

# Setting Up Poster Sessions for Large Format Printing (Windows)

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*A Workshop for San Diego State University Faculty and Staff*



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# Where to Find Help When You Need It

## Help from your Division/College's Computer Consultant

Some divisions and colleges have computer consultants assigned to them. You can contact these consultants when you need help. To determine if you have a consultant assigned to your division or college, look to: <http://rohan.sdsu.edu/~facstaff>

## Help from the BATS Web Page

BATS (Baseline Access, Training and Support) is a California State University initiative to provide all students, faculty, and staff with "baseline" access to information resources via networks, training in the uses of baseline hardware and software systems, and ongoing professional and technical support for utilization of computer resources at San Diego State University. You can access the BATS Web Page by pointing your browser to: <http://rohan.sdsu.edu/~bats/>

## Help in the San Diego State University, Faculty Room

The Faculty Room is staffed Monday through Friday with computing consultants who will try to answer your questions.

**Location:** Adams Humanities, 1109  
**Phone Number:** x45727  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday -Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

## Help from the Faculty Computing Help Line

**Phone Number:** x41348  
**E-mail:** [helpline@mail.sdsu.edu](mailto:helpline@mail.sdsu.edu)  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday – Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

## Help from the Staff Computing Help Line

**Phone Number:** x40824  
**E-mail:** [staffhelp@sdsu.edu](mailto:staffhelp@sdsu.edu)  
**Semester Hours:** 7:30am – 6:00pm Monday – Thursday  
7:30am – 4:30pm Friday  
**Semester Intersession:** 7:30am – 4:30pm Monday – Friday

# INTRODUCTION

This handout is designed to compliment content presented in the BATS Setting Up Poster Sessions for Large Format Printing Workshop. The first section is step-by-step instructions for using the Page Setup in PowerPoint to make a large size page rather than a screen for slides. This handout will walk you through the steps you need to setup your page, set a background color, use Guides (a great tool) for setting margins and lining up objects. It also briefly covers the use of the drawing tools available in PowerPoint.

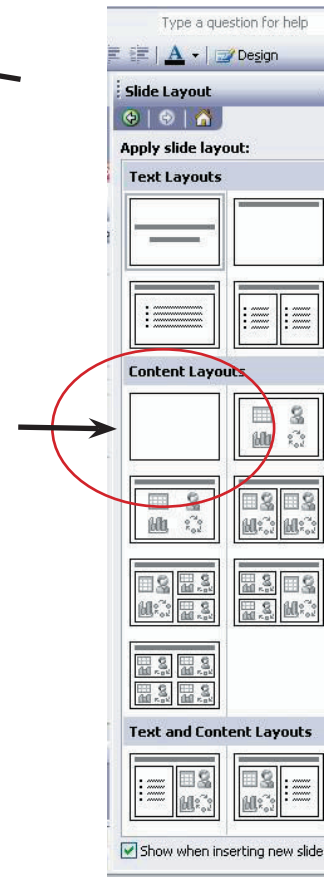
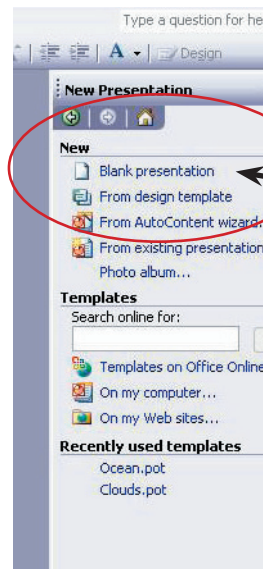
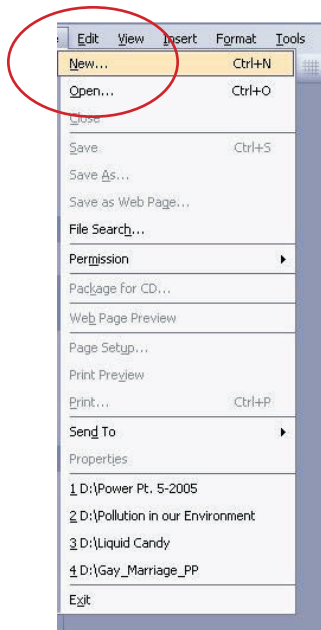
Tips for organizing your materials, picking good colors that will both print well and look good, and picking the correct font and type size are all addressed. Indents, tabs and line spacing are great tools if you know how to use them correctly. How do you put photos, graphs and charts and tables into your PowerPoint poster session? The answer to that question is covered here!

