



PowerPoint Tips and Tricks

PowerPoint Info

Microsoft PowerPoint is a presentation program for PC, Mac, or mobile devices. It can create presentations from scratch or a template. Users can add text, images, art, audio and videos; use professional designs with PowerPoint Designer; and add transitions, animations, and motion. Presentations can be saved to OneDrive and shared to work with others.

Tips for making creative and effective presentations

1. **Keep it simple:** The less clutter you have on your slides, the more powerful your visual message will become. Your slides should have plenty of “white space” or “negative space.”
2. **Limit text and bullets:** An effective PowerPoint presentation should have a small amount of text on each slide. The audience should listen to you, not read along!
3. **Use graphics and charts:** Use graphs and charts to visually communicate data and information. Graphics and charts should be high-quality, accurate, and self-explanatory.
4. **Use fonts that are easy to read:** Sans serif fonts are typically the best for presentations. Do not use more than two complementary fonts; for example Arial and Arial Bold for emphasis. Also, be generous with spacing between lines.
5. **Use colors that improve readability:** Try to keep it simple and do not use too many colors. In general, three to four colors is sufficient for a presentation.
 - Follow the 60-30-10 rule—if you’ve chosen three colors, then you should devote 60 percent of the space on your slides to the primary color, 30 percent to the secondary and 10 percent to the accent color.
 - Don’t be subtle with your color palette. Use bold colors and high contrast that make your text stand out clearly from the background.
 - Be careful about layering text over images—make sure the contrast is strong. Use a color contrast checker and aim for a color contrast ratio for text to interactive element ratio of at least 4.5 : 1.
6. **Use animations judiciously:** Animations can help direct the audience's eye and can also help engage audiences who are facing presentation fatigue. Animation can be a powerful communication tool; however, the type of animation matters!
 - Some types, like Appear, Fade-in, Fade-out are subtle while Spin or Fly-in can be highly distracting.
 - Using too many animations can make the presentation look less serious.

7. Use audio/video for impact: Audio or video can make the presentation more interesting and improve the impact of the message you are trying to communicate. However, make sure you have access to the audio-visual facilities in the location where you are making the presentation, for in-person presentations. In a Zoom meeting, you will have to share your computer audio along with the screen.
8. Be consistent and organized: The color scheme, design choices, and animation effects in a presentation need to be consistent, unless there is a clear and specific purpose to bring in variation.
 - An easy way to achieve this is to get your “Master” slides in place before you build content slides. You can also organize your content with section headers and guideposts.
 - Keep your images consistent on a slide—do not mix visual types. If you want to use photos on a slide, then use just photos. Don’t get tempted to insert a clipart on the same slide. If you use a 2D image on a slide, don’t insert a 3D image right next to it.
9. Consider Accessibility: Accessibility Checker verifies your presentation against a set of standards that identify possible areas of concern for people who have disabilities. Running the Accessibility Checker is a critical process in optimizing your presentations for accessibility. This can be done when you have completed your project, or you can get notified of issues as you are working.

How to Use Animations in PowerPoint

1. Go to the ‘Animations’ option in the top toolbar.
2. Click the ‘Animation Pane’ button: this will pop up a pane on the right side of the screen. This pane lets you see and manage the animations on each slide.
3. Select the text or graphic in the slide that you wish to animate.
4. Select the type of animation from the options provided in the top bar.
 - The green stars show the various ways the text/graphic selected can appear on the slide. For example: The Matrix uses the ‘Fly In’ option.
 - You can also use ‘Emphasis Effects’, shown by yellow stars, independently or in combination with other animation effects. For example: The Matrix uses the ‘Grow/Shrink’ emphasis effect.
5. Once you select an animation style, it will also get displayed in the Animation pane. Here you can change the order, properties, timing, and trigger for your animation.
 - You can adjust animation effect properties using the animation pane. For example: rearrange the order of animations by using up/down arrows or by dragging/dropping the step.



- When you select an animation step in the Animation pane, the pane will show you additional properties which you can change. For example: the Grow/Shrink emphasis effect has a 'property' option of making the text smaller or bigger. It also lets you select 'Auto-reverse' and shrink the text back to the original size.
- 6. Explore and test various animations and effects, to find the best fit for your presentation. Use the 'Help' option in the top toolbar, and search 'animations' to get more information.

How to Use Themes and Designer

PowerPoint Themes are design templates containing color schemes, slide and title masters with custom formatting, and styled fonts designed for a particular "look." When you apply a design template to your presentation, the slide master and color scheme of the new template replace the slide master and color scheme of the original presentation. You can also choose to use a basic design template and create your own design as you go.

Designer improves slides by automatically generating design ideas to choose from. When you put content on a slide, Designer works in the background to match that content to professionally designed layouts. You can choose to accept the layout proposed by the designer, or continue making your own design choices.

1. Themes
 - a. Select the Design tab.
 - b. Select one of the Themes—click on the down arrow with a line over it for the drop-down menu.
 - c. Select one of the Variants.
2. Designer: When you insert one or more pictures, a list of items, or a list of dates.
 - a. The Designer panel will open.
 - b. Select the design you want.
 - c. You can also bring up Designer by selecting a picture, and then selecting Design > Design Ideas.

Resources on Improving Accessibility

- Carnegie Museums web accessibility guidelines:
<http://web-accessibility.carnegiemuseums.org/design/color/>
- Accessibility support for PowerPoint:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/topic/accessibility-support-for-powerpoint-9d2b646d-0b79-4135-a570-b8c7ad33ac2f>

Additional Resources

- Get Started:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/create-a-presentation-in-powerpoint-422250f8-5721-4cea-92cc-202fa7b89617>
- Animations and Multimedia Resources:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/animations-and-multimedia-7a01ed05-b0f9-435a-b1b8-113912657c11?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US>
- Design Resources:
<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/design-your-slides-53c20bd5-e594-4837-a7ad-525706e09960?ui=en-US&rs=en-US&ad=US>
- Northeastern University Colors:
<https://brand.northeastern.edu/guide/design-elements/colors/>