Sabbatical Showcase

Presentation Ideas & Poster Design

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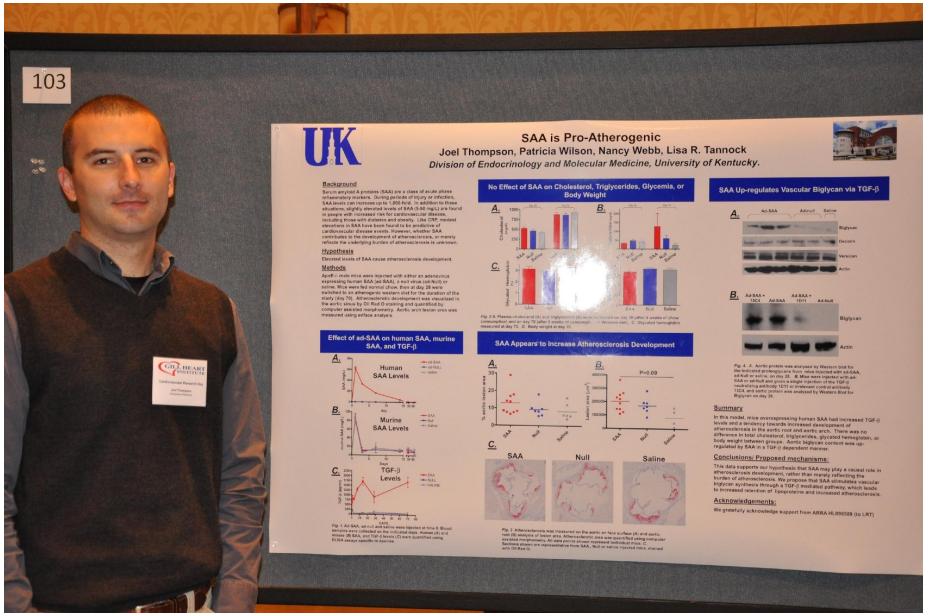
Poster presentations

- Great to present productivity in visual and written form
- Great to generate discussion



Key Information Design Considerations

for poster presentations

Consider the overall “story” or narrative that the poster should convey.

Write in a way that is approachable for a range of people in different subject areas.

Assume that conversation will allow you to elaborate on your ideas; privilege clarity over exhaustive textual coverage.

Sabbatical projects represent a wide range of genres, goals, disciplines, etc. Design the poster around the project rather than fitting the project into a format that won’t serve it.

Convey messages as well as information.

Visual Design

enhancing the message &
communicating key information

Key Visual Design Considerations

there are many considerations but these will get you most of the way to where you need to be

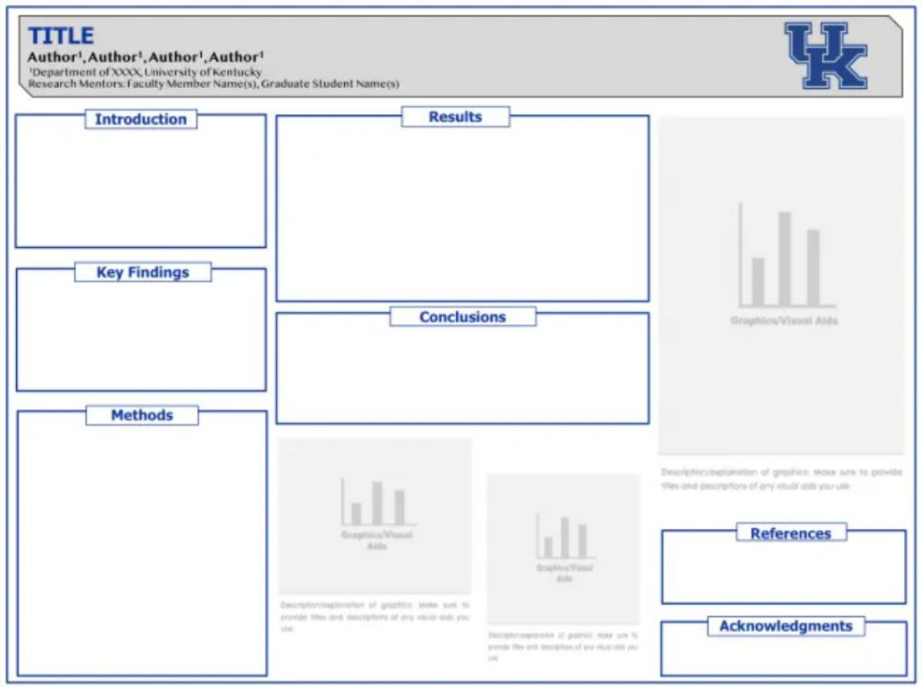
Use a font size that is easily readable.

