

PowerPoint Basics

Content

- Resist the temptation to put your entire presentation on your slides. Instead, just highlight your main points.
- Avoid paragraphs. Limit your slides to 5 bullet points each, using only a few key words or phrases. Complete sentences are also unnecessary.
- Remember to use spell check and review your slides for grammar and punctuation errors

Formatting and Style

- Fancier is not always better, keep your slides simple and to the point.
- Use a consistent layout from slide to slide, including title and body text sizes and colors.
- Fonts should be at least 18pt or larger.
- Use one fonts, or two if you wish to use a special font for headings, make sure it looks different from your body font.
- Avoid all-caps, bolding, and italics except on small portions of text. If everything is bold, underlined, or italic, the focus is lost.
- Be sure to use sharply contrasting colors for your background and text.

Visuals

- Only use visuals (illustrations, photos, charts, and graphs) if they enhance your meaning. Clip art and cartoons can appear unprofessional and should be avoided.
- Limit your graphics to only one or two per slide; too many images can be distracting.
- Obtain permission for and credit copyrighted material, including both text and graphics.
- If you must display a complex visual concept, build it up gradually on screen rather than throwing up a detailed image that is too complex to immediately grasp.

Presenting

- Do not read your slides. Use them as a springboard for your presentation. This is the most common complaint among attendees.
- Practice your presentation with the PowerPoint. It will be apparent if you have not.
- Obtain permission for and credit copyrighted material, including both text and graphics.
- Keep a final image on screen at the end of your presentation. If you don't want to leave your last content slide up, use to a general slide (e.g. your opening title slide, a slide saying "Questions?", an image etc.).