



## Module 5: Slide Show Design & Presentation Tips

### Design Principles

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#### Color

Color creates its own dynamic, and it is a visual communication device.

- Black on white is the easiest to read. Avoid white backgrounds; the solid color is hard on the eyes.
- White on black can give a techno or retro look.
- Contrast in colors can be dynamic. Use high contrast to make key items stand out, to draw the eye.
- Lack of contrast can make text appear to blur into the background.

Avoid red on the screen; it bleeds.

**“A limited color palette, or color scheme, can be very appealing and can add more of a feeling of sophistication and organization.”**

**– Robin Williams  
The Non-Designer's Web Book**

#### Type & Fonts

No more than two fonts

- Too many fonts are distracting.
- Be consistent and limit yourself to two type families, one sans serif and one serif.

For headings, use a sans serif font.

- Arial or Helvetica.

For body text, use serif body text.

- Times New Roman.

Sans serif fonts (fonts without the “slabs”) are easier to read on the screen.

- For slide show presentations, use Arial for body text.

Unless you have a background in design and know how to “break the rules,” do not combine two sans serif fonts on the same slide. The same rule goes for serif fonts. If you are going to combine typefaces, one should be serif and the other sans serif.

- Within each typeface, you can make some words bold or italic.

Do not use ALL CAPS, except for emphasis.

Do not underline. Underlining is for typewriters; italic is for professional text.

Use large fonts for readability.

## Layout & Design

The following C.R.A.P. acronym was developed by Robin Williams, author of "The Non-Designer's Design Book," when explaining the four basic design principles:

**Contrast** - draws the eye into the page. Create a focal point with contrast by making an element bold or different in color.

**Repetition** - repeat certain elements that tie all the disparate parts together, e.g. colors, style, illustrations, format, layout, typography.

**Alignment** - items on the page are lined up with each other. Choose one alignment for the entire page. Don't mix alignments.

**Proximity** - refers to the relationships that develop when things are close to each other. Place like items together, including headlines next to text.

No more than seven “key points” per screen.

- The human brain is capable of remembering five to seven main points or bits of information.

Repeat main ideas.

Don't crowd text placed inside a box. Leave plenty of room on all sides.

Use a lot of graphics.

- Use images as metaphors, concept maps, reinforcement, to help explain topic .

Make sure the information is easy-to-read and understand. Less is more!

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## Recommended Reading

"The Non-Designer's Design Book" by Robin Williams  
Design and Typographic Principles for the Visual Novice  
ISBN 1-56609-159-4

## Why Use Slide Shows?

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Presentations, when supported by visual materials, enhance an audience's ability to focus, recall key points of a lecture, and understand topics to a deeper level.

Slideshows support visual learners and not just auditory learners.

They help support special needs students as well as ESL students.

Students who create slideshows learn how to focus on logical presentation of ideas. The process helps them to focus on key points.



As a presenter, do not "read" your slideshow or depend upon it for the lecture. Use it to enhance delivery.

## Creating Effective Slide Shows

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### Vary Elements to Keep Slides Interesting

Vary items and possibly backgrounds for different types of slides in your presentation. We're not suggesting radical color changes or new fonts on every slide. Use the same graphic elements, colors and fonts, but rearrange them a little differently on various types of slides. For instance, you can **vary objects' sizes, text placement or headline position** to draw your audience's attention to a new subject or speaker.

Break the monotony!

### Keep it simple, Speaker

Remember to keep the slide content clean and uncluttered, too. It only takes a few overdone slides to spoil the batch.

Be careful with color. Don't overdue it. A subtle color palette is more professional than one with too many colors.

Keep Transitions To a Minimum.

Do not use too many transitions, which can create a "gaudy" effect. Run through the slideshow to make sure you like the transitions you've chosen.

Don't forget KISS - Keep it simple, speaker!

**KISS –  
Keep it  
simple,  
Speaker**

## Avoiding Copyright Trouble: Permission and Licensing

It's tempting to infringe on copyright when creating slide show presentations, especially when it is so easy to gather content from the Web. Always **assume that any pre-existing work you'd like to use is copyrighted work** and that it requires permission from the copyright owner to use or copy.

### *What if you want to use only a small fraction of a copyrighted work?*

The Copyright Act includes a "fair use" exception, granting the ability to use copyrighted material without written permission from the owner. In some cases, copyright owners are easy to track down through the contact information listed on their materials. Individual authors or smaller organizations in particular are usually flattered by such requests and willing to negotiate fair terms, often allowing you to reuse their material for free with proper attribution.

In academia, fair use is a little more liberal, as long as you're using material strictly for research, scholarship or nonprofit education. But, you can't hand out mounds of photocopies to paying students without written permission or a license.

Under the Copyright Act of 1976, the basis of U.S. copyright law, **copyright is automatic when an original work is first "fixed" in a tangible medium of expression.** That means material is protected by copyright at the point when it is first printed, captured on film, drawn, or saved to hard drive or disk.

Among original works of authorship cited in copyright statutes are "pictorial, graphic, audiovisual and sound recordings." These are broad categories that include the GIF and JPG image files and WAV audio files commonly found on the Web.

When creating slide shows, ensure you remain within the boundaries of use for educational purposes. Honor the original creations of someone else, and make sure to teach your students to do the same.

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## Resources

Copyright and Fair Use: Stanford University Libraries  
<http://fairuse.stanford.edu/>

Brad Templeton's site, author of the popular "10 Big Myths about Copyright Explained"  
<http://www.templetons.com/brad/copymyths.html>