Use no more than two fonts: one for headers (sans serif) and one for body text (serif or sans serif). If stylizing text with italics, etc., use one style at a time and with a semiotic consistency (i.e., they always “mean” the same thing).

Ensure readable color contrast for text or objects over a background (checker).

Leave at least a little white space to “break up” the layout for visual interpretation. “Chunk” the poster into sections with clear indications of the hierarchy and sequence of information.

Visuals—used intentionally—convey or reinforce messages, narrative, insights, and takeaways.



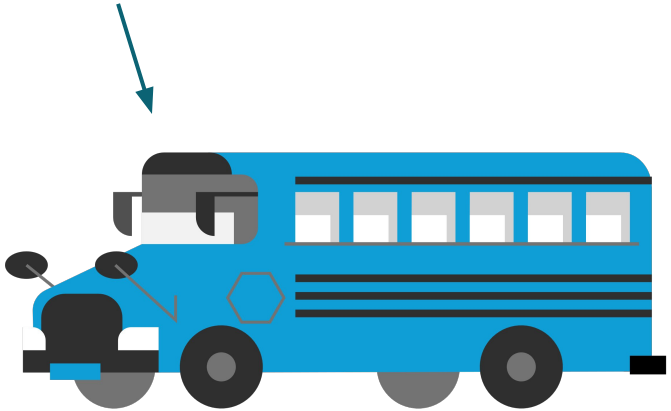
Sections of the poster are clearly labeled, moderately sized, and follow a column-like design (usually three) to make the text, narrative, data, etc., easier to read and understand. The most important aspects for conversation—the results and conclusions—are featured in a prominent way (in this case, the top-middle in the widest column).

While these examples assume empirical and mostly finished research, the design principle can be applied to work that is in-progress and spans a wide methodological range. Generally speaking, you can introduce the sabbatical project, provide relevant background information, indicate your approach or methods, and showcase the results of your work.

CATCHY TITLE HERE

Author name, department, College

Eye catching image can be useful



The wheels on the bus
go round and round,
Round and round,
round and round.

The wheels on the bus
go round and round,
All day long.

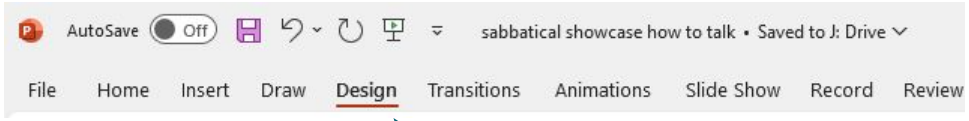
The wipers on the bus go
swish, swish, swish ...

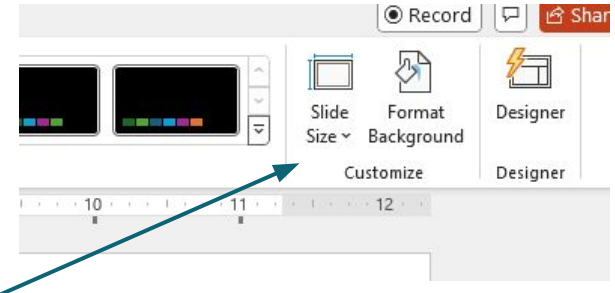
The horn on the bus goes
beep! beep! beep! ...