## *Organizing Your Poster*

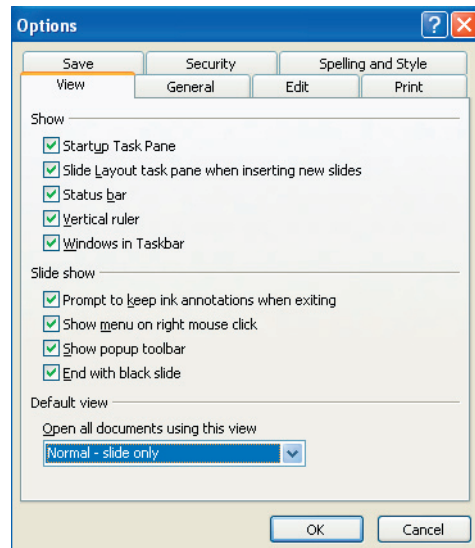
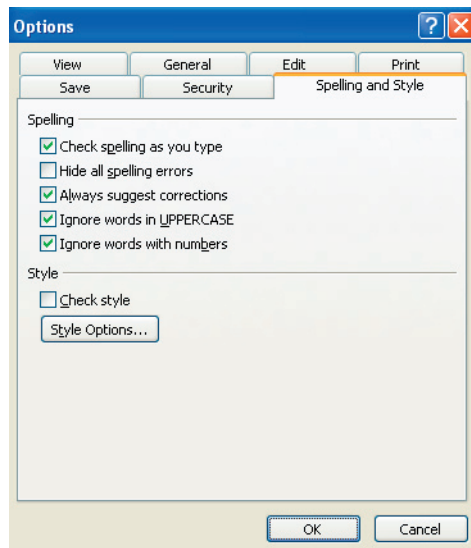
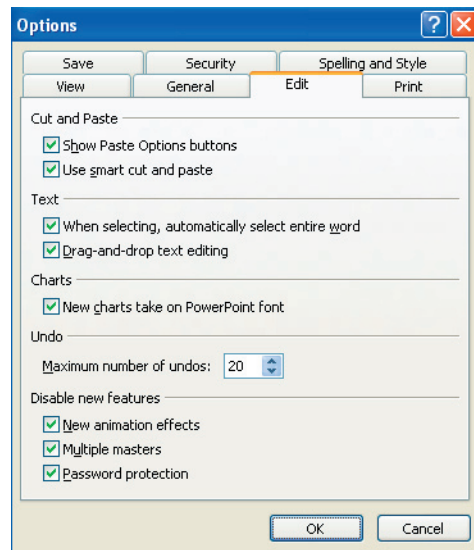
- Divide materials into sections, possible sections include:  
Abstract, Introduction, Hypothesis, Objectives, Participants, Methods, Results, Outcomes, Discussion, Conclusions, Future Work, Acknowledgements, References
- Do a “thumbnail” sketch with paper and pencil to rough out the order of your contents including any tables, graphs, charts and photos
- Represent materials graphically rather than textually when possible, emphasize conclusions, use handouts rather than endless text and tables
- Set up materials in vertical columns for easy viewing, horizontal columns cause viewers to back track as they read your poster
- Think about color choices ahead of time so all materials will harmonize
- Prepare materials that will need to be added such as photos, graphs, and illustrations before you do the poster layout in PowerPoint.
- Proof, proof again, have someone else proof, if you make a PDF, proof the PDF

