Effective Charts

Intro to Data Visualization
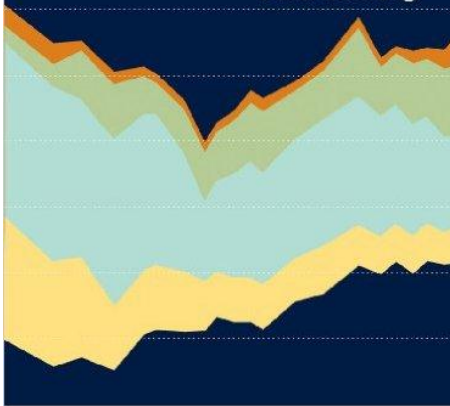
Gaston Sanchez

Effective Charts

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Guide to Information Graphics

THE DOS AND DON'TS OF PRESENTING DATA, FACTS, AND FIGURES
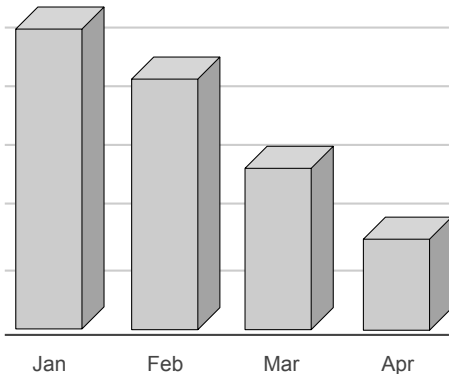
Dona M. Wong

Bar Charts

No need for 3D Effect

don't
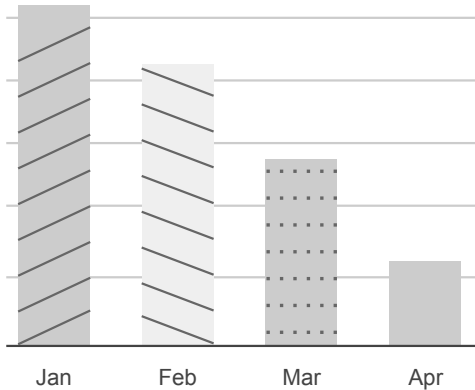
Don't use 3-dimensional bars:
- it adds no information
- it is hard to guess where the top is
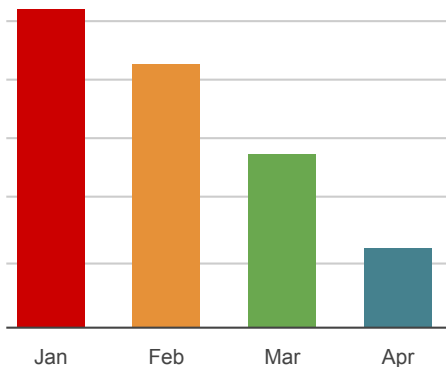
Avoid distracting shades

don't Don't use multiple distracting shades

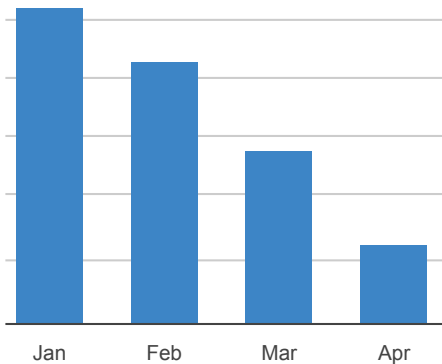# Different colors for the same type of data?