The people on the bus go
chat, chat, chat ...

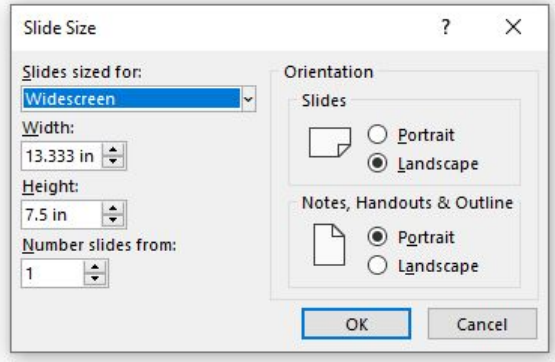
Story line or text

Setting the Size in PowerPoint



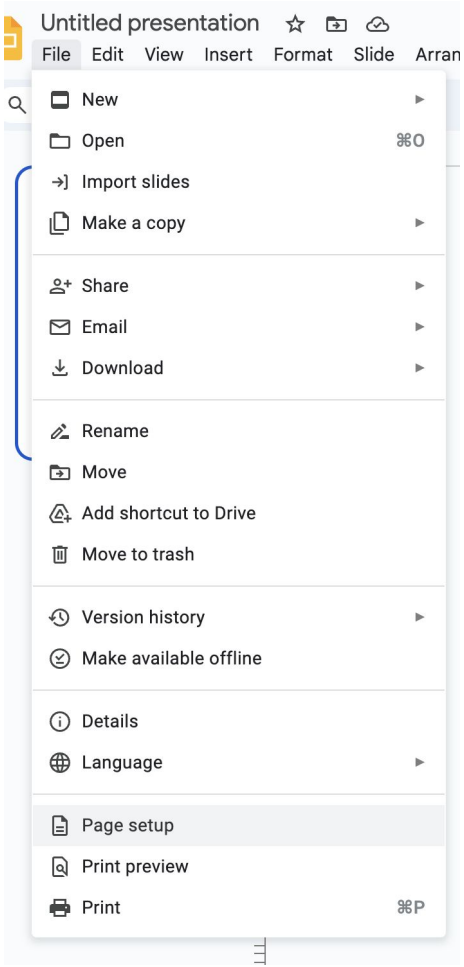


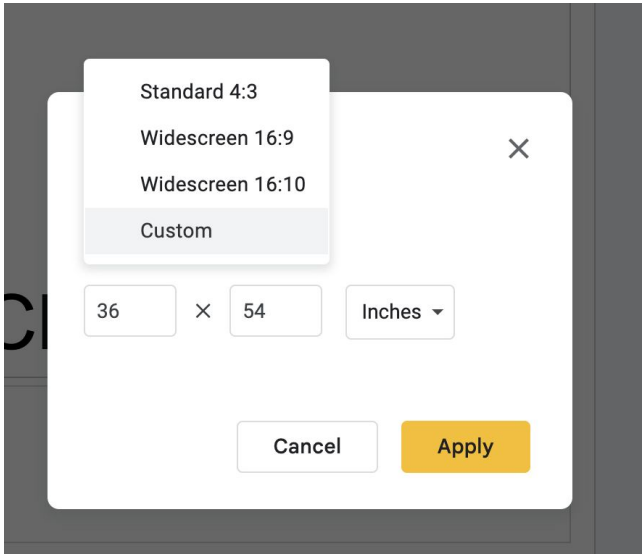
- Click on “Design” across the top
- Then click on “slide size” on the upper right corner
- Click on “Custom slide size”
- In the pop up window enter the height and width as appropriate
- Standard dimensions are 24-36 inches high x 36-54 inches wide (based on poster printer specs)



Setting the Size in Google Slides

- Go File > Page Setup
- Select “Custom Size” in the drop down
- Type in the size by inches
- Click “Apply”





Resources

for visual design: ideas, techniques, tools, etc.

