

# Tools for Creating a Poster using PowerPoint 2010

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## Creating a blank presentation

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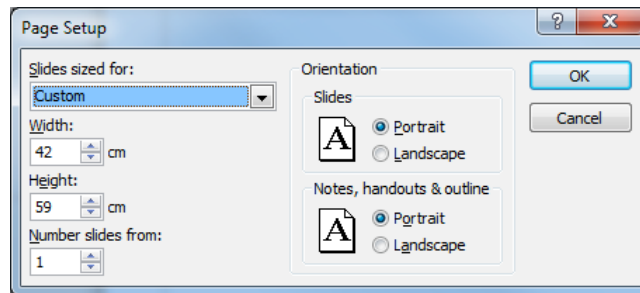
- Start the **PowerPoint** software by selecting it from the **Start** menu
- Choose **Layout** from the **Home** ribbon, and click on the **Blank** Content Layout.

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## Setting the size of the poster to A1 (or A2)

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- Choose **Page Setup** from the **Design** ribbon to see this dialog:



- In the **Slides Sized for** drop-down menu select **Custom** size
- A1:** edit the width to be **59cm** and the height to be **84cm** and click on **OK**  
**A2:** width **42cm**, height **59cm**
- Don't forget to save your work every few minutes!

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## Setting up a grid and guides to help align objects

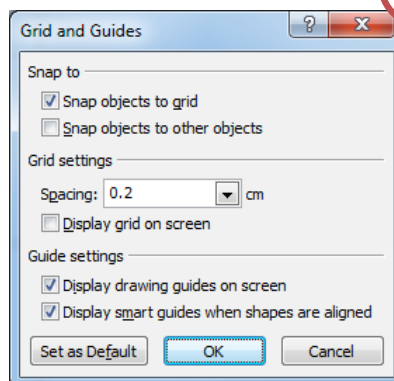
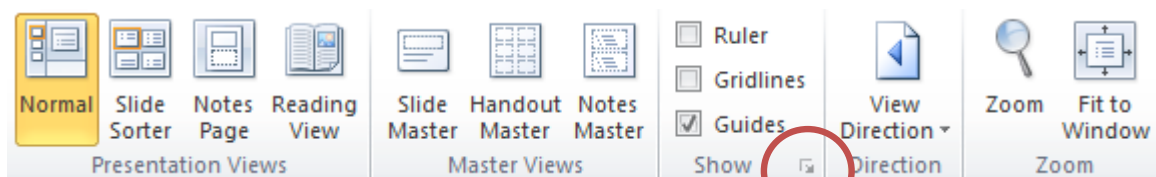
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**Tip:** the Grid is like 'electronic graph paper' that controls both the size and position of objects.

**Tip:** Guides appear as dotted lines on top of your poster in PowerPoint, but do not print. Objects will "snap" their edges to the guides if they are positioned near them, making alignment easy.

**Tip:** set up the guides before colour the background, otherwise the guide lines are hard to see!

- Choose **Fit to Window** from the **View** ribbon – you will use this and the adjacent **Zoom** control frequently to zoom in and out of the poster view as you work
- Click the **Show** arrow under **Ruler, Gridlines and Guides** on the **View** ribbon to see this dialog box:



- Select the grid size required from the drop-down menu – for example '2 grids per cm' means that the grid size is 0.5cm and that the dimensions of any objects you draw will be multiples of this – e.g. 4.5cm x 2.5cm
- Click the checkbox to **Display drawing guides on screen** and then click **OK** – the vertical and horizontal guides are initially positioned in the centre of the poster
- Click-and-drag the vertical guide to define the left-hand margin that you want – you are shown a readout of the distance from the centre-line. Make a note of the final position.
- Hold down the **Ctrl** key and **drag** a copy of the vertical guide to the right-hand side of the poster – you may want to have equal margins (i.e. equal distances from the centre-line).
- Ctrl-drag** to define as many vertical guides as you need. Repeat the process to define any horizontal guides needed. Your aim is to create a **grid** that defines the overall layout of the poster. Don't forget to use two guides to define the gutters between columns.
- If you make a mistake, simply reposition the guide or delete it by dragging it off the poster.