don't

Don't use multiple colors to represent the same kind of data

Same color for the same type of data

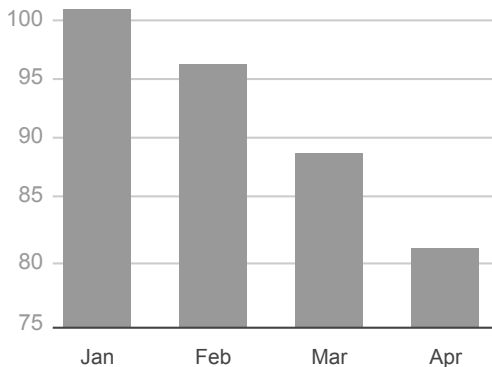Use the same color to represent the same variable
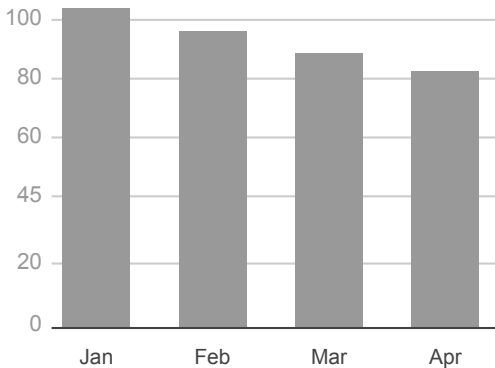
Truncated Baseline
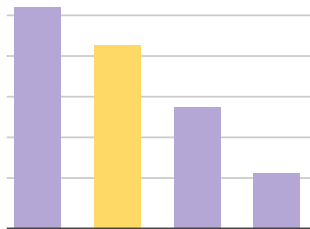
don't

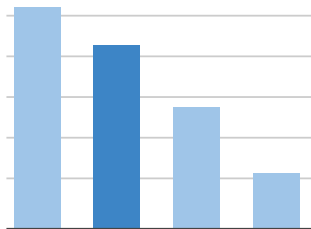Don't truncate baseline of bar charts

Zero Baseline

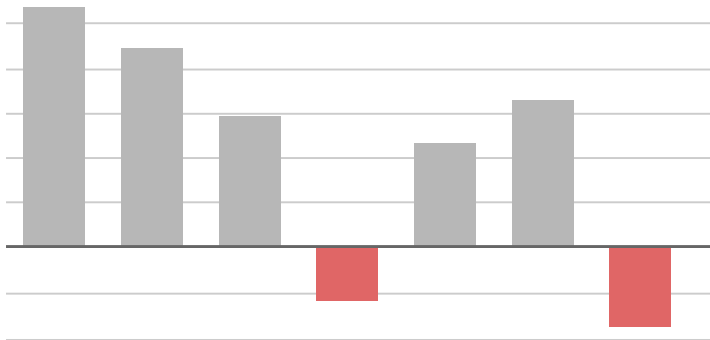Always start at the zero baseline
No exceptions!

do

Darker Shades

Use a darker shade or a different color
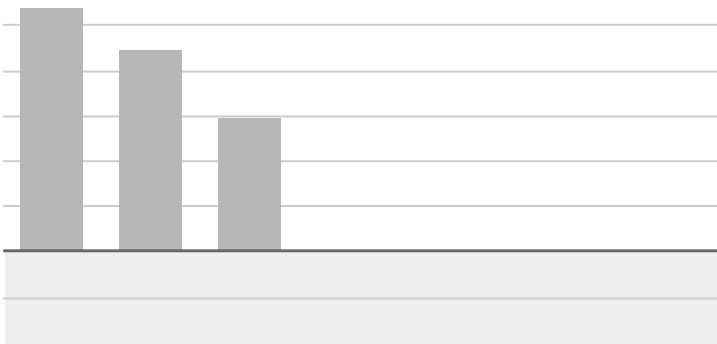to highlight the focal point

do

Contrasting Color

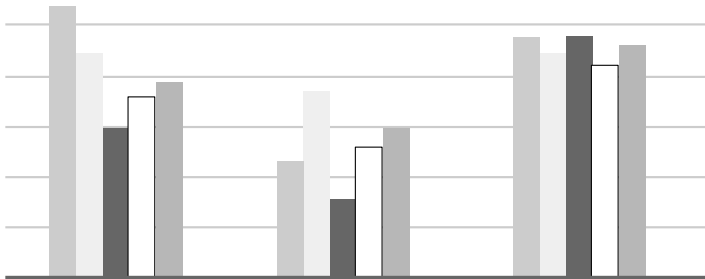You can use contrasting colors to depict negative values

Background Color

You can use a gray background to identify the negative zone
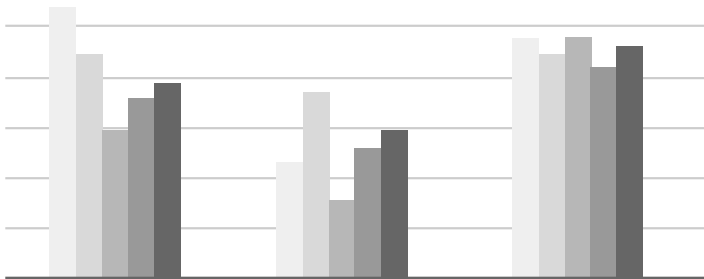
do

