

# Creating a Poster Presentation using PowerPoint

## Course Description:

This course is designed to assist you in creating eye-catching effective posters for presentation of research findings at scientific conferences. You will be able to create a poster from scratch, learning how to: choose and create backgrounds; create a title; create and insert text, and learn appropriate font styles and sizes; insert and manipulate photos, graphs and tables; align and balance all components of the poster; create levels in your poster for quick and easy previewing; and learn to use colour, balance and shapes to add a final touch to your poster. No previous experience with PowerPoint is needed.

## Course Outline:

- ❑ Poster setup
  - Size
  - Background
- ❑ Titles
  - Changing colours/style
  - Font Sizing
- ❑ Text
  - Importing text from word files
  - Fonts and font sizes
  - Sizing text and boxes
- ❑ Graphics
  - Inserting graphic files
    - tif vs jpg files
    - Resizing
    - Using the picture toolbar
- ❑ Chart and Graphs
  - Creating in PowerPoint (basic)
  - Importing from Excel/other graphics software
- ❑ Tables
  - Creating in PowerPoint (basic)
  - Importing
- ❑ Aligning and balancing graphics and text
- ❑ Using colour/balance/shapes/graphics to highlight

## **Poster Sessions:**

Posters need to be created and designed in a manner to best communicate your message in a visual, graphic manner, so the viewer can quickly discern your message and make a determination whether she/he needs to read more or move on to the next poster. It is critical that your poster is designed to communicate quickly and clearly. This course will incorporate tips to assist you in doing just that.

## **Why PowerPoint:**

PowerPoint is our software of choice in creating posters for the following reasons:

1. Most people have used PowