

1.



Overview

Now that you have learned about different kinds of visualizations, you can pause for a moment and think about what you are learning. In this self-reflection, you will consider how to select the right visualization for your needs and respond to brief questions. This self-reflection will help you develop insights into your own learning and prepare you to apply your knowledge of visualizations to your own projects. As you answer questions—and come up with questions of your own—you will consider concepts, practices, and principles to help refine your understanding and reinforce your learning. You've done the hard work, so make sure to get the most out of it: This reflection will help your knowledge stick!

What makes an effective visualization?

The key to effective presentations is data visualizations that are clear and convincing. In turn, the key to effective visualizations is selecting the best way to depict your data.

You have learned about a few types of visualizations (e.g., bar graphs, pie charts) and what each type is best at emphasizing. Determining which type of visualization to use is essential to giving your presentation the impact it needs.

So far, you have considered a few rules about what makes a helpful data visualization:

Five-second rule: A data visualization should be clear, effective, and convincing enough to be absorbed in five seconds or less.

Color contrast: Graphs and charts should use a diverging color palette to show contrast between elements.

Conventions and expectations: Visuals and their organization should align with audience expectations and cultural conventions. For example, if the majority of your audience associates green with a positive concept and red with a negative one, your visualization should reflect this.

Minimal labels: Titles, axes, and annotations should use as few labels as it takes to make sense. Having too many labels makes your graph or chart too busy. It takes up too much space and prevents the labels from being shown clearly.

For a refresher, you can refer back to the readings from this section. Check out [Designing a chart in 60 minutes](#)[↗], [The wonderful world of visualizations](#)[↗], and [Visualizations in spreadsheets and Tableau](#)[↗].

Reflection

Consider the guidelines for picking a visualization that you reviewed in this reflection:

What should you consider when deciding on the right data visualization?

What is your first step in determining the best data visualization for a presentation?