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### Setting the poster background colour

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- Choose **Background Styles** from the **Design** ribbon and then select **Format Background**.
- Click the **color** drop-down control and choose a theme colour, a standard colour or select **More colors...** to see the hexagonal PowerPoint colour chooser. You can either click to select one of these colours or click the **Custom** tab to select the exact colour you want
- You can also select gradient fills, textures, patterns and images. Please spend a few minutes experimenting with these, even if you decide to revert to a plain colour background.

**Tip:** remember to keep graduated fills simple – avoid strongly contrasting colours!

**Tip:** if you want to use an image as the background, it should be a fairly high-resolution JPEG file – for example at least 1024x768 pixels. You will also need to crop the image to the correct dimensions (59 x 84 or 42 x 59) using an image editing program such as Adobe Elements.

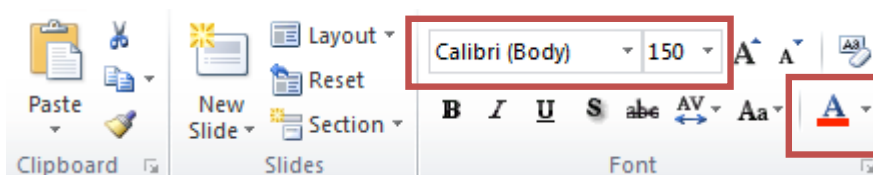
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### Adding a title that exactly fills a specific width

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Suppose you want to make sure that your title text fits exactly across the width of the poster:

- Choose **Shapes** from the **Insert** ribbon and select the **text box** shape.
- Click on the intersection of the top and left guide, then drag down and across to draw a text box that runs the whole width of the poster to the right guide. Type the title of your poster.
- Drag to select all of the text and use the **Home** ribbon controls (below) to choose the font (e.g. Calibri) and a first guess at the font size (e.g. 72 points).



- To adjust the point size until it fits, simply type any larger number into the **font size** indicator on the **Home** ribbon the text splits onto two lines, then work backwards reducing the font size incrementally until you find the exact size you need!
- Select all of the text and choose a suitable colour.

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## Adding a text box

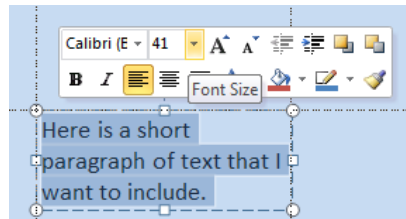
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Text boxes allow you to easily position re-size and re-position blocks of text on your poster. They can have a coloured background and/or an outline, but can also be transparent so all you see is the text. How you use them depends on your design ideas.

- Use **Shapes** on the **Insert** ribbon to add a **Text Box** that fits the grid of your poster
- Type a short paragraph of text in the Text Box – your choice of words!

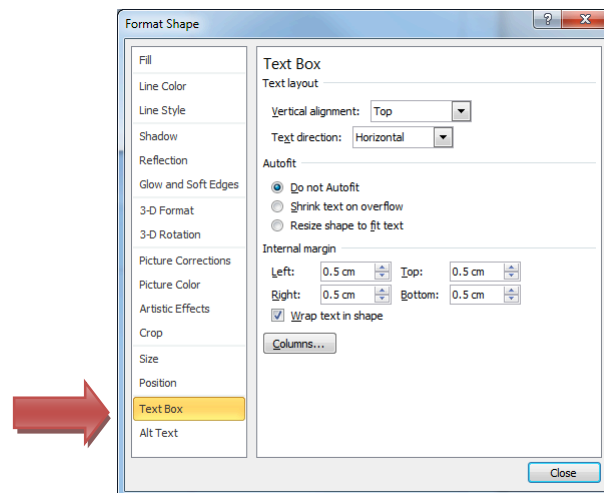
**Tip:** you should use the **Zoom** control on the toolbar to ensure you can read the text you are typing

- Drag to select all of the text and use the pop-up font control to choose the font (e.g. Arial or Bookman Old Style) and a suitable font size (e.g. 24 points).



the pop-up font control

**Tip:** if you want to make the text block have a background colour, right-click on the text and choose **Format Shape** from the pop-up menu. The dialogue box that appears enables you to set the fill colour, line colour, line style and thickness. The **Text Box** pane allows you to define the alignment of the text and the margins within the block.



