



Creating Effective PowerPoint® Presentations

Microsoft® PowerPoint® is a tool for creating dynamic oral presentations. An effective PowerPoint® presentation has maximum impact on an audience in minimal time. This tutorial will introduce the elements of a PowerPoint® presentation and help you get started by illustrating the steps for creating slides and the features that make a presentation effective.



Figure 1: Woman using a laptop.
Photo: © 2014 Jupiterimages

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The Elements of a PowerPoint® Presentation

If you have been assigned a PowerPoint® in addition to an essay or instead of an essay, here are the key similarities [✓] and differences [✗] between these two forms:

| ELEMENTS | ESSAY | POWERPOINT® |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| DESIGN | ✗Text heavy: white pages, regular black font, one inch margins, double spacing | ✓Visual heavy: color, theme, and layout options; art and multimedia options |
| TITLE | ✓Title page | ✓Title slide |
| INTRODUCTION | ✓Topic, issue, thesis statement | ✓Slide title (topic); key points |
| BODY | ✓Paragraphs featuring one point each | ✓Slides featuring one point each |
| CONCLUSION | ✓Recap of main point, final thoughts | ✓Slide listing recap of main points |
| PARAGRAPHS | ✓Unified and cohesive paragraphs with topic and concluding sentences | ✗Bulleted lists or an image with a caption to convey key points |
| SENTENCES | ✓ Complete sentences are the building blocks of an essay. | ≈Sentences are one-line, fragments, or completed in the form of a bulleted list. |
| BULLET POINTS | ≈ Occasionally used within a sentence to separate three or more elements. | ✓ Bulleted lists of one-line phrases are the building blocks of a PowerPoint®. Use four or fewer bullet points per slide. |
| VISUALS/ART | ✓ Tables, charts, and graphs display data and research results and make a paper visually appealing. | ✓ Images, art, tables, charts, and graphs increase the impact and visual appeal of a presentation. |
| IN-TEXT CITATIONS | ✓ Quotes, paraphrases, summaries, and visuals require in-text citations. | ✓ Quotes, paraphrases, and summaries, and visuals require in-text citations. |
| REFERENCE LIST | ✓ Last page lists full-citation references | ✓ Last slide lists full-citation references |

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Getting Started with Slides



Figure 2 Woman holding poster board. © 2014 Jupiterimages.

Similar to drafting an essay, when creating a PowerPoint®, you need to define your topic and focus, determine your audience, and know your purpose--whether you are informing, educating, entertaining, or persuading.

Another essential step that takes as much time when creating a PowerPoint® as it does when writing an essay is to research your subject matter and prewrite your ideas.

A next step to fully prepare is to make an informal outline to organize your ideas and establish a clear beginning middle and end. With the groundwork complete and content prepared, you are ready to create Slide 1.

Slide 1

1. New presentations begin with a title slide. Follow the directions given in the text placeholders beginning with “click to add title.”
2. Then, in the next box, add your subtitle. You may also use this area to provide your name and the university name per **APA** guidelines or any other information required on your title slide.
3. Since a PowerPoint® accompanies an oral presentation, you may want to add speaker notes in the notes pane to elaborate on the points on each slide.