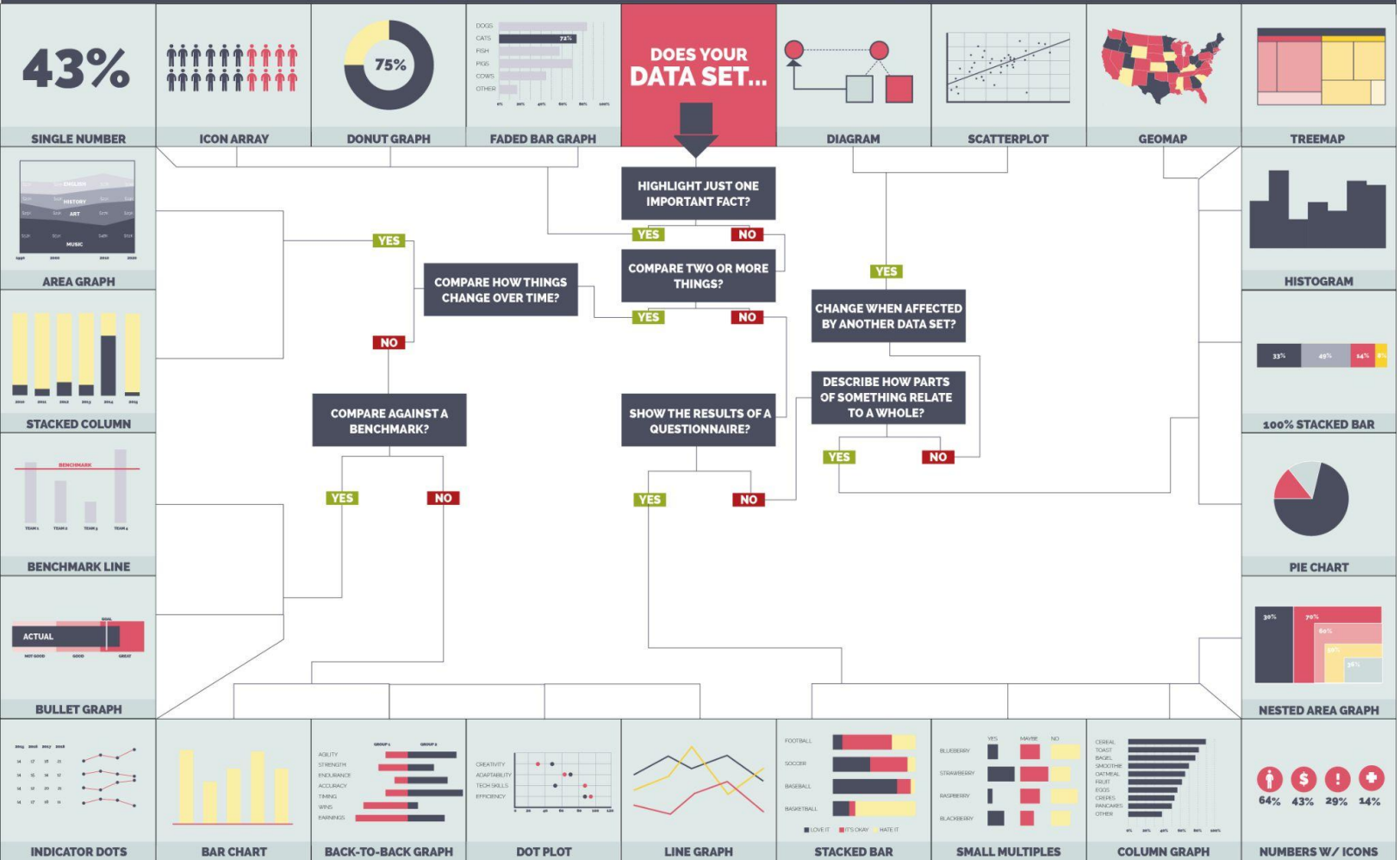
Rules of Document Design

the top 50 most important

Designed by Curtis Newbold | TheVisualCommunicationGuy.com | 2014

[image](#)
[full text](#)

Curtis Newbold's 50 rules of document design offer inspiration and techniques for enhancing the communication efficacy and the design appeal of your poster. It's not about following every rule; it's about looking for inspiration in one or two areas that might enhance your poster.

