How to make a poster

- A **poster** is simply a static, visual medium (usually of the paper and board variety) that you use to communicate ideas and messages.

- The difference between **poster** and oral presentations is that you should let your poster do most of the "*talking*".

How to make a poster

- However, that does not mean that you can disappear and the poster alone.

- You have to "*stand-by-your-poster*"!

- Your task as the presenter is to answer questions and provide further details.

- Your role is to bask in praises or suffer difficult questions; and to convince others that what you have done is excellent and worthwhile.

How to make a poster

How much poster space are you allowed?

- In your poster presentations you are limited to a poster that is 36 inches high and 48 inches wide (Display Boards come in a folded 36 inch by 48 inch board).

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- The purpose of poster presentations is not to have boards upon boards of information.

- Better to hand out a report in that case.

- If you are presenting your poster at a conference or convention, you would have limited space.

- The space you are allowed will determine the content of the poster.

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Is there a standard format?

- Yes, there is! As with an oral presentation, there is normally:

  - **Title** - telling others the title of the project, the people involved in the work and their affiliation;
  - **Summary** - stating what you have set out to do, how you have done it, the key findings and the main results

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Is there a standard format?

- Yes, there is! As with an oral presentation, there is normally:

  - **Introduction** - include clear statements about the problem that you are trying to solve.

  - These should then lead to declarations of project aims and objectives.

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Is there a standard format?

- Yes, there is! As with an oral presentation, there is normally:
  - **Theory** or **Methodology -** explains the basis of the technique that you are using or the procedure.
  - State and justify any assumptions (so that your results could be viewed in the proper context).

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Is there a standard format?

- Yes, there is! As with an oral presentation, there is normally:
  - **Results** - show illustrative examples of the main results of the work.
  - **Conclusion** - list the main findings of your investigation.

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Is there a standard format?

- You therefore have to present certain pieces of information but have limited space.
- So, before you rush away to put pen to paper or fingers to keyboard, spend a few moments or even *hours* to plan your presentation.

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Is there a standard format?

- Planning is very important.
- Unlike oral presentations, where some ultra-smooth talkers may be able to divert attention from a poorly planned presentation, with posters, *poor planning is there for all to see*.

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Planning - There are several stages in planning a presentation.

Gathering the information

- You have to stand back and think again about the *What's*, the *How's* and the *Why's* of the work that you have done.
- You have to examine critically, the approach that you have taken and the results.

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Planning - There are several stages in planning a presentation.

Gathering the information

- Ideally, you should have done this throughout your project anyway.
- In doing so, you will have a clearer idea of the objectives and the contributions that you have, or have not, been able to make.

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Planning - There are several stages in planning a presentation.

Gathering the information
- Brainstorming often yields loads of idea.
- Record your answers on a BIG piece of paper, not necessarily in an ordered fashion.
- The intention is to note as many points as possible, so that you do not miss any important aspects.

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Planning - There are several stages in planning a presentation.

Gathering the information
- The ordering and pruning of the information come later.
- From your list, note the common areas, topics or pieces of information, and group them together.
- Use color or number coding, or circles and lines to help you identify and categorize the information.

How to make a poster

Poster Design

- An advertising billboard is a poster.
- If well designed, it will be attractive and engenders a lasting impression.
- Using posters to convey technical information, they should be designed such that readers think **"Yes!"** or **"I see!"** and leave with the impression that they have learnt something new.

How to make a poster

Poster Design

- Here are some general guidelines:
1. **Plan, plan and plan!**
2. **Keep the material simple**
   - Make full use of the space, but do not cramp a page full of information as the result can often appear messy
   - Be concise and do not waffle - use only pertinent information to convey your message

How to make a poster

Poster Design

- Here are some general guidelines:
1. **Plan, plan and plan!**
2. **Keep the material simple**
   - Be selective when showing results
   - Present only those that illustrate the main findings of the project.
   - However, do keep other results handy so that you may refer to them when asked

How to make a poster

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- Here are some general guidelines:
3. **Use colors sparingly and with taste**
   - Colors should be used only to emphasize, differentiate and to add interest.
   - Choose background and foreground color combinations that have high contrast and complement each other.

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▪ Here are some general guidelines:

4. **Do not use more than 2 font types**
   • Too many font types distracts, especially when they appear on the same sentence.
   • In our work, use only **1 Font type**
   • Fonts that are easy on the eyes are:

   Times-Roman and **Arial**

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▪ Here are some general guidelines:

5. **Titles** and **headings** should appear larger than other text
   • Not too large.
   • The text should also be legible from a distance, say from 5 to 6 feet.

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▪ Here are some general guidelines:

6. **Do not use all UPPER CASE**
   • It can make the material difficult to read. Just compare the two sentences below:
   WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS LINE WHERE ALL THE CHARACTERS ARE IN UPPER CASE?

How to make a poster

Poster Design

▪ Here are some general guidelines:

6. **Do not use all UPPER CASE**
   • It can make the material difficult to read. Just compare the two sentences below:
   What do you think of this line, where only the first character of the first word is in upper case?

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▪ Here are some general guidelines:

7. **Do not use a different font type to highlight important points**
   • The fluency and flow of your sentence can appear disrupted. For example,
   In this sentence, I want to **emphasize** the word 'emphasize'.
   In this sentence, I want to *emphasize* the word 'emphasize'.