Avoid Zebra Pattern

don't
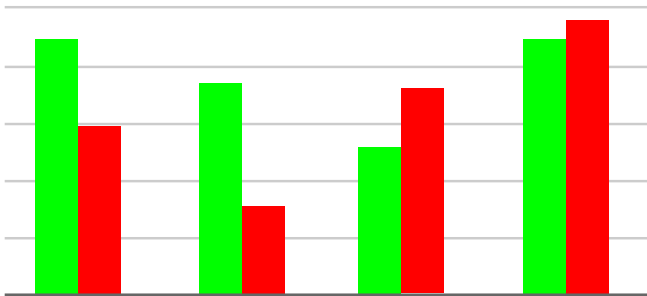
No zebra pattern

Sequential Shades

From lightest to darkest
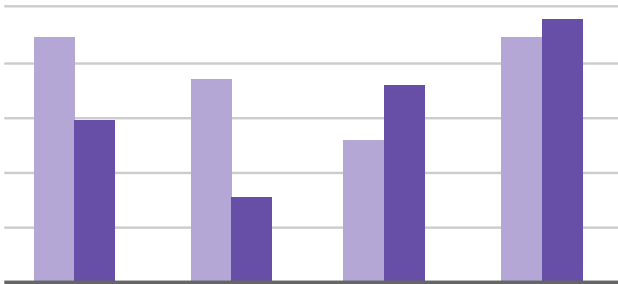
Using Complementary Colors?

don't Be careful with the selection of colors:
When working with two colors avoid
complementary (opposite) colors

Using Different Shades

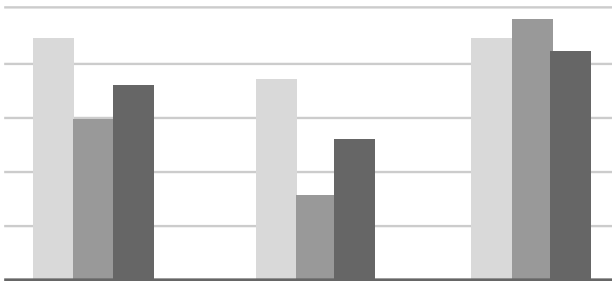It's better to use different shades of the same color