## Setting Up A Poster Page in PowerPoint

- Open PowerPoint
- **Choose:**
  - File: New: Blank Presentation: Contents Layout (blank)
- Adjust window size on screen for maximum viewing (close Task Panes if necessary)



- Set Options  
Tools: Options  
**Choose:**
  - View: Check all
  - Edit: Check all
  - Spelling: Check all except “Hide Spelling Errors”
  - Set other preferences as desired



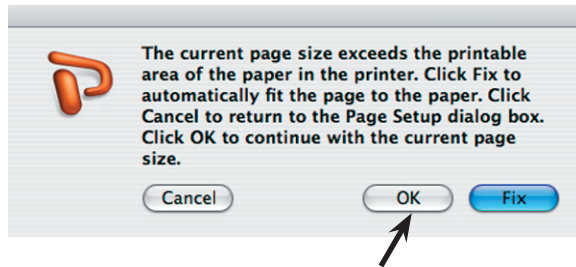
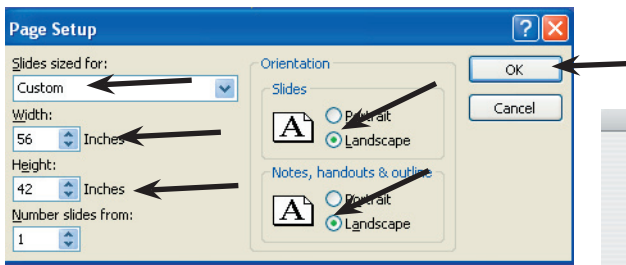
- Go to Page Setup
  - Custom
  - 42" x 56" maximum in PowerPoint, can be smaller

The wide format printer in ITS takes a **maximum of a 42"** roll of paper so one dimension of your poster must be no more than 42".

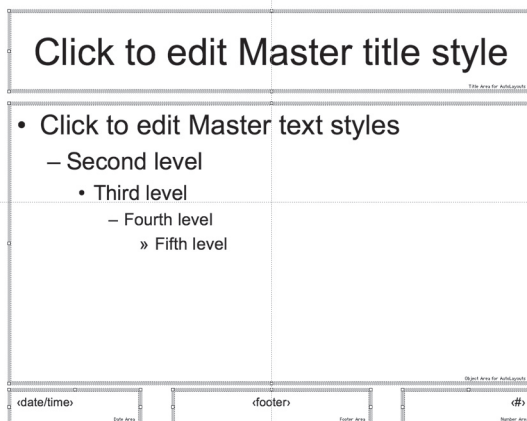
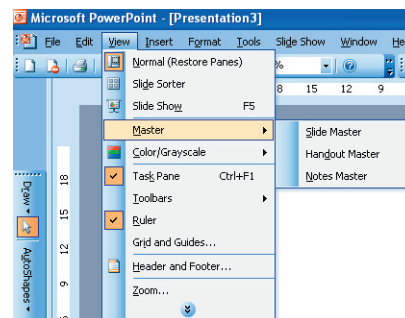
PowerPoint restricts the width setting in Landscape mode to 56", thus the restriction to a 42" x 56" maximum poster size in PowerPoint. You can set the orientation to Landscape or Portrait.

If you use Illustrator or Freehand one dimension is still restricted to 42" because of the paper roll size but the other dimension can be larger (up to 9 feet).

