Microsoft PowerPoint Checklist: Presentation Basics

Follow the checklist below to design a thorough, engaging PowerPoint presentation — every time.

☐ Plan your slides on paper or in Microsoft Word before creating them in PowerPoint.
  ✓ How much time do you have for your presentation? It is difficult for audiences to follow one slide (or more!) per minute. When preparing your presentation, remember: “Less is more.”
  ✓ What content do you want to include? Identify key facts, data, and images you need to convey your message.
  ✓ How will your audience follow your presentation? Use title slides to organize your talk into different sections. Relevant images or other visuals can help your audience stay focused. If you use animation, select smooth transitions.

☐ Pick your template and theme.
  ✓ Use a template and theme appropriate and relevant to your audience. Keep it simple. Complicated or extravagantly colorful designs and patterns can distract viewers. Use a simple, clean template with plenty of white space to engage readers throughout your session.

☐ Test all videos, film, animation, and narration in your presentation drafts and final copy.
  ✓ Narrating your slides requires additional preparation. Make sure your computer can record your narration. Rehearse what you want to say, speak clearly, and enunciate your words.
  ✓ Embed the links to film and video in your presentation, if you choose to use them.
  ✓ Take time to test your slides before you present them. You do not want any surprises to fluster you or distract your audience from your key message.

☐ Cite your work as needed in a reference-list slide.
  ✓ Follow APA or another documentation style as necessary in your area of study.

☐ Experiment with PowerPoint – and have fun!
  ✓ The best way to learn is through practice. Each time you need to design a presentation, experiment with a new tool in PowerPoint that you have not used before. In time, you will become familiar with PowerPoint’s many advantages.

Let the Academic Skills Center help you!

Use our PowerPoint resources with instructions for using features to help you design an engaging presentation. Send your questions to us at PowerPointHelp@mail.waldenu.edu.