

Using Visuals in Your Presentations, Posters, Videos, & More

How do I use visuals?

- **Use visuals to present information clearly.**

Visuals can aid your audience's understanding by helping them visualize data and understand where something happened.

- **Use visuals to add interest to your writing or speech.**

Visuals can make text or speech more interesting and appealing to the viewer.

- **Use high-quality, high-resolution visuals.**

Avoid images that become pixelated or blurry when printed or projected on a screen. Avoid skewing the image by making it too tall or too wide. In many programs, holding the SHIFT key as you resize the picture will maintain the original proportions.

- **Use visuals that are relevant to what you have to say.**

Visuals should do more than just decorate your text. They should support your point or message. Omit visuals that distract from your message or ideas.

- **Leave white space around visuals.**

This makes it easier to read and interpret the visuals and improves your project's appearance.

- **Explain the visual to your audience.**

Always tell your viewer in the text or speech how the visual connects to your project before or when the visual appears. ("As shown in fig. 2...")



Fig. 1: Panther silhouette from: Krustovin. "Black Panther Big Cat Silhouette." Pixabay, 11 Sept. 2021. pixabay.com/illustrations/black-panther-big-cat-silhouette-5563460/

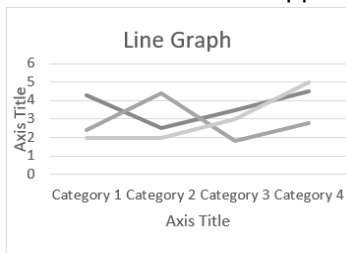
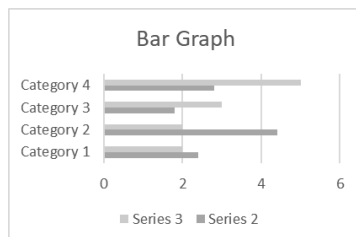


Fig. 2: Line graph template
Word, Microsoft Office 365,
version 16.0.16529.20100.



Which type of visual should I use?

- **Photographs and illustrations** can show something that's difficult to explain, support an argument, catch the viewer's attention, and appeal to the emotions.

- **Videos** demonstrate processes, actions, and sequences. These may be used in how-to presentations and demonstrations.

- **Graphs, charts, and tables** make data easier to understand.

- **Line graphs** (See fig. 2) are often used to show changes and trends in data.

- **Bar graphs** (See fig. 3) are used to compare quantitative data.

- **Pie Charts** (See fig. 4) show parts relative to the whole.

- **Tables** (See tab. 1) present a lot of information in an organized manner.

- **Diagrams** illustrate details a photograph might not show.

Fig. 3: Bar graph template
Word, Microsoft Office 365,
version 16.0.16529.20100.

- **Maps** provide geographic contexts. These are generally used when location is important.

Where do I find visuals?

- **Create your own.**
Take your own photographs. Draw your own diagrams. Create charts using software like Microsoft Excel, Google Sheets, etc.
- **Use copyright-free visuals.**
Websites like Pixabay, Pexels, and Freemages have many royalty-free images for non-commercial use.
- **Use tables and images from academic sources.**
You may find helpful tables, figures, and images in academic sources or databases like Artstor.
- **Use AI-generated images.**
AI-generated images may grab your viewer's attention but should not be used as evidence in an argument (unless arguing about AI). If using AI-generated visuals, ensure they are high-quality.

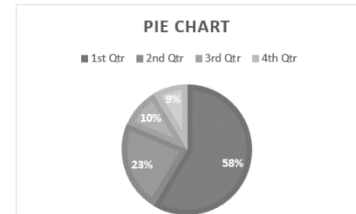


Fig. 4: Pie chart template
Word, Microsoft Office 365,
version 16.0.16529.20100.

How do I label and cite visuals?

All visuals must be labeled and cited, including copyright-free and AI-generated visuals.

- **Labels & Titles:**
Label tables above the table with a table number ("Table 1"). Clearly label the horizontal and vertical axes. **Label graphs, charts, photos, and diagrams below the visual** with a figure number ("Fig. 1"). All visuals need a descriptive title ("U.S. Population by Region, 2010-20").
- **Captions:**
Caption photographs if they convey or illustrate important information (See fig. 1). If they are primarily to attract attention, they do not require captions (but still require citations).
- **Citations:**
Cite visual beneath the image. Use the citation style required by your professor. The examples given are MLA style citations.
For photos, diagrams, charts, etc., the caption/label will lead into the source. (Fig. 1. Man exercising from: Green, Annie. "Yoga: Stretching Out." *Sports Digest*, 8 May 2006, p. 22.)
Cite tables beneath the visual. Write "Source:" and then give the citation. (Source: Mohr, Andrea. "Family Variables Associated with Peer Victimization." *Swiss Journal Collection*, doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1024/1421-0185.65.2.107>.)
Check the style guidelines. In MLA, if the full citation is given in the caption, do not include it in your works cited list. If you only include basic information in the caption, include the source in your works cited list. If an image requires citation, APA requires citations both beneath the image and in the references list. In MLA, stock images and clipart from programs like PowerPoint and Canva

Table 1.
Human population in core panther habitat in Southwest Florida or noncore potential translocation sites in South Central Florida.

Source: Langin, Cynthia, and Susan K. Jacobson. "Risk and Residency Influences on Public Support for Florida Panther Recovery." *Wildlife Society Bulletin*, vol. 36, no. 4, Dec. 2012, pp. 713-21. EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1002/wsb.187>.

must be cited. In APA, citing stock images and clipart depends on the licensing agreement. Some images require citations, while others do not.