- Slides and handout icons set at "Landscape" or "Portrait" as required
- If a dialog box comes up about printer size, click OK



- Go to Slide Master
  - View: Master: Slide Master
  - Select all, delete all text boxes
  - Return to slide view



Delete all text boxes from Master Slide to avoid any of them showing up unexpectedly in your poster

## Setting a Background Color

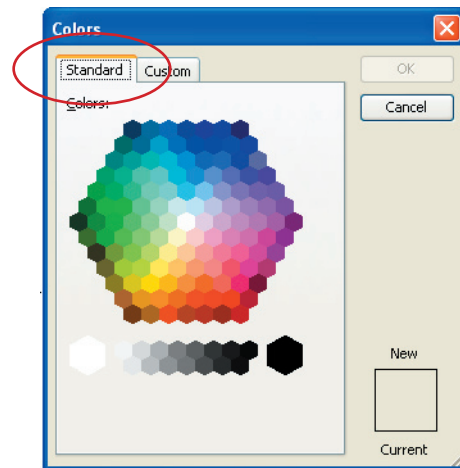
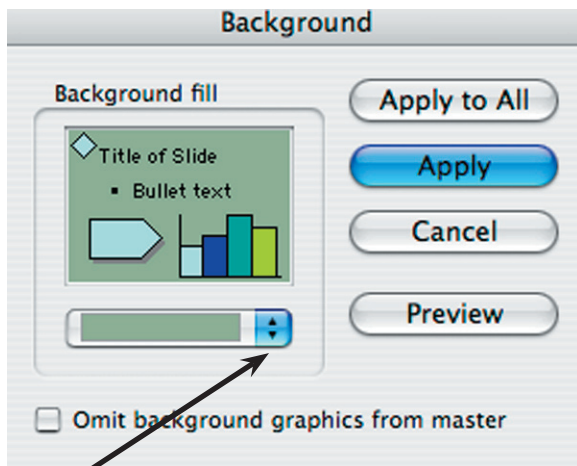
- Set background color (can be changed at any time) – or a white background is great!

### Go to:

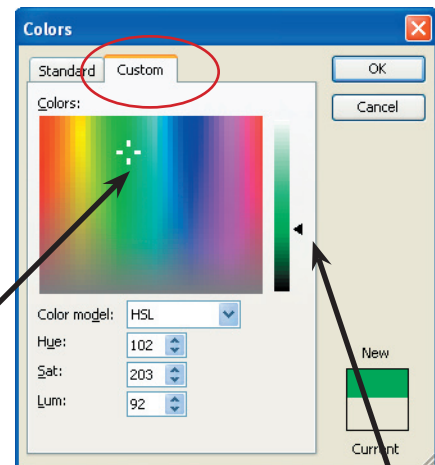
- Format: Background – see page 12 for tips on choosing colors

Do **NOT** use PowerPoint slide templates or any fill effects (such as gradations or patterns) for backgrounds!! They do not print properly (and take forever to print badly) from PowerPoint.

Gradations will print from Illustrator or Freehand poster files.



- Use drop down menu to select “More colors”
  - Preview and/or apply (you must apply to use that color as your background) Once the color is applied it will be saved in the palettes (fill, text, and line) for this file.
- Use Standard or Custom Colors



Choose colors by dragging the small crosshairs around the color wheel

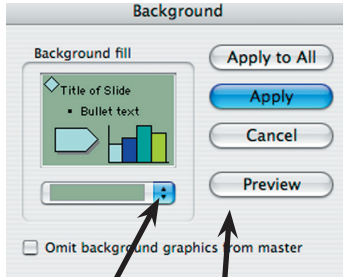
Move the slider up and down to darken or lighten the color

Do **NOT** make a background color by drawing a box to match the size of the poster and filling it with color. You will find yourself continually selecting that box by accident! You will have the same problem if you try to copy and paste or insert a photo as a background. To make a photo background follow the next procedure.



To use a photo as a background, first do all your photo adjustments (size, dpi, lighten or darken) in a photo manipulation program like Photoshop. Save the file as a cmyk jpeg. No more resolution than 150 dpi at actual size (for example: 150 dpi at 56" x 42") is ever needed.

