

Poster techniques and considerations: Titles should be at least 72 point font size

Presenter Name, Where/Who for this presenter

Presenter Name, If there is another presenter

Introduction or Abstract

In this 48"x36" poster example, you will see a few different PowerPoint techniques that you can consider using in your poster. Keep in mind that this isn't definitive and should serve as inspiration.

In the following sections, you will notice that the headers are separate text boxes. This can make it easier to style the headers differently from the section's body text. You also will notice that both the header text boxes and the regular section text box have margins set (found in Format panel's text box options) so that the text doesn't run up to the edges of the boxes. This helps to increase clarity.

Sub-headers

- It's ok to have sub-headers in sections.
 - Sometimes sub-headers can be useful to bring specificity to a generally broad section.
- Bullets can also function similarly, providing supplemental information with subsequent indented bullets.
 - Notice that these bullets have a very small indent setting with a hanging indent.
 - The small indent helps to save a little more space on each line.
 - The hanging indent helps to keep the next lines of text inline with the first which helps to clearly delineate each bulleted blurb.
 - To adjust bullet indentation, use the "Paragraph" formatting dialog box.

Notes

1. You can use whatever headers that make sense to you. The headers here are a couple standard header titles to show what they could look like.
2. This poster doesn't have very many images. Make sure yours has more images since they will spark intrigue from a far.

Analysis

Text with graphics

Unfortunately there is no way to have text wrap around an image automatically in PowerPoint. This is a feature that is usually in page layout applications for print like InDesign, Word, or Publisher. In PowerPoint, you will have to use separate text boxes to make it seem like the text is wrapping around. Or you can use line returns in mid-sentence and tabs to give the illusion of wrapped text. (Note: Use the Arrange tool to reorder graphics and text to select them.)



"Wrapping" text around graphics will give you the benefit of saving space while adhering to a clean structured layout. Just remember to keep the spacing between the text, the graphics and the section's boundaries uniformly consistent for clarity.

A section with real columns

Firstly, notice how the space above this section is larger than a typical paragraph space. This helps to make sure that this section feels visually separated from the previous one.

This section uses a text box that has actual columns set using formatting tools. Columns can be tricky to use but can help to keep spacing consistent. You can choose to add/remove columns to a text box after you have written or pasted your text in.

Notice how the caption under the 3rd image stands out subtly because slight indent and

With second columns, make sure the first line is lined up with the first line of the previous column, not the header so it stands out. Also if you use columns in a section, make sure that the next section starts spatially further away so that the reader doesn't start reading the next section before completing this one.

Notice that the image below has a caption. Give captions space to breathe and make them a little smaller than the body text so that they feel like more supplemental information.