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▪ Here are some general guidelines:

7. **Do not use a different font type to highlight important points**
   • Use underlined text, **bold face** or ***italic combinations*** to emphasize words
   • if you use ***bold italicized print*** for emphasis, then ***underlining*** is not necessary - overkill!

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- Here are some general guidelines:

8. Equations
  - Should be kept to a minimum
  - Present only the necessary and important equations
  - Should be large enough
  - Should be accompanied by nomenclature to explain the significance of each variable

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- Here are some general guidelines:

9. A picture is worth a thousand words …
  - But, only if it is drawn properly and used appropriately
  - Choose graphs types that are appropriate to the information that you want to display
  - Annotations and the lines of graphs should be large enough to be viewed from a distance

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- Here are some general guidelines:

9. A picture is worth a thousand words …
  - Instead of using lines of different thickness, use contrasting **colored lines** or **different line styles** to distinguish between different lines in multi-line graphs

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- Here are some general guidelines:

9. A picture is worth a thousand words …
  - **Diagrams and drawings** should be labeled
  - Drawings and labels should be large and clear enough so that they are still legible from a distance
  - Do not try to cramp labeling to fit into components of a drawing or diagram.
  - Use 'arrows' and 'callouts'

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- Here are some general guidelines:

9. A picture is worth a thousand words …
  - **Clipart** should only be used if they add interest to the display **and** complement the subject matter.
  - Otherwise, all they do is to distract attention from the focus of the presentation.
  - Can also be '**dangerous**' as you may spend more time fiddling about with images and choosing appropriate cartoons than concentrating on the content

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- Here are some general guidelines:

10. Check your spelling
  - There is nothing more amusing or annoying than spelling mistakes on public display, especially if they are on the title page.
  - Spelling mistakes give the impression that you have not put in the effort; been careless; or not bothered to edit your work

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- Here are some general guidelines:

11. **Maintain a consistent style**
    - Inconsistent styles give the impression of disharmony and can interrupt the fluency and flow of your messages.
    - Headings on the different pages of the poster should appear in the same position on all pages.
    - Graphs should be of the same size and scale especially if they are to be compared

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- Here are some general guidelines:

11. **Maintain a consistent style**
    - If **bold lettering** is used for emphasis in one section, then do not use *italics* on others.
    - Captions for graphs, drawings should either be positioned at the bottom of the figure
    - Headings for tables should be positioned at the top of the table

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- Here are some general guidelines:

12. **Arrangement of poster components should appear smooth**
    - Remember that you are using posters to tell a story about what you have done and achieved
    - As in report writing, the way you arrange the sections should follow the '*storyline*'.

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- Here are some general guidelines:

13. **Review, review and review**
    - **Review, review, and review**
    - **Review, review, and review**
    - **Review, review, and review**
    - **Review, review, and review**

How to make a poster

Poster Design

- Here are some general guidelines:

13. **Review, review and review**
    - Make draft versions of your poster sections and check them for: mistakes, legibility, and inconsistency in style
    - Try different layout arrangements
    - Ask your partner, friends, colleagues or for their 'honest' opinions
    - Be critical!

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- Here are some templates that are available on the class website.

How to make a poster

Poster Design in PowerPoint

1. **Poster size:** You will be creating a single large slide in PowerPoint.

   Your poster should be 36 inches high and 48 inches long.

   If you change the page size after you already have content, you will distort all of the objects on the page.

How to make a poster

Poster Design

1. **Poster size:** Click on *Design* and then *Page Setup*

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Poster Design

2. **Margins:** It is essential to leave at least a **1 inch margin** around the edges of the poster.

   The easiest way to see whether your margins are correct is to use the Grid & Guides feature.

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Poster Design

2. **Margins:** It is essential to leave at least a **1 inch margin** around the edges of the poster.

   Right click on the slide background and then select *Grid and Guides*

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2. **Margins:** This will superimpose a grid with one inch squares on your slide.

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2. **Margins:** The "Spacing" setting defines how many sub-divisions each square will be divided into.

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2. **Margins:** The grid, combined with the "Snap objects to grid" feature is also really useful for making sure that text boxes and images line up with each other.

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3. **No dark backgrounds:** It is *absolutely essential* that the background of your slide uses light colors.

   Most of the preset Design Templates in PowerPoint are created for on-screen presentation and are way too dark to print.

How to make a poster

Poster Design

3. **No dark backgrounds:** It is *absolutely essential* that the background of your slide uses light colors.

   Most of the preset Design Templates in PowerPoint are created for on-screen presentation and are way too dark to print.

How to make a poster

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3. To select a color background color, right-click on your slide and choose ***Format Background....***

   In the color dropbox, select *More Colors....*
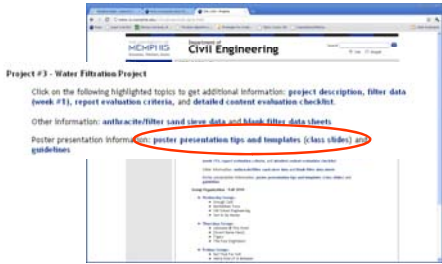
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3. The best colors to use are the ones immediately around the white center.

   If you stray too far away from the center (i.e. more than two shades), your background will be too dark to print.

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Do not forget to check our class website for more information and sample PowerPoint Templates.

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Any questions?