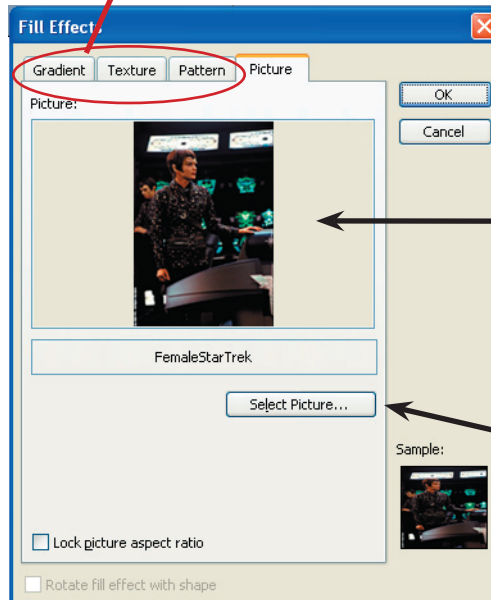
- Go to:
  - Format: Slide Background: Drop Down Menu: Fill Effects: Picture



1.

4. Click OK and then Preview and/or Apply

Never use these settings in a PowerPoint poster. They will not print correctly and can seriously slow down the time it takes to print a poster!!



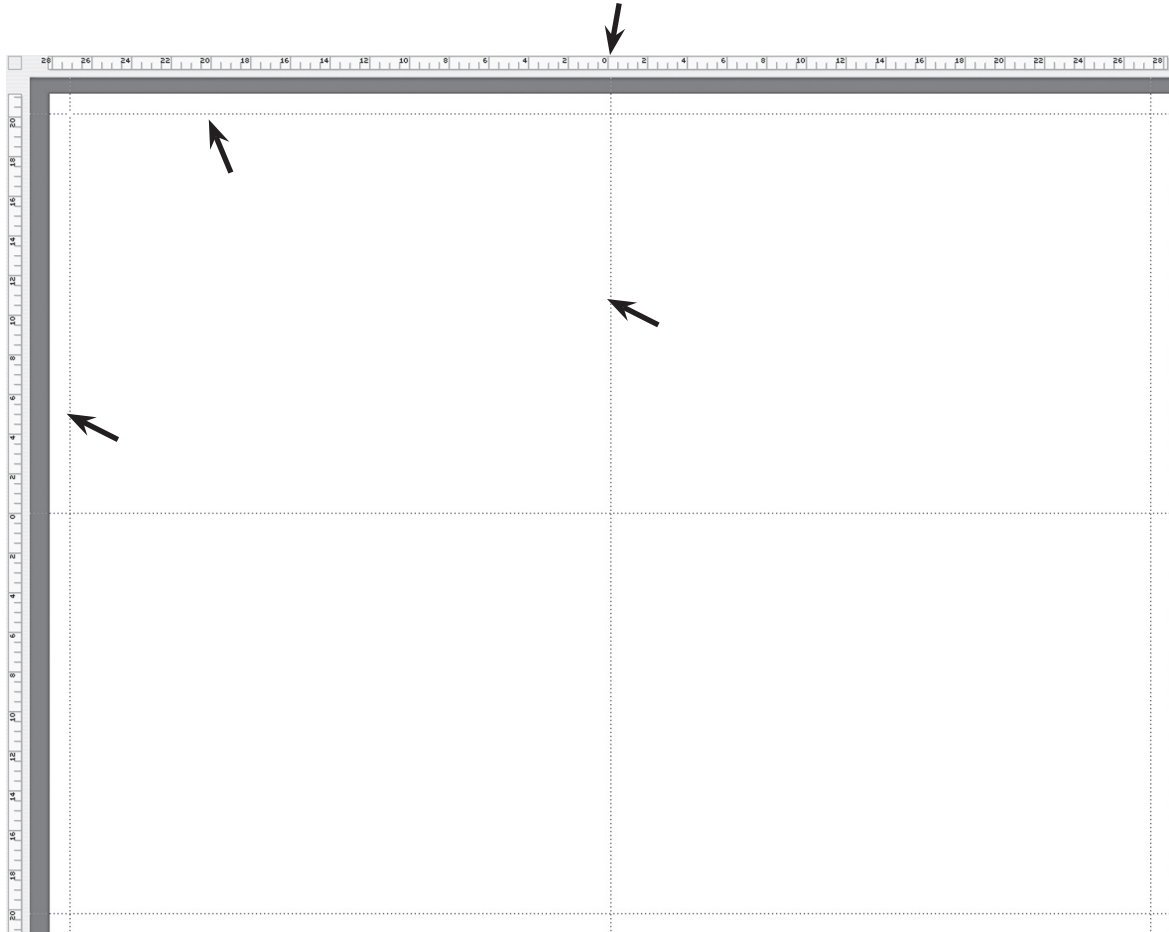
3. After you navigate to your photo and select it, it will appear here.