Using Legends

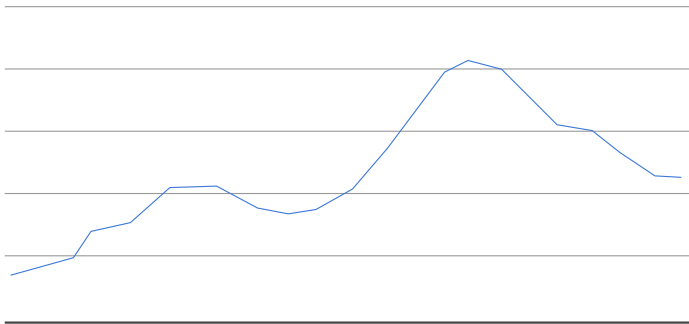Add legends in the right sequence

do

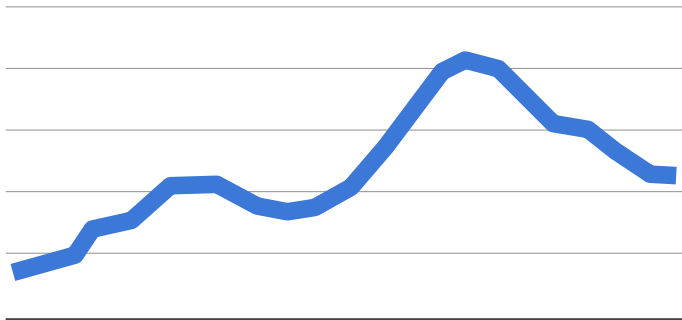Legend A   Legend B   Legend C

Lines

Width of Lines

don't

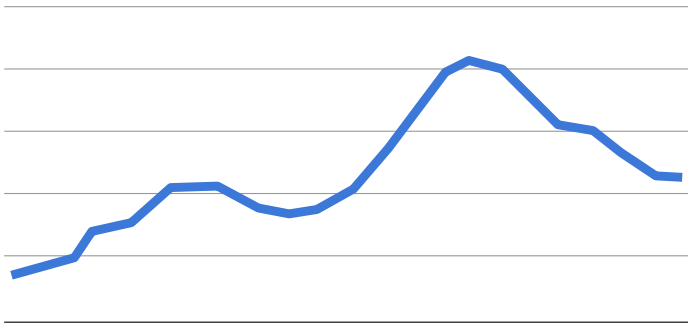lines too thin are hard to read

Line Width

don't

too thick lines may hide some details
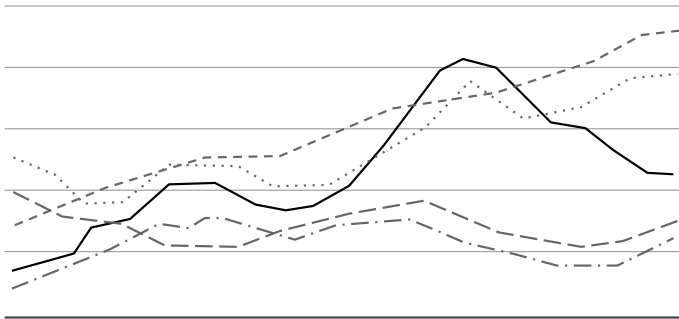
Line Width

look for "an OK" thickness
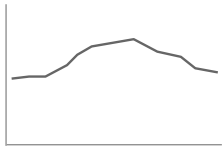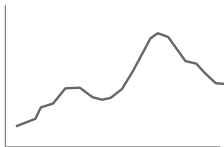
do

Avoid Spaghetti Lines

don't

Avoid spaghetti lines:
Don't differentiate each line trying all types of dashed lines
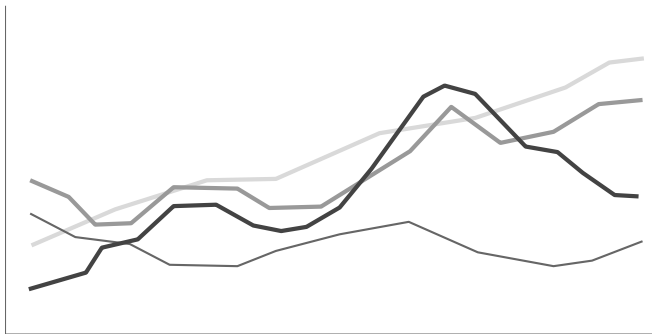
Facetting

