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How to Make a Poster Using PowerPoint
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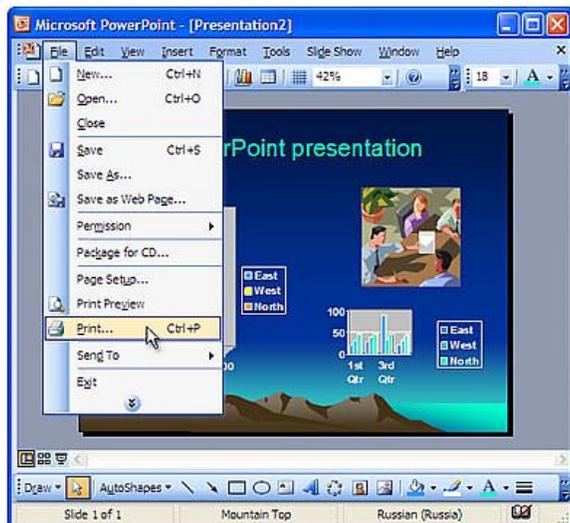
PowerPoint XP

Introduction

These practical guidelines for producing posters in PowerPoint will help you to plan and design an academic poster.

Instructions

Difficulty: Moderate

Things You'll Need

A computer which is installed with the Microsoft PowerPoint application.

Steps

1 **Step One**

Start PowerPoint. From the New Presentation task pane, click Blank Presentation. Choose the Blank slide layout (first left, under Content Layouts).

2 **Step Two**

Choose the size of your poster. if you work in A4 and later scale it up to A0, the print quality will be poor especially for any images included. This exercise is based on A0 size, landscape.
Go to File / Page setup.
From the Slides sized for list, choose Custom.
Type in the sizes required. For exact A0 this will be: Width: 118.9 cm (46")Height: 84.1 cm (33"). Orientation for Slides should automatically show Landscape. Click OK, and save the file.

3 **Step Three**

Next, you will need to add text. In order to add text, the text needs a "container" – a Text Box. Make a text box by:
a.Clicking on the Text Box tool or selecting Text Box under the Insert menu.
b.Clicking or clicking-and-dragging where you want the text to be. After this step, you should see the rectangular shape of the Text Box. You can re-size it at any time by dragging one of the little square "handles". The box will also grow automatically as you type (if it needs to).

As in many programmes, you can change the font and size by highlighting the text to be changed and then making the changes. A 100-point font is about an inch high. If you don't see the size you want in the selection list, you can enter it in by hand.

Note:

1. To move a Text Box, position your pointer over a part of the edge of the box that is not a handle. The pointer should become shaped like a plus sign with arrows. Click and drag the Text Box to the wanted position.
2. You can change the colour of the text, the edge, and the fill as well as other things under the Format menu/Text Box.
3. Make a separate Text Box for each separate piece of text. "Separate text" means a portion of text that you want to be able to move independently from the others.

Step Four

Add an image. The two ways to add images are with Insert/Picture and with Copy and Paste:

Insert/Picture: This is the most common way of adding graphics to a PowerPoint document. If you have a file that is in one of several standard graphic formats (like JPEG, GIF, PICT, etc.), use the Insert menu/Picture/From-file and select your file. The image will appear on your document with handles. Use one of the corner handles to re-size it. (The corner handles will keep the same aspect ratio; the side handles will not.) Click and drag in the middle of the graphic to move it. You can do many other things to an image (including brightness, cropping, and resetting it to how it was originally brought in) under Format/Picture.

Copy and Paste: Use this if you have something like an Excel graph you want to add to your document. Generally avoid this method if you can – Copy and Paste will often only give you a low-resolution copy of a graphic.

5   **Step Five**

Background: You can select a background under the Format menu/Background. If you want a picture background, select "Background" off the Format menu, then click on the down arrow for more options. Select "fill effects" and then the tab for "picture". Click on "select picture" and find the picture you want from your hard drive. You will probably want to fade or lighten the image prior to using it as background or you may risk the picture competing with your text.

6   **Step Six**

Lines, Boxes, Arrows: There are many other things that PowerPoint can do. Next to the Text Box tool are tools to make ovals, boxes, lines, arrows, etc. When you have made one of these, you can change it (when it is selected) with the Format menu/Colours and Lines.

⊞ Click to enlarge

7   **Step Seven**

Zoom: You can control the zoom amount by clicking on the zoom choice box (if visible), or using the View menu/Zoom.

⊞ Click to enlarge

8   **Step Eight**

Voilà, an academic poster!

⊞ Click to enlarge

Tips & Warnings

When creating your own poster, the size will depend on the printer you have available. You will probably have to allow for a non-printable margin, and reduce your poster size a little, accordingly.Please check print size limitations before you begin.

PowerPoint is very flexible in how its tools are arranged. The down side of that is that your tools may be in a different place than they are described here. The Text Box tool is often found near the bottom center – it looks like a mini page with an "A" in the upper-left part of it.

Avoid choosing a layout with Title or Text placeholders, as these are pre-formatted for larger font sizes than required for this task, and may cause formatting problems later.

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