



12 top tricks and tips for MS PowerPoint

1. Screenshot

Tap the F5 key to start a screenshot from the start wherever you are within your presentation or Shift/F5 from the slide you are on.

2. Planning goes a long way

A little planning goes a long way. You should know what you intend to say and then figure out how to visualise it. Unless you are an expert at improvising, make sure you write out or at least outline your presentation before trying to put together slides.

3. Story telling

Make sure your script follows good storytelling conventions: give it a beginning, middle, and end. Build towards some sort of climax and conclusion.

4. One point at a time

Plan your presentation so just one new point is displayed at any given moment. Bullet points can be revealed one at a time as you reach them.

5. Pictures paint a thousand words

Your slides are the *illustrations* for your presentation, *not* the presentation itself. They should underline and reinforce what you're saying as you give your presentation.

6. Design matters

- Use a sans serif font for body text.
- Use decorative fonts only for slide headers, and then only if they're easy to read.
- Put dark text on a light background.
- Avoid clutter!

7. Use images sparingly

There are two schools of thought about images in presentations. Some say they add visual interest and keep audiences engaged; others say images are an unnecessary distraction. Both arguments have some merit, so in this case the best option is to split the difference: use images only when they add important information or make an abstract point more concrete.

8. It's all about YOU not the slides

Remember, the slides on the screen are only *part* of the presentation – and not the main part. Even though you're liable to be presenting in a darkened room, give some thought to your own presentation manner – how you hold yourself, what you wear, how you move around the room. *You* are the focus when you're presenting, no matter how interesting your slides are.

9. Reel them in

The best presentation shook their audiences early and then reel them in. Open with something surprising or intriguing, something that will get your audience to sit up and take notice.

10. Involve your audience

Questions arouse interest, pique curiosity, and engage audiences. So ask a lot of them. Build tension by posing a question and letting your audience stew a moment before moving to the next slide with the answer.

11. Put yourself in their shoes

Ask yourself why are they here? What is it you are trying to do, sell, convince or simply inform? What do they already know?

12. Make them focus on you

Whilst in your screenshot, tap the letter b to make the screen go black to make your audience focus on you and press it again to return to your presentation.