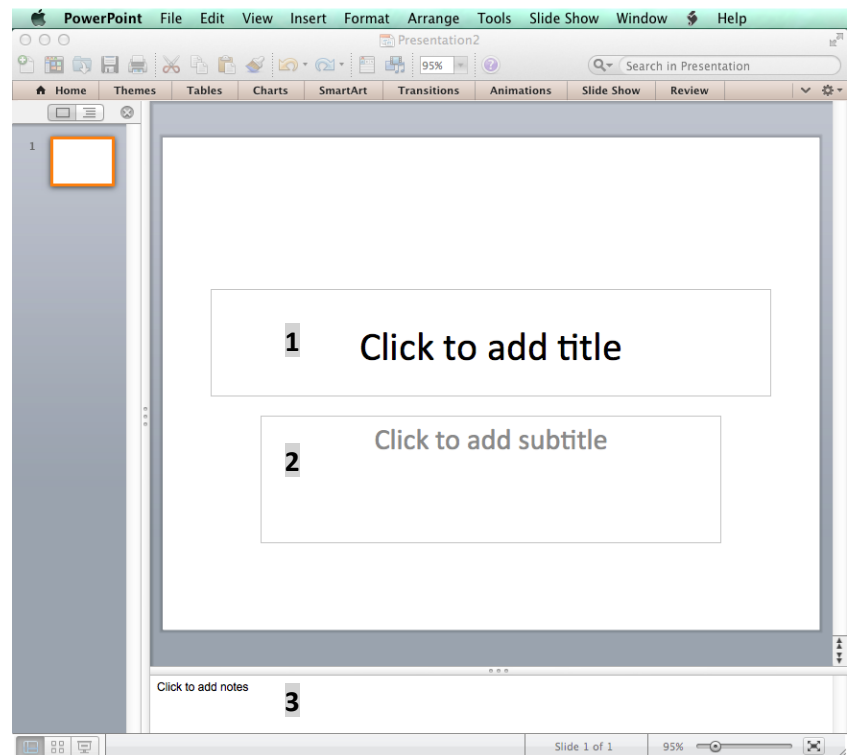


Figure 3: PowerPoint® Side 1: “Click to add title.”

Important: PowerPoint® has older versions and newer, PC and Mac. Shown in Figure 3 is Microsoft® PowerPoint® for Mac 2011. All versions have the similar components. For the purposes of this tutorial, the focus will be on steps and features without addressing the nuances of different versions. The PowerPoint® Help tool and the Microsoft® website, provide specific details about your software. [Back to Table of Contents](#)



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Slides 2, 3, 4...

1. To insert another slide, right-click the thumbnail of the slide that you want the next slide to follow.
2. On the dropdown menu, click “New Slide.”
3. The new slide will open in a **default layout**. To use this layout, “click to add title,” and in the body placeholder, you can click to add text or select from the media options.

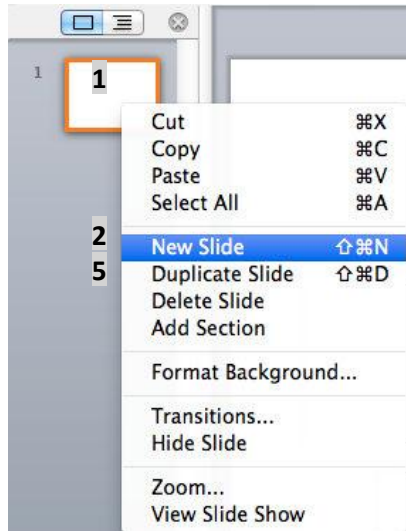


Figure 4: Insert New Slide

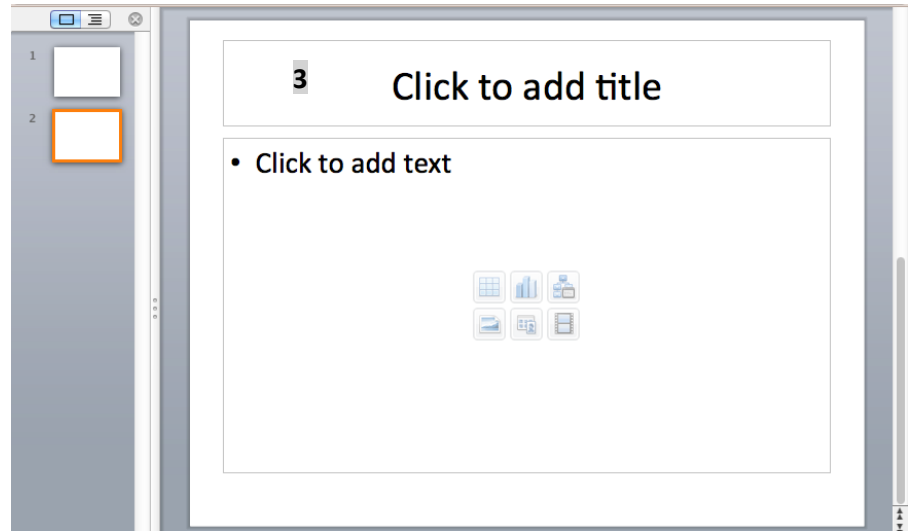


Figure 5: New Slide in Default Template. Click text placeholders to add content.