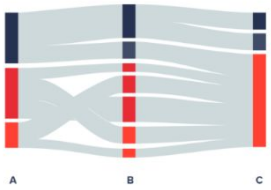


[image]

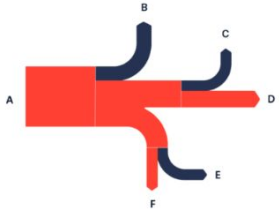
If you have data of any kind that you want to convey in your poster, choosing a form that best suits that data and the message you want to convey about it is an important decision. This slide and the next offer options and ideas for data visualization.

The DataViz Project (website)

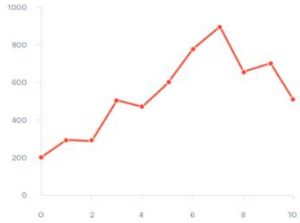
Alluvial Diagram



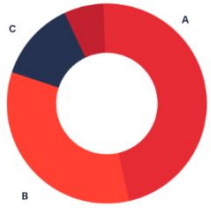
Sankey Diagram



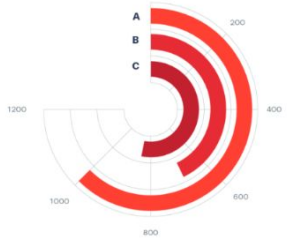
Line Graph



Donut Chart

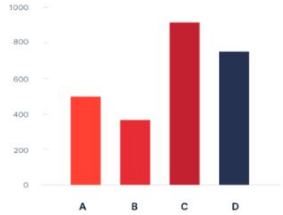


Radial Bar Chart

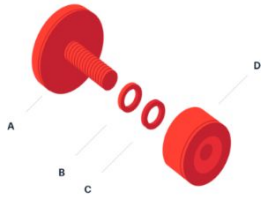


Polar Area Chart

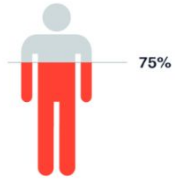
Bar Chart (Vertical)



