TIPS & TRICKS
For Designing in PowerPoint

Change the slide size.

PowerPoint slides are not limited to the size of a regular PowerPoint! You can change the size to anything you want. In order to change the size to a letter sized paper, click on the *Design* tab, then from the *Slide Size* drop down, choose *Page Setup* or *Custom Slide Size*. From here you can choose Letter Paper, or any other size!

Design Tab → Slide Size → Page Setup or Custom Slide Size

Turn on rules & guides.

One of the most helpful features of using PowerPoint to design is the rulers and guides. These help to align your objects and keep a clean grid. To make sure your rulers and grids are visible, click on the *View* tab, then check off both *Ruler* and *Guides*. These guides are movable, and you can add more. These can be helpful in keeping alignment across a multiple page document.

View Tab → Ruler or Guides

See and label objects in the selection pane.

Sometimes it's hard to grab small objects, especially when there are a lot of shapes on your slide. The Selection Pane can be very helpful in times like these! To see your Selection Pane, make sure a shape is selected, then the *Shape Format* tab (or *Picture Format* tab) will appear, then click *Selection Pane*. From here you can select, hide, and even name the different objects on your slide!

Shape Format Tab or Picture Format Tab→ Selection Pane

Align and space objects.

Instead of using the arrow keys to align objects, make PowerPoint do the work for you. The align tool can automatically align shapes and textboxes. To do this, first select multiple objects you want to align, then click on the *Shape Format* tab (or *Picture Format tab)*, and then *Align.* In this drop-down menu you can even choose to distribute your objects, giving them equal space between them.

Shape Format Tab → Align dropdown menu

Select exact colors with the eye dropper.

Want to use the exact color of a logo or another image? Use the Eye Dropper tool to find the exact color. When changing the color of a shape or font, choose *More Colors* at the bottom of the pull-down menu. A new menu will pop up, at the bottom there is a small *eye dropper*. When you click this eye dropper your mouse will turn into a small eyedropper. Next click on the color you want to copy.

More Colors → Eye Dropper

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Copy font text, size, and color with the formatting brush.

Like the eye dropper tool, the Formatting Brush can copy the style of fonts between or within files. First, place your curser on the text you want to mimic, then in the Home tab, click on the Format Painter brush icon. Move your cursor and highlight the text you want to alter.

Highlight original text → Home Tab → Format or Format Painter→ Highlight new text

Customize your theme colors.

It can be helpful to change PowerPoint's default color palette to a custom palette. This means you're not always typing in the HEX number of your specific colors. To create a custom color theme, go to the Design tab, click the arrow under Variants, and hover over Colors. At the bottom of this drop-down menu, you will have the option to choose Custom Colors. Make sure to save as a custom theme if you use this color set often!

Design Tab → Variants drop down → Colors → Custom Colors

Group sections together.

If you are still moving objects around to find the best layout, it can be helpful to group certain objects or textboxes together so you can move them all at once. To do this, select all of the objects or text boxes you want to group, click on the *Shape Format* tab, and then *Group.* Remember, these groups can be easily seen and even named in the *Selection Pane.*

Shape Format → Group

Use comments to review designs in PowerPoint.

It's always helpful to have another pair of eyes review your design before it's finalized. Unfortunately, there are no track changes in PowerPoint. There are, however, comments. To insert a comment, click on the *Review* tab, then *New Comment.* This can come in handy when asking another to edit or review your design.

Review Tab → New Comment

Print the final document as PDF.

The standard way of sharing designs build in PowerPoint is generally as a PDF file. You can either print or save PowerPoint files to PDF. We have found that the quality is generally higher if you print to PDF. To do this, go to *File, Print.* In the bottom left-hand corner, there is a drop-down box that says PDF. Here you can choose *Save as PDF.* If you notice any textboxes disappeared when looking at your PDF, go back to your PowerPoint file and enlarge the size of the textbox.

File → Print → Save as PDF

Use these design tips in Microsoft Word and Excel.

Many of these tricks will work in other Microsoft Office Suite applications!

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