

What People Hate about PowerPoint Presentations

What people hate about PowerPoint presentations:	What you can do to prevent these things:
Presenters and Presentation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ presenter fumbles around on 'Desktop' before and during presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • make sure the presentation is set up and try a few slides 10 minutes before the presentation starts • Use "Presenters' View" (under "Slide Show" → Set up show → Multiple Monitors)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ unclear structure ☛ no clear indication of the main ideas/points ☛ lack of a "take-home" message 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • before you start <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ decide on the point you want to make as a one-sentence statement (cf. argument in Writing Skills) ○ list the evidence you have ○ order the evidence to... ○ ... create an outline (which can then be imported into PP; good tips and trick on the internet) • if you try out your presentation, ask the trial audience if they get the take-home message
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ no handout 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create a handout (not necessarily using the "print handout" feature of PowerPoint) that <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ lists the slides and ○ that contains all lengthier quotes • Make sure there is space for notes on the handout
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ presenters reads out what is on the slide 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The information on the slides needs to be in <i>keyword</i> format (except when you give shorter quotes) • make yourself a note sheet using either <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ "View" → Handout Master → 2 or 3 slides per page; this leaves you with space for notes to the right of the slide ○ or "View" → Notes Master
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ embedded material (youtube videos) not working 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use your own computer (less of a problem than hoping all you need is on the memory stick...) • If at all possible, download video material (https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/video-downloadhelper/) and include the video in your Presentation • If you need live access, give yourself at least 30 minutes before the presentation to make sure the connection to the internet is reliable and works
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ presenter moves too fast for audience to take in the content of slides ☛ too many slides, slides move too fast 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time yourself in a trial run. If you overrun the allotted time, <i>reduce the numbers of slides</i>. • Slides should not be up for less than 30 seconds unless they only contain a picture for illustration and no text or information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ☛ presenter talks about things that seem unrelated to the presentation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The slide show represents the backbone (not the entire content) of a presentation: make sure that what you are saying relates to the information on the slides.

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On your note sheet, draw a line (in colour) that links the points you want to mention to the keywords on the slide. If no line can be drawn, rethink!
☹ presenter looks at the screen rather than the audience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use “Presenters View” which shows you the entire slide on your laptop; you will not stand with your back to the audience.
Slide design	
☹ coloured backgrounds / design of slides too fanciful	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use a simple or no background white slides with black letters work just fine
☹ too much text on the slide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> generally no more than seven bullet points per slide longer quotations on a handout
☹ font too small	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> do not use a font of less than 18pts, ideally a sans-serif type (Arial)
☹ static slides with all information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> use animations to reveal each point you are discussing in turn
☹ wild, pointless animations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> animations need to make didactic sense: they can illustrate <ul style="list-style-type: none"> how an idea is developed what elements make up a phenomenon what factors contribute to a given situation or outcome do not use animations to liven up a dull presentation
☹ silly transitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> they are not needed
☹ messy layout	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> create your own templates (master slides) with a clear indication of levels simple is better (PPT is almost always too fancy...)
☹ no graphic elements or images in a wasteland of printed text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> an image can illustrate more than a “1000 words” instead of giving figures and statistics, try convert them to charts never add a graphic element just to have a picture...
Content of slides	
☹ Info on the slide that is not mentioned or referred to in the presentation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> in a trial run ask observers to keep an eye on this if you have information that is of interest but not included in the presentation (because it would skew the development of your ideas) clearly signpost them as such: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Let me just add briefly...” / “I will open a bracket here...” “On a personal note...” / “As an aside...”
☹ lengthy quotations on the slide in too small a font	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally, any quotation longer than three lines on a slide is more readable and accessible on a handout
☹ full sentences on bullet points instead of keywords	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> reduce bullet points to the focal keywords (and provide the full sentence statements in what you say)
☹ no examples or illustrations of abstract points presented	<p>With <i>every</i> abstract statement or generalisation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide an illustration, give an example support your idea with discussion points that pre-empt criticism of the generalisation