Exploded View Drawing



Pictorial Percentage Chart

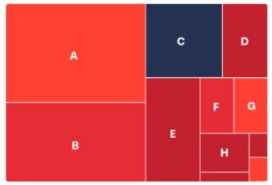


Radial Histogram

Heat Map

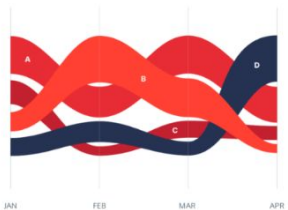
Sunburst Diagram

Treemap



Flow Map

Sorted Stream Graph



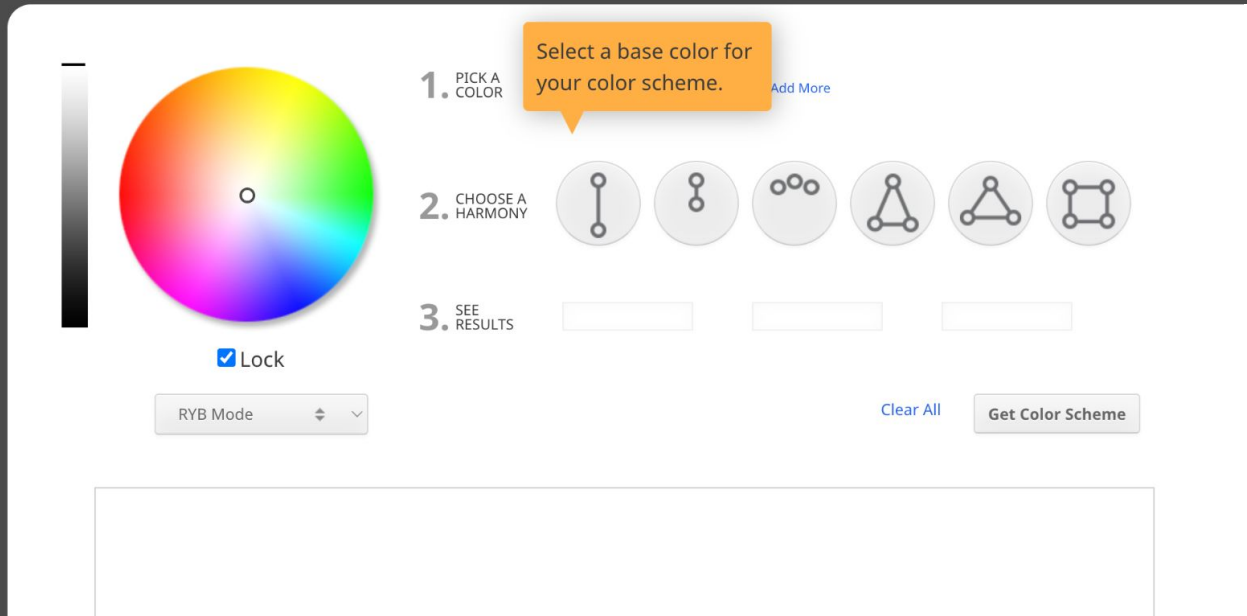
Iconography can enhance the document design and readability, but it also can detract from the experience if the icons seem unnecessary, irrelevant, low quality, or purely decorative. Use them sparingly to convey meaning in a consistent way.

The Noun Project website (Creative Commons use icons, 7 million+)

The Sessions College Color Calculator

Whether you're designing a logo or painting a house, choosing colors can be frustrating. Where do you start? Which colors work together, and why? How can you creatively explore different moods or directions?

Use the free **Color Calculator** to explore creative color options for your design project. Simply pick your base color(s), choose a color harmony, tweak/explore as needed, and see results. You'll get a report of the hex, RGB, and CMYK color values for your project and see your colors applied to design samples. Share or print, rinse and repeat.



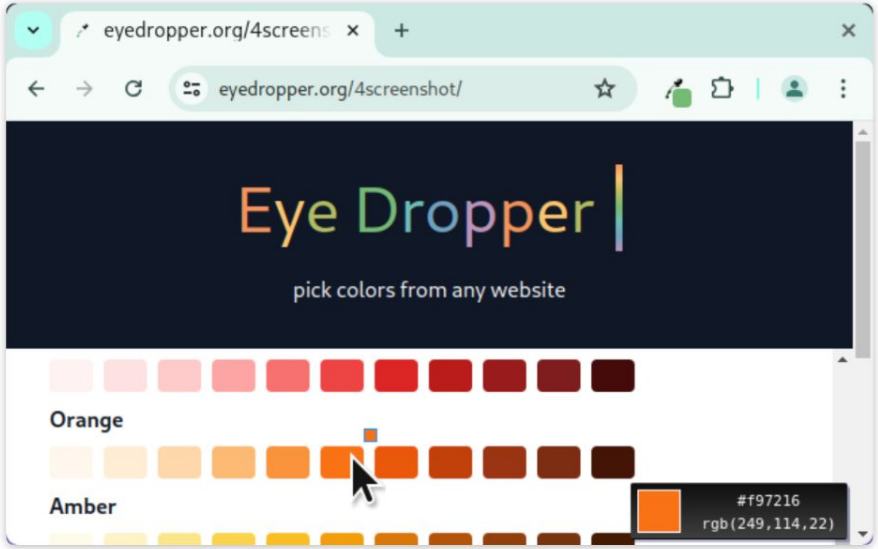
The color calculator allows you to input any hex code or select a color (though the latter is less precise) and discover colors that complement the design in six different schemes (see buttons to the left).