2. Navigate to your photo

## ***Making and Using Guides***

- Make “Guides” visible:
  - View: Guides
- Make sure Rulers\* are also visible:
  - View: Rulers
- Set Margins using Guides
  - To make more Guides:
    - Click and hold on guideline with mouse pointer, small white box with measurement\* will appear
    - Hold down Ctrl key at the same time as you are holding guide with mouse and drag out another guideline  
**Do not** let go of the Ctrl key until the guide is in place and you are no longer holding down the mouse click!
    - Make and set guidelines 1” in from each side of page
    - Make as may guides as you need, pull them to the edge of the page if there are extras or go back to View: Guides and toggle them off when you don’t want to see them

***\* Note that measurements on the ruler work from the center outward***

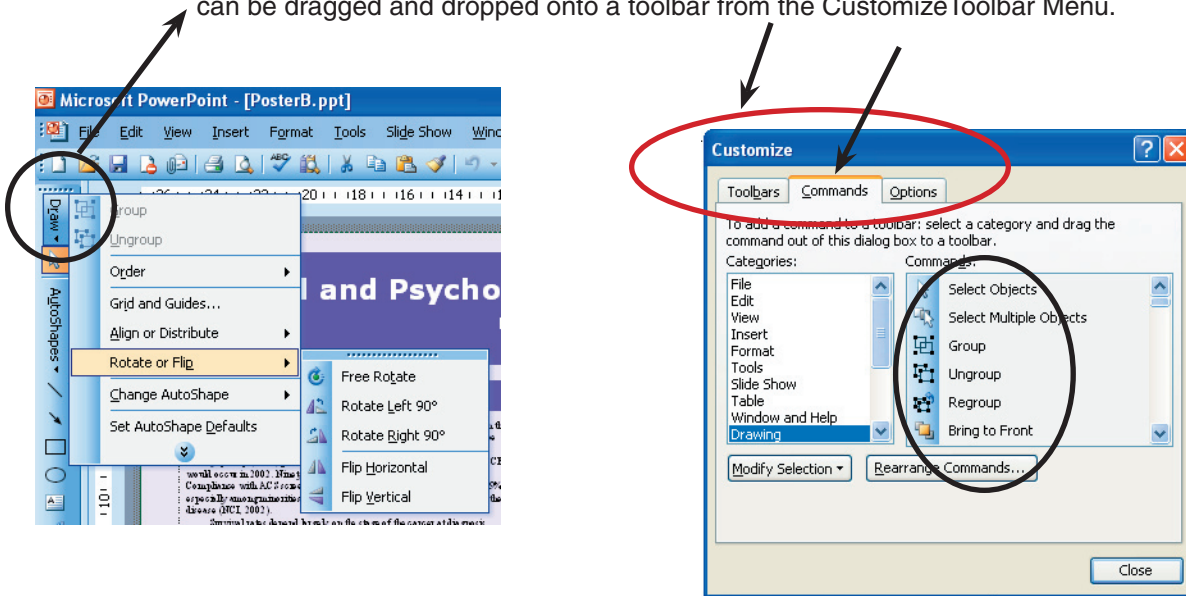


## Toolbars in PowerPoint

Tools for text, drawing and color appear in at least two places for each tool. Some are in the Toolbars as default, others can be added to the Toolbars (View: Toolbars: Customize).