4. To use another layout, open the Slide Layout task pane and select the layout that best suits your content. Continue inserting slides using the same steps as above, or insert a “Duplicate Slide” and replace the text or image to maintain consistent title placement and formatting.

APA Citation Tips:

- Cite your research after the bullet point(s) that have the quoted, paraphrased, or summarized text.
- You can insert textboxes as needed and position them on the slide to add citations to images or charts from your research. Refer to the Insert menu on the PowerPoint® toolbar to use this feature.

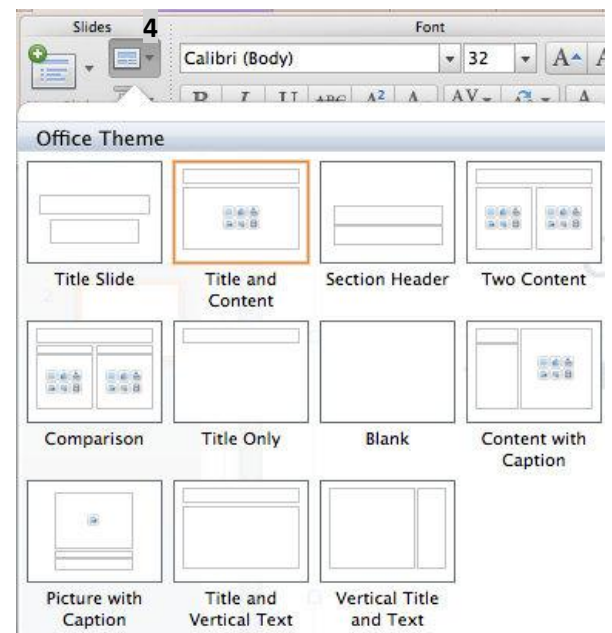


Figure 6: Slide Layout Options

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Designing an Effective Presentation

PowerPoint® presentations are meant to be seen more than read. Their impact depends on their visual appeal. Therefore, when beginning slide 1, or while drafting your presentation, you will want to apply design features. For the design to be effective, consider the following tips and features:

- 1. Apply a theme.** Themes are design templates that establish the style and color scheme for bullets, charts, SmartArt, and text, as well as the position of the content placeholders. Slide layout options also remain available, and you can resize and reposition any object on a slide (except the stylistic patterns built into the themes).
- 2. Use a consistent background** such as one design template throughout. Only use a different background in the presentation to bring attention to ONE slide.
- 3. Use a consistent color scheme throughout** of no more than three colors (or one design theme). When selecting colors, avoid the following:
 - Hard-to-read extremes such as black text on a white background, which is blinding, or white text on a black background, which is like reading the inside of a box.
 - Vibrant, difficult-to-read neon colors such as hunter's orange, hot pink, or electric blue, or color combinations such as red on green, yellow on white, and orange on blue (or vice versa).
- 4. Use one type of transition** (such as fade-to-black or dissolve) between slides for consistency as well.