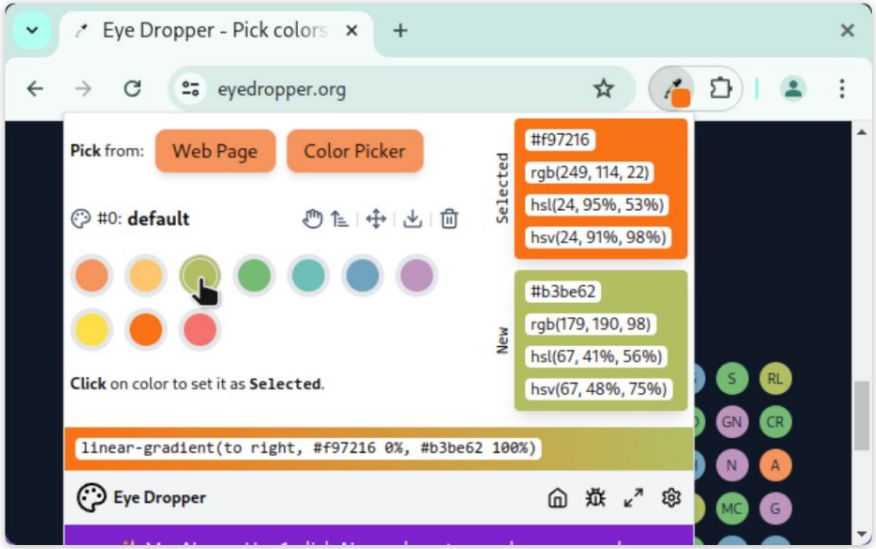
Eye Dropper

eyedropper.org Featured 4.3 ★ (3K ratings)

Extension Developer Tools 1,000,000 users

[The Chrome Eye Dropper](#) tool lets you “grab” the hex code for any color on a webpage. You can then use the hex code in any app or tool, e.g., Google Slides, the Sessions color wheel calculator.





Using GenAI for visuals and other design elements

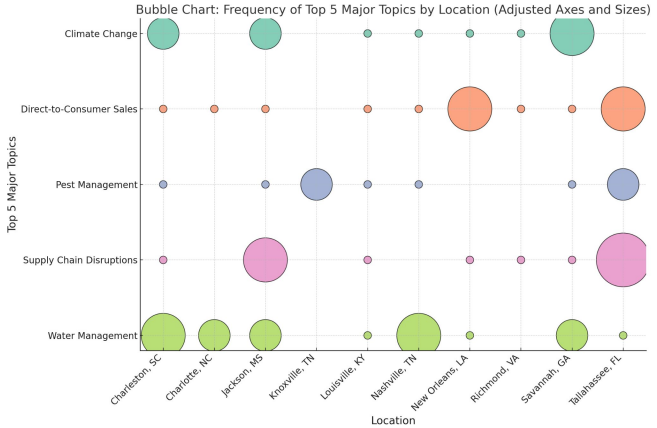
If you want to experiment with GenAI tools to produce visual design elements, keep in mind that the tools may work well or not depending on what you're asking for and what you're prompting.

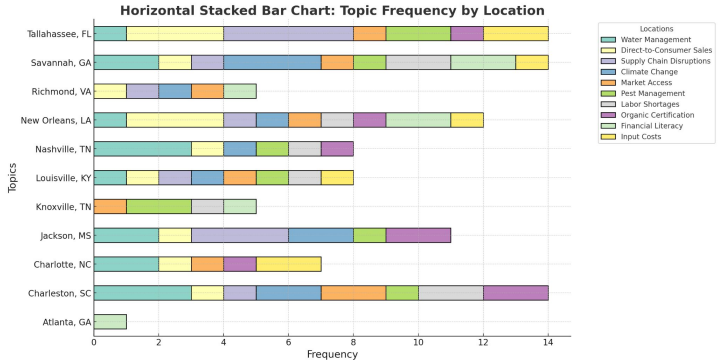
GenAI, especially multimedia, is still a contested technology for issues of IP, copyright, etc., in the methods for training the models, and the visual output can be problematic, e.g. biased, inappropriate, low quality, inaccurate, error-prone, etc.

For example, here is something I generated with GPT-4o. It took three iterations with the AI. And, notice that the background is not white, so I would still have to edit this image further to use it on a poster.