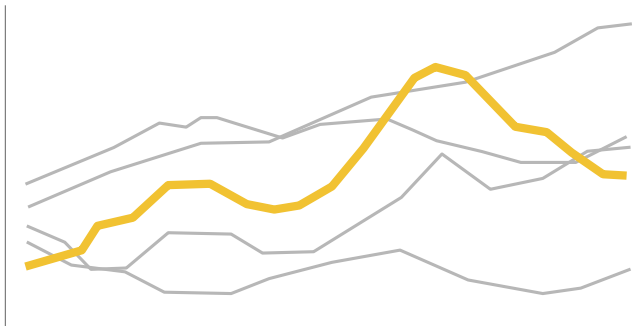Better comparisons
with panel of charts

do

Dark Intensities

Four or fewer lines is better with
different dark intensities

do

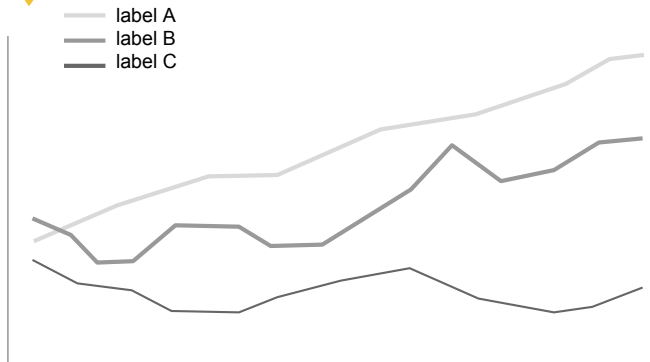# Dark Intensities

Use bright to dark colors to emphasize the important line
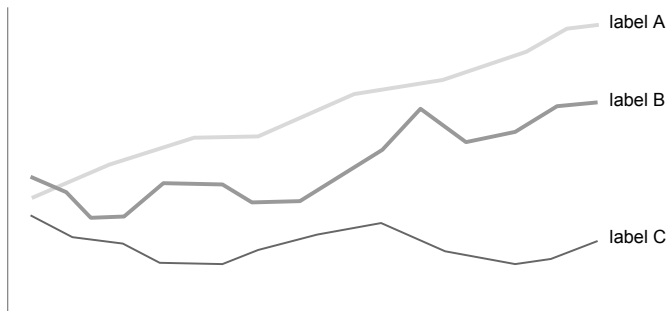
Avoid Long-distance Labeling

don't

Avoid labeling at long distance

label A
label B
label C

Direct Labeling

Label the lines directly

do

label A
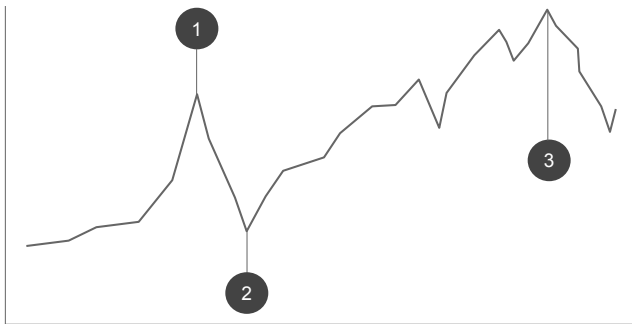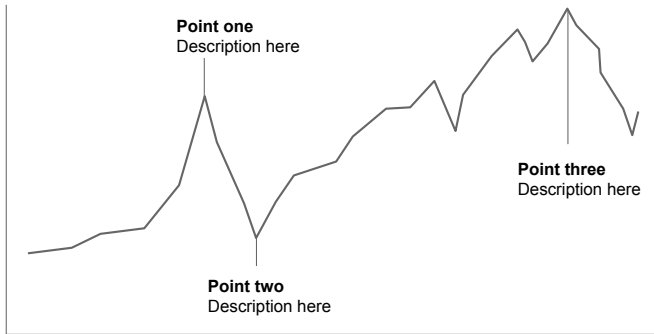
label B

label C

Avoid Long-distance Labeling

don't

Avoid labeling at long distance

1. **Point one** Description text goes here
2. **Point two** Description text goes here
3. **Point three** Description text goes here

Prefer direct labeling

Point one
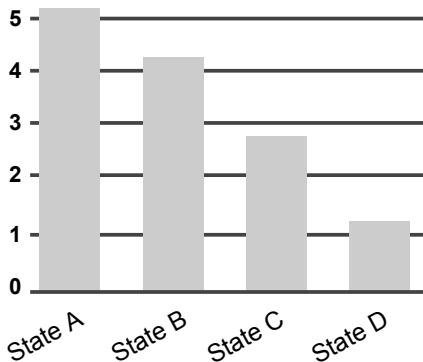Description here

Point two
Description here

Point three
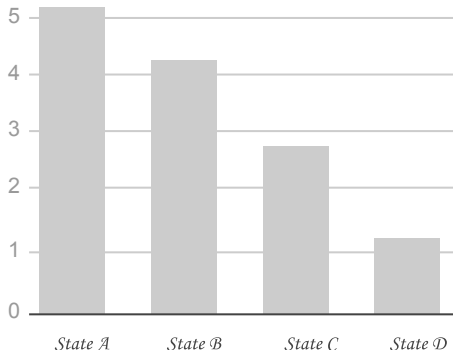Description here

do

Typography

Oppressing typography

Avoid highly stylized typography

HEADLINE OF THE CHART

A brief description that outlines what the data shows

Simple typography

HEADLINE OF THE CHART

A brief description that outlines what the data shows

do

5	
4	
3	
2	
1	
0	

State A   State B   State C   State D