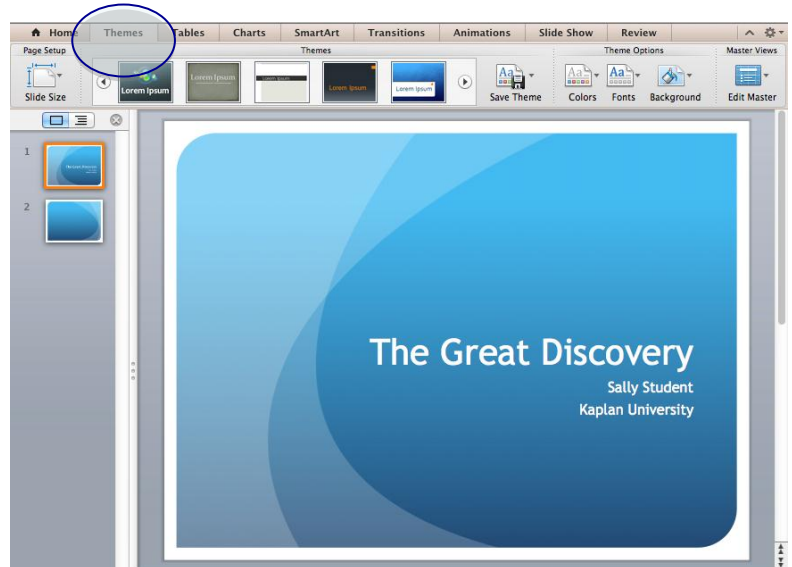


Figure 7: Apply a theme to create a consistent design and professional look.

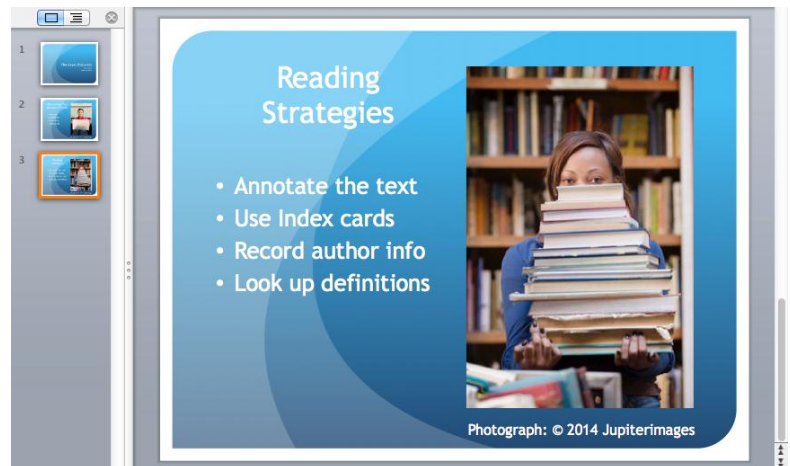


Figure 4: Use consistent color scheme throughout the presentation.

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5. Use a consistent and plain font throughout such as Arial, Times, Verdana, or Calibri. Use font sizes large enough to view from anywhere in the room. Avoid using font smaller than 24.
6. Use visuals such as charts, images, and clipart to illustrate your content. However, do not add clipart simply to make a slide fancier or more colorful. All elements of the slide must work together to be effective and have the intended impact on the audience.

Figure 9 illustrates an ineffective slide design.

- The cartoonish clipart is unprofessional and irrelevant. In this example it also crowds, disrupts, and overpowers the text, which itself is too frilly, dense, slanted, and small to read.



Figure 9: Ineffective Slide Design

Figure 10 illustrates an effective slide design.

- The title reflects the topic of the slide.
- The content is presented in 4 lines. Notice the bullet points finish the sentence.
- Capitalize the first word of the bulleted point, and when applicable, any proper nouns (names). Use grammatical and parallel clause and phrase structures when listing your points.



Figure 10: Effective Slide Design

6. APA Citation Tip: When using Microsoft® PowerPoint® clipart in your Microsoft® PowerPoint® presentation, you do not have to cite it according to APA. If you use clipart or images from an on-line source, however, you will want to attribute the art to its source with a citation. In APA format, this citation format is the following:

In-text, aligned with image:

(Name of image creator, Year image was created)

Reference slide:

Name of image creator, A. A. (Year image was created). *Title of image*. [medium or file type of image].

Retrieved from <http://...>

Want to Learn More About PowerPoint? The Microsoft® PowerPoint® website has many tutorials to choose from: <http://bit.ly/1cZWSY0>.

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