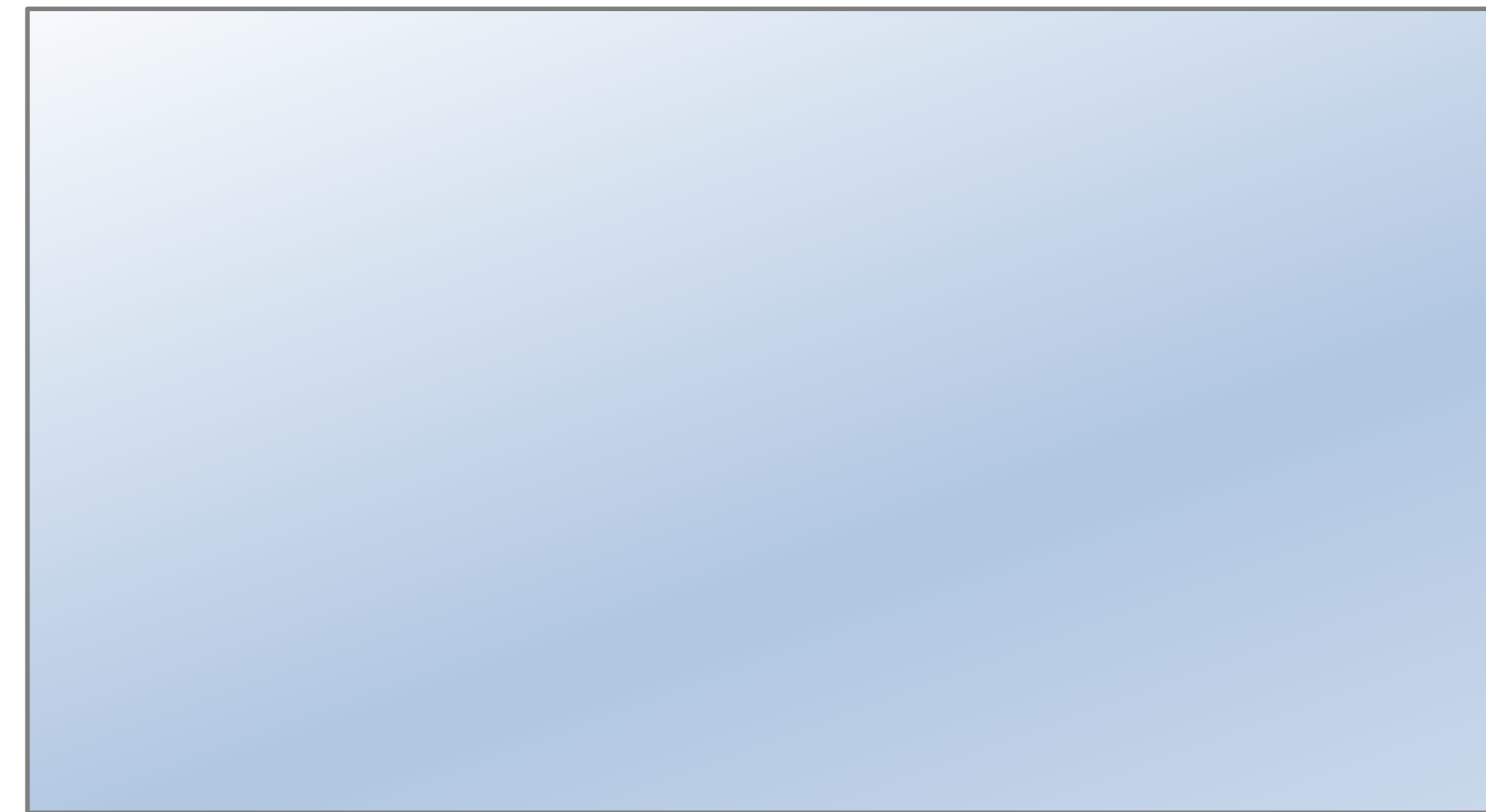


Fig. 1: This could be a chart or diagram.

