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Alt text in data visualization

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- Reading by listening is becoming more and more common, as the audiobook explosion demonstrates.
- If an image can't load, for instance on a website, the alt text will generally be displayed instead.
- Forcing yourself to describe the point of each data visualization in just a sentence or two is an valuable exercise and will often lead you to make improvements to your plots before publication.

Best practices for alt text in data visualization

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- the **type** of plot
- the **variables** being displayed
- the overall **trend** or message of the plot

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For example, "A scatterplot showing bill length versus bill depth in antarctic penguins, colored by species. In each of the three groups, there is an upward trend, with Adelies tending to have the shortest bills."

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- Use correct grammar and punctuation according to the standards of the rest of your document.
- It's ok to refer to color or other visual elements in your descriptions.
- Don't duplicate adjacent text from the body of your document.
- If the plot is fully described elsewhere, it's ok to briefly say to that in your alt text. You can also write "null" as a way of indicating that no additional description is needed.