- To View Toolbars:
  - View: Toolbars – make sure the Standard, Formatting and Drawing toolbars are visible (checked); they are the ones you will need most in making a poster
- To Customize Toolbars:
  - View: Toolbars: Customize (at bottom of Toolbar menu): Commands
  - Drag desired tools to Toolbar

One place Tools such as Align, Group and Ungroup, Flip and Rotate reside is under this drop down menu in the Drawing Toolbar. Many of these same tools and others can be dragged and dropped onto a toolbar from the CustomizeToolbar Menu.



Drag tools to toolbar and drop tools on to the Toolbar when black bar appears

## ***Color in Poster Sessions***

- Background Colors
  - Lighter colors are better, or white background:  
Tans, grays, lavenders, light blues, greens and soft yellows, pink
- Text Colors
  - Darker CONTRASTING colors:  
Black, browns, dark blues, greens, purples, white text against a dark shape such as a heading bar works well also
- Use an Accent Color
  - For visual interest and to draw attention to important information
  - Usually a bright color - red, orange, possibly yellow but it does not contrast well with lighter background colors
  - Don't overuse your accent color
- If, when looking at your poster, the colors seems to be vibrating or your eyes can't decide where to stop and read, you probably don't have a good color combination!

***Important note:*** Blues tend to print towards the purple side from PowerPoint, ask for recommendations on "safe" colors if it you really want something to be blue.

