

How Do I Prepare PowerPoint Sides For Teaching?

Overall: Remember that PowerPoint is a teaching aid, not a tool to deliver lots of text (content)! The order of your slides and their design should reflect your teaching approach and your priorities in class. The principles outlined here will also apply for Mac owners using Keynote.

- A general rule for effective PowerPoints is that “**less is more**”. Make sure your slides contain lots of “white space”. Read noted presenter Garr Reynolds’ “[Top Ten Slide Tips](#)”;
- Take some time to design your teaching around fewer slides rather than “teach” by simply going through many slides. Try to present no more than 20 slides per 30 minutes of teaching time. See sheet #2 for some tips to prioritize your teaching;
- “Less is more” also should guide what you present on your slides. Pare down text and **use just key words** rather than long phrases or sentences. When you use key words the listener focuses better on what you are saying. Too many words increase cognitive overload as the reader is reading and listening at the same time;
- Use the “**rule of 6**”: not more than six lines of text (including the title) and not more than six words per line;
- If you use a template for your slides, keep it visually clean and simple. Some templates are available from our [School](#);
- Use contrasting colors for background / text and **avoid red and green** which clash, are hard to read and are affected by color blindness. Read more about colors [HERE](#);
- Use a **large font**: minimum 28pt for text and larger for titles;
- Use a **sans serif font** (Arial, Tahoma, Verdana) for consistent letter thickness;
- Present an index slide early in your sequence and repeat its use with a different item highlighted for each section of your presentation;
- Use several slides rather than one for more detailed information. Connect these slides by the use of title slide titles, e.g. **Disease Management (cont’d)**;
- **Limit slide animations** (pop-ups, sliding bullets, fancy transitions etc). If you must, use only one type that convincingly adds to presentation value. Too much animation is distracting and tires the audience;
- Remember that many students are visual learners so **include a graphic** in every slide if you can. If possible, the graphic should visually summarize the main point of your slide;
- Ensure that all graphic images are in **.jpeg format**. GIF files display images poorly. (See sheet #8 for sources of images);
- Making slides for video conferencing? Many things that work on your personal computer may not on VC: don’t embed video or audio; keep margins wide; use color contrasts carefully; avoid animations and transitions; avoid italics which can appear jagged.

Please address any concerns, questions or requests for support to:

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