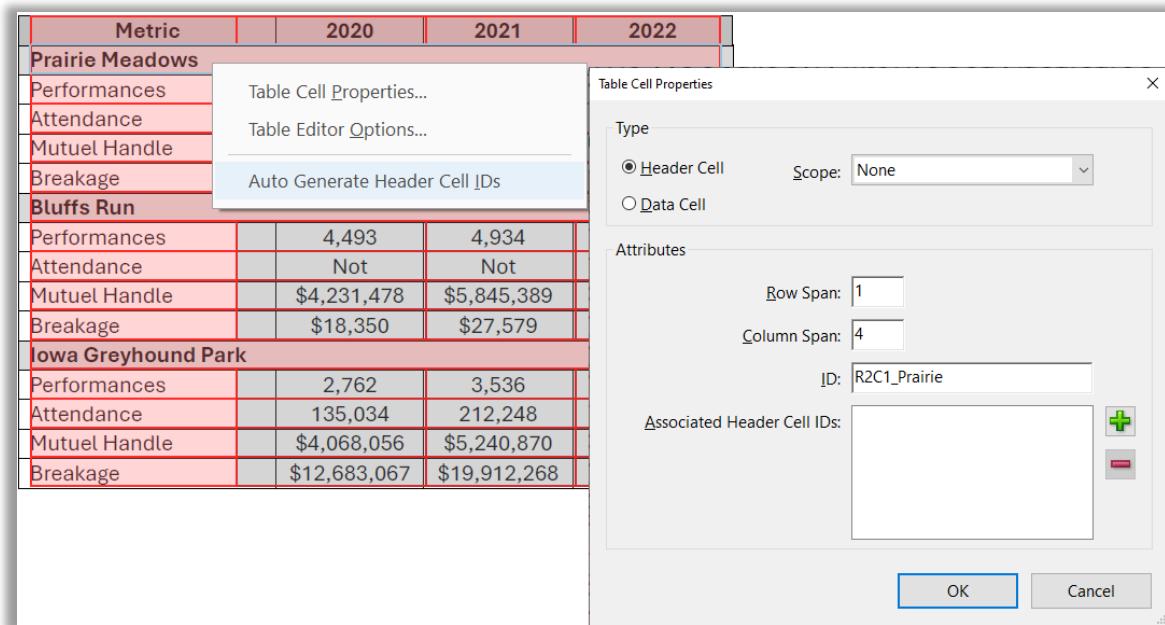
Complex Tables

Metric	2020	2021	2022
Prairie Meadows			
Performances	5,179	7,364	7,999
Attendance	1,183,557	2,161,839	2,069,909
Mutuel Handle	$41,627,619	$46,734,763	$39,728,364
Breakage	$36,912	$41,017	$41,260
Bluffs Run			
Performances	4,493	4,934	4,936
Attendance	Not	Not	Not Available
Mutuel Handle	$4,231,478	$5,845,389	$5,576,705
Breakage	$18,350	$27,579	$45,938
Iowa Greyhound Park			
Performances	2,762	3,536	3,540
Attendance	135,034	212,248	84,762
Mutuel Handle	$4,068,056	$5,240,870	$4,154,043
Breakage	$12,683,067	$19,912,268	$2,400,682

If a table must remain complex, additional markup must be added in the Table Editor.

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Complex Table Header Cells

For each header cell:

- Indicate the number of columns or rows spanned

- Every header cell must have a unique ID

- Right click → Auto Generate Header Cell IDs

Complex Table Data Cells

For each data cell:

- List the ID of each associated header cell.

Simplified Table

Every complex table can be rearranged or split into multiple tables to avoid being irregular.

Metric	2020	2021	2022
Prairie Meadows Performances	5,179	7,364	7,999
Prairie Meadows Attendance	1,183,557	2,161,839	2,069,909
Prairie Meadows Mutuel Handle	$41,627,619	$46,734,763	$39,728,364
Prairie Meadows Breakage	$36,912	$41,017	$41,260
Bluffs Run Performances	4,493	4,934	4,936
Bluffs Run Attendance	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
Bluffs Run Mutuel Handle	$4,231,478	$5,845,389	$5,576,705
Bluffs Run Breakage	$18,350	$27,579	$45,938
Iowa Greyhound Park Performances	2,762	3,536	3,540
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Iowa Greyhound Park Mutuel Handle	$4,068,056	$5,240,870	$4,154,043
Iowa Greyhound Park Breakage	$12,683,067	$19,912,268	$2,400,682

Complex, but in a different way

If a table must remain complex, use two columns of row headers or two rows of column headers.

Park	Metric	2020	2021	2022
Prairie Meadows	Performances	5,179	7,364	7,999
	Attendance	1,183,557	2,161,839	2,069,909
	Mutuel Handle	$41,627,619	$46,734,763	$39,728,364
	Breakage	$36,912	$41,017	$41,260
Bluffs Run	Performances	4,493	4,934	4,936
	Attendance	Not Available	Not Available	Not Available
	Mutuel Handle	$4,231,478	$5,845,389	$5,576,705
	Breakage	$18,350	$27,579	$45,938
Iowa Greyhound Park	Performances	2,762	3,536	3,540
	Attendance	135,034	212,248	84,762
	Mutuel Handle	$4,068,056	$5,240,870	$4,154,043
	Breakage	$12,683,067	$19,912,268	$2,400,682

Q&A

Questions?

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