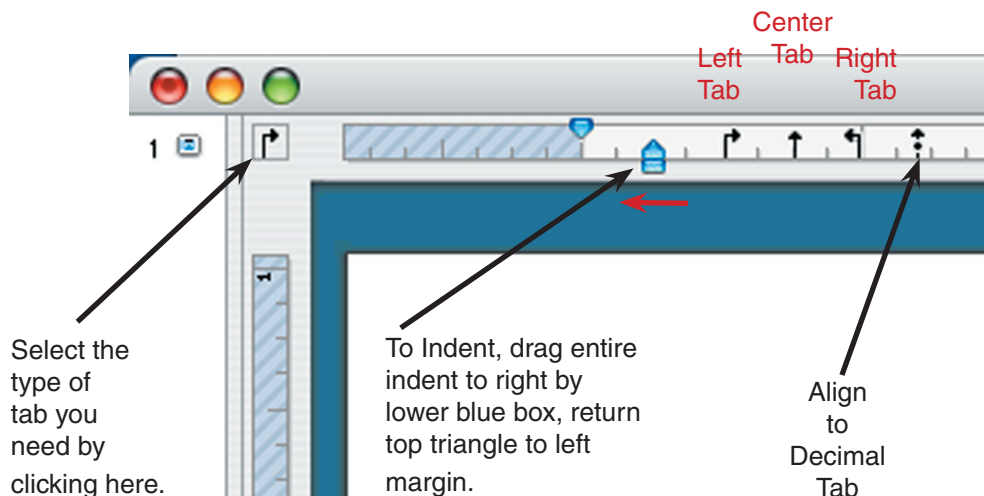
## ***Text in Poster Sessions***

- Fonts
  - Use common, easy to read fonts (one that every printer is likely to have):  
Arial, Times, Helvetica, Verdana, Palatino
  - Save bold, italics, and caps for headings and to emphasize important information
- Sizes
  - Title - 96 pt to 130 pt depending on title length  
All caps, bold OK on titles
  - Headings, Authors, Institution - 36 pt to 60 pt depending on space, all caps OK
  - Body text - minimum 30 pt, 24 may be OK but if you have to go smaller on your text size you may need to reevaluate the amount of information on your poster,  
*Never use all caps for body text except for single words or short phrases*  
Think about using Handouts to give research details, cut down on poster text
- Adding text to poster
  - Select the Text Tool and draw a text box
  - Type directly into PowerPoint when possible
  - Use "**Paste Special**" under Edit if you have to cut and paste, if you just *paste* your text, it will come into PowerPoint as an object that you can't edit
  - Let text wrap in the text box – **DO NOT USE A RETURN AT THE END OF EACH LINE OF TEXT!!**

- Indents
  - Use with bullet and numbering buttons
  - Set up the indent BEFORE you use the Numbering or Bullet buttons (Make text box, type or paste special text, select text and set indent, then use the Bullet or Numbering buttons)
- Tabs
  - Use for indent and spacing needs for which the Indents with bullets or numbering buttons don't work
- Line Spacing – in drop down Format Menu
  - Use returns ONLY the end of each paragraph
  - Use soft returns (shift + return) if you must manually put in a line break
  - Use for 1, 1.5 and double spacing
  - Use for paragraph spacing instead of two returns, gives control of spacing sizes
- Text Boxes
  - Don't use in place of color shapes behind text or to draw boxes!
  - Text boxes should always be set at "No Fill"!
  - Text boxes should not be more than 45" in width, lines breaks will start occurring in the middle of words if text boxes are wider
  - **CLEAN UP UNUSED TEXT BOXES!**
- Color boxes behind text – use the tools in the tool bar to draw the shapes you need, put the text on top of the shapes, align them and group. Don't add background color to text boxes! Color in the text box just adds headaches for you as you try to space text and for the person trying to print the file.



Use these tools to draw any shapes you might need behind text or for simple diagrams



## ***Graphics in Poster Sessions***

Use Graphics whenever possible, adds interest, captures viewers attention, gives information “at a glance”

- Photos and Illustrations
  - 150 dpi at the size they will be on the poster (100%)  
higher dpi does not improve printed quality, higher dpi makes larger files  
lower or “stretched” dpi images can look bitmapped
  - jpegs and PDFs best file types to insert in to PowerPoint, works on both PC and Mac computers
  - Insert: Picture: From File
- Tables
  - Create in PowerPoint, table feature very similar to Word  
Use – Insert: Table
  - Can edit directly in PowerPoint if created in PowerPoint
  - If Table is created in Word use – Insert: Object: Microsoft Word Document:  
Create from File,
  - To edit double click on Table to bring up Word file
- Graphs and charts
  - Can be created in PowerPoint
  - Prefer to create graphs in Excel  
Insert: Object: Microsoft Chart: Create from file  
Double click on graph or chart in PowerPoint to open Excel file to edit
- SPSS, ChemDraw, other graph programs
  - Try to insert as jpeg or PDF files, symbols and formatting can be lost if copy and paste used  
Try paste special?
- Freehand and Illustrator
  - Almost all file types can be copy and pasted, inserted or placed in either software application

### **IMPORTANT NOTE:**

**Do not let any text boxes, lines, shapes, images, or photos (in other words – anything!) sit partially or fully outside the actual poster area in a PowerPoint file. You may have problems scrolling or viewing the poster. If the file is acting oddly don't assume it is corrupt. Set your poster magnification at about 50%, do a “select all” and look for items that may be sitting outside the poster boundaries. Fix that problem and your file should be fine.**

## ***Making A PDF of your Poster for Large Format Printing***

- Why make a PDF?
  - If you make a PDF and proof it, no shifts of information, layout, fonts, symbols, bolds, etc. should occur when printed from PDF (be sure to proof PDF!)
  - This holds true on both Mac and PC platforms
- Making PDFs on PC or Mac computers
  - Adobe Acrobat Distiller (in the ITS Faculty Room) must be used to make a PDF