- use **Format Shape - Fill** to choose suitable colours for the Text Box - try out various colours to see what looks best against your background colour
- use **Format Shape – Text box** to set suitable margins and alignment for the text – for a A1 or A2 poster the margins should be around 0.5cm

**Tip:** Click on the text to position the cursor so you can edit the words as required. A box appears around the block of text.

**Tip:** Click and drag on the box's "handles" to re-size the text block.

**Tip:** Click and drag the box outline (anywhere *except* the handles) to reposition the text block.

**Tip:** You can easily copy-and-paste this text box to create consistent text elements for this poster. You may want to create a heading within the text box (possibly using a different font) before you start copying it.

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## Not just text boxes

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- Your text boxes do not have to be rectangular – you can also choose other shapes from **Shapes** on the **Insert** ribbon. Add the shape, then right-click on it and choose **Edit Text** from the context menu. In some cases you may find it helpful to right-click on the shape, choose **Format Shape** and set the **Vertical alignment** on the **Text Box** pane.
- An alternative method is to draw the shape you want and then add the text as a transparent Text Box on top of the shape.

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## Clip Art graphics

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- Add a clip-art graphic by choosing **Clip Art** from the **Insert** ribbon.
- Type a search term (e.g. chair) in the **Search for:** field in the Task Pane on the right of the screen. Click and drag the image you want to use onto your poster

**Tip:** you can re-position and re-size the graphics just like the text blocks – drag the corner handles to avoid stretching or squashing the image

- Reposition the graphic by dragging its **centre** and re-size it by dragging its **corner** handles. Use the drawing guides to help align it.

**Tip:** you can get the University logo and colours from <http://www.edshare.soton.ac.uk/6338/>

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## Digital Photos

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- Add a photo by choosing **Picture** from the **Insert** ribbon.
- Locate the image file, select it and click **Insert** - photos should be JPEG format.

**Tip:** for maximum quality, the resolution of an image should be about 60 pixels per cm, so for example a photo that will be 20 cm wide will need a horizontal resolution of 1200 pixels.

- The **Picture** ribbon appears whenever an image is selected, and has tools that enable you to modify its colour, contrast and brightness. You can also to crop it (i.e. trim the edges of the image).

**Tip:** You can use **Shapes** to create non-rectangular images – create the shape, then right-click and choose **Format Shape**. Set the **Fill to Picture or texture fill**, select **Insert from: File** and then select the image you want to use. You may need to experiment with the options to get the effect you want. For example, use the **Tile picture as texture** checkbox to avoid distorting the image, and the scale and offset controls to show the part of the picture required.

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## Importing Excel Charts

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The easiest method is to simply copy-and-paste the chart directly from Excel into PowerPoint.

However, if you want to be able to edit the chart (for example to update the data or adjust the size and colour of the axes and text labels) you will have to use the following method.

In Excel, you should ensure that each chart is created on its own worksheet. Then use **Object** from the **Insert** ribbon to select the Excel file containing the chart and click **OK**

Only one worksheet is displayed at a time. To display a different worksheet, double-click the Excel object, and then click a different worksheet. Double-click chart elements to edit them – for example to change the font or size of the chart title.

Note that you can also use this method to insert tabular data from Excel into your poster.

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## Importing Charts from other programs

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Some graphical programs enable you to export their charts or diagrams as image files, in which case GIF, BMP or TIFF are good choices. Some even allow you to choose the resolution, so that you get fine detail when you print the poster.

Other programs enable you to export their output using other file formats, such as EPS or CGM. These can be imported into PowerPoint in the usual way, but may not always display

correctly – you should always print out a trial version before paying someone else to print and encapsulate your poster.

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### **Inserting Screen-grabs**

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You can include screen-grabs from programs, such as web-pages or charts from programs that do not output in a format usable by PowerPoint, using **Screenshot** on the **Insert** ribbon.

**Tip:** open the other program so it shows what you want to grab, and then switch back to PowerPoint and use the Screenshot tool.