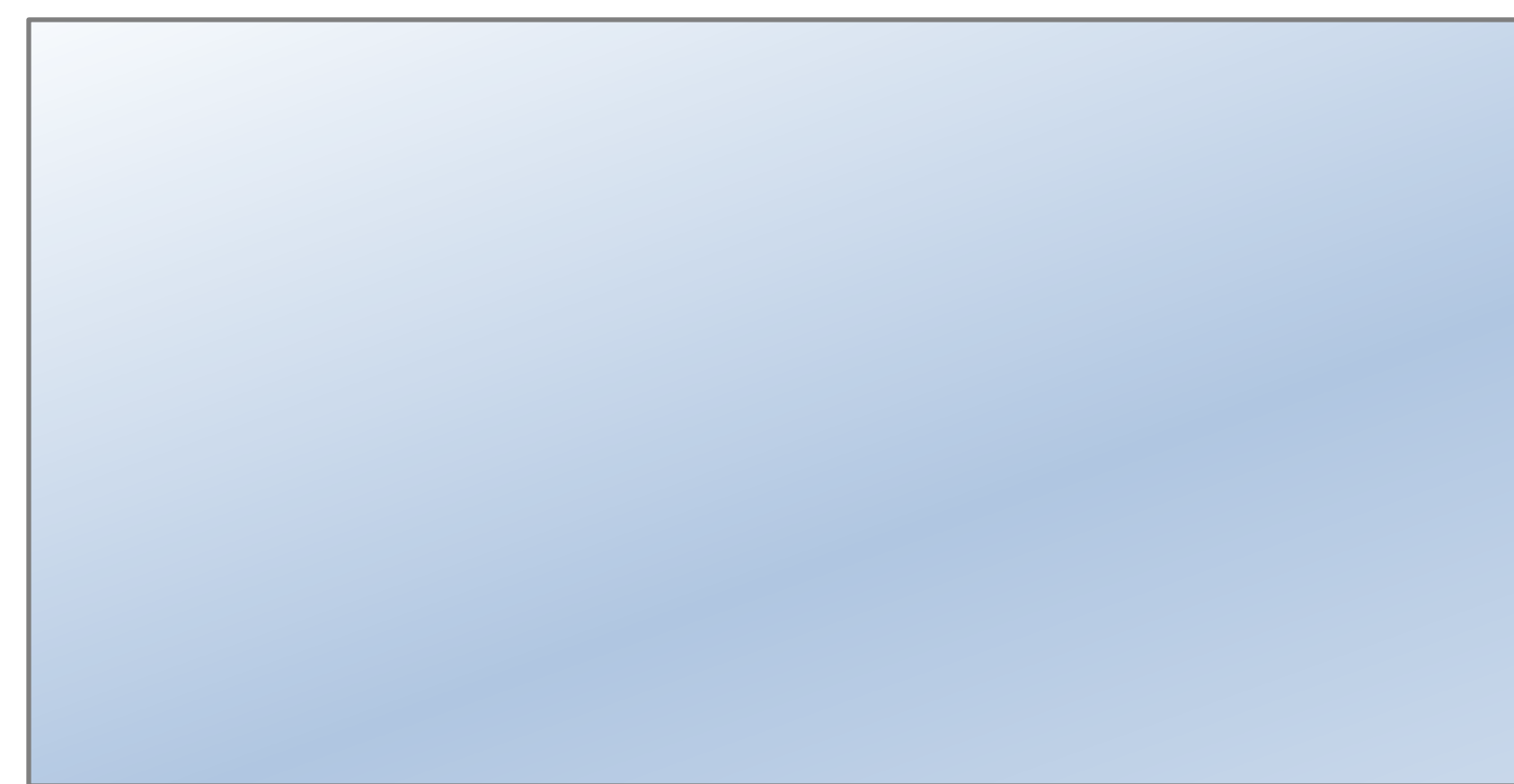


Fig. 2: This caption could be more than one line but try to keep it short.

because it is close to its subject (the image) with enough space below it so that it doesn't become apart of this text.

Results

From a distance

Your text and graphics should be reasonably legible from 6 feet away. This may mean that you will need to increase the size of your images or text (depending on the type of font you use).

A good way to test legibility from a distance is to print out the finished poster in full-sized sections on 8.5"x11" paper (tiled printing). Unfortunately, PowerPoint doesn't have the ability to do this from the Print screen so you will need to save the PowerPoint as a PDF and use Acrobat (Reader or Pro) to "Print as a Poster"

Contrast and Squinting

Another helpful tool when assessing your finished poster is to squint your eyes at it. Squinting your eyes will reduce your vision so that you can focus on contrast (the difference between the light and dark colors). If you discover that text, graphics or entire sections start to disappear into the background while squinting, increase the contrast.

You can do this in a number of ways:

- Make light colors lighter.
- Make dark colors darker.
- Increase the thickness of lines in graphics.
- Increase the size of the font.
- Change the font.

Conclusion

Remember to make your poster your own. Feel free to adjust the layout as you see fit or change any of the styles. Perhaps you think gray is boring or you think that having borders around each section takes up too much space (it does). If so, change it. Maybe experiment a little. Always keep in mind that clarity is key and when in doubt, have someone review your poster before printing.

Acknowledgements and Citations

Here are a couple of extra useful notes to consider with PowerPoint and laying out your content.

1. You can divide spaces with lines and boxes to give them a designated area to fill like you see here.

2. Text boxes are automatically set to resize to the amount of text in it, but you can always turn that setting off. In Format Shape text box tools, turn off Autofit and you will be free to adjust text boxes as you please.

3. In PowerPoint, if you can't find a formatting tool, you can always right click on the object and choose Format Shape/Text to bring up the Format panel.

4. When moving objects around, you can use the arrow keys to 'nudge' them. You can also use the Align and Distribute tools to ensure accuracy.