

BEST PRACTICES: SLIDE DESIGN & ACCESSIBILITY



NOSM U CEPD TIP SHEET

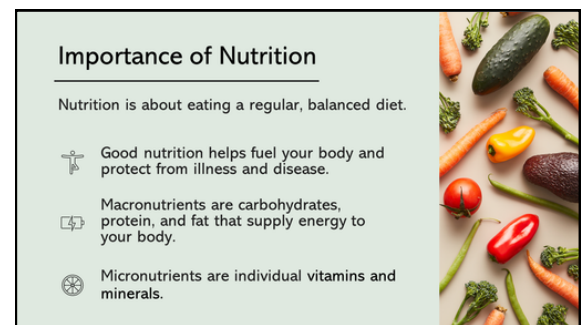
Good design elements can keep your audience engaged and reinforce key messages. Maximize your presentation's impact by following best practices for slide design and accessibility.

- Use images sparingly to support and emphasize your key messages. Too many images, or unrelated images, can distract the audience from your content.
- Keep slide text minimal and focus on key points. Provide more text in your speaker notes if you need.
- Use a large font to increase visibility: we recommend 28 point font or higher.
- Use sans serif fonts which are easier to read on screens, and increase accessibility.
- We recommend using the same font throughout your presentation.
- Avoid clip art or animated images. Don't combine illustrations with photographs on the same slide.
- Consider consistency. Use images with a similar tone and colour palette throughout your work.
- Avoid images as backgrounds or textured backgrounds that reduce visibility.

DON'T



DO



Technical Requirements for Images

Use high quality, high-resolution photos. You will want the highest resolution that can be expanded to fit your screen without pixelation. Standard screen resolutions are 1920 x 1080 pixels (the default dimensions for PowerPoint presentations).

When you are using stock photos, download them to your computer at the resolution you need to maintain picture clarity. Check that your images look crisp and are not pixelated in full screen mode.

Find free stock photos at [Unsplash](https://unsplash.com), [Canto](https://canto.nosm.ca) (NOSM U's online digital asset management system for internal users), or use PowerPoint's built-in Stock Photo Library.

Make sure to check copyright status and follow any attribution/licensing restrictions when using images. When in doubt, don't use it! Check out our "Guide to Using Copyrighted Images in Presentations" Tip Sheet for more info.



Additional Resource: [A Guide to Using Images and Photos for PowerPoint.](#)



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As a presenter, ensuring your PowerPoint is accessible means that your entire audience can fully engage with and learn from the content you are creating. Follow the tips below to help ensure your presentations are more accessible.

Check Contrast

The Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) provides guidelines for ensuring sufficient contrast in visual materials displayed on screens. This ensures your content can be accessed and read by as many people as possible and increases overall legibility.

Use PowerPoint's "[Check Accessibility](#)" feature in the Review toolbar to check for contrast, or [use an online contrast checker](#).

Tips:

- Choose a colour scheme or template that provides a high contrast between your background and text.
- Avoid layering text on top of images or textures.
- Keep body text black or very dark in colour.

Use Alt Text for All Visuals

Alt text helps people who use screen readers to understand what's important in the visuals in your slides. Purely decorative visuals usually do not need alt text.

In alt text, describe the image, its purpose, and what is important about the image in 1-2 sentences. Screen readers read the description to users who can't see the content. [Learn how to add alt text to visuals](#).

Additional Tips & Resources

Captions & Subtitles for Videos: Ensure videos include closed captions, in-band closed captions, open captions, or subtitles.

Slide Titles: Giving each slide a unique, descriptive title allows people with visual disabilities that use screen readers to know which slide is which.

Don't Use Colour As the Sole Way to Convey Meaning: Colour on its own is not a reliable way to convey information because colorblind people experience it in many different ways.

Avoid Using Tables: Screen readers have a difficult time reading tables. Use alternative ways to present information when possible.



Additional Resource: [Make Your PowerPoint Presentations Accessible to People with Disabilities](#).