Using GenAI for visuals and other design elements

If you want to experiment with GenAI tools to produce data visualizations, keep in mind that you might need to go back and forth with different AI tools and even work in other software if the output isn't very satisfactory. If you have protected or confidential data be aware that uploading data to AI tools is a form of sharing data.

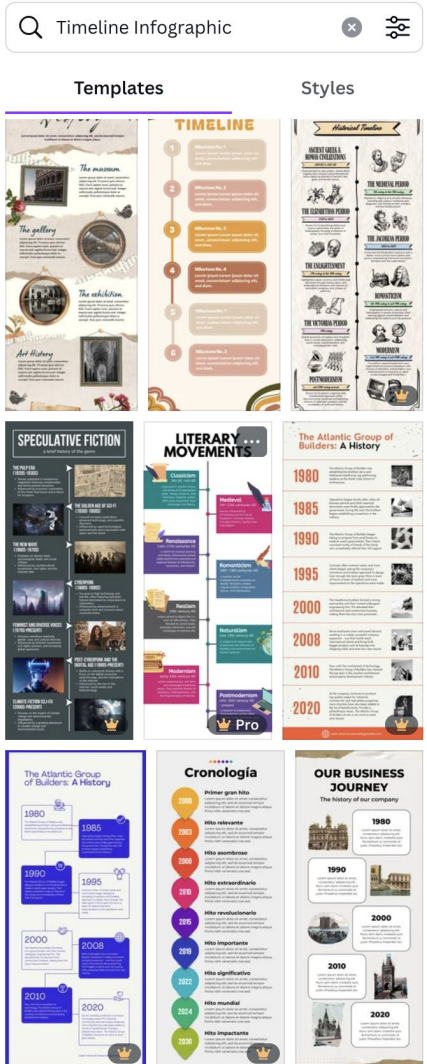


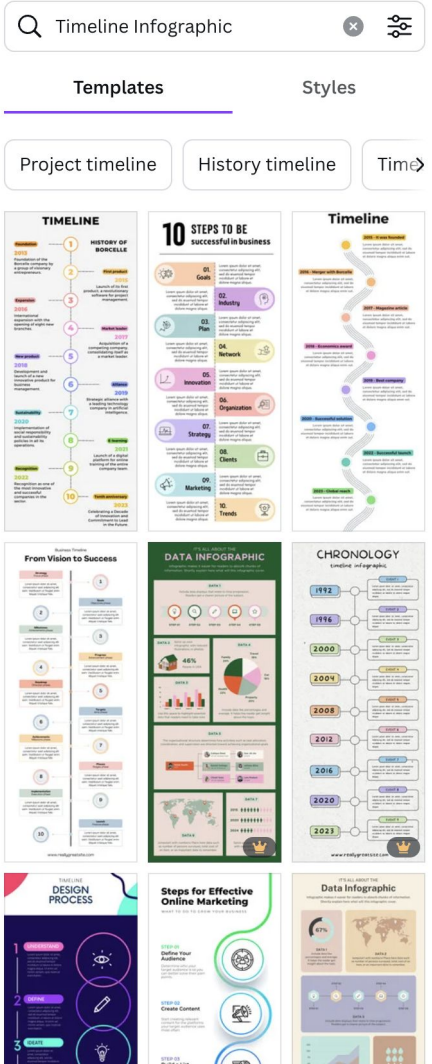


For example, here is something I generated with GPT-4o based on a synthetic dataset of interview metadata that I also generated with GPT-4o. Neither option is good and took me about 30 minutes while multitasking on other things. These were actually not the final versions but the "least bad" visualizations that GPT-4o produced during the interaction. Here is the conversation (without images).

Make Timelines

[with Canva]





Tips

- Font should be easily readable if you print to a normal sheet of paper (8 x 10)
- Use large, bold font
- Images useful to draw attention

- The goal is initiate conversation, does not need to be stand alone

Printing your Poster

- https://libraries.uky.edu/spaces-technology/find-equipment/printing-scanning
- https://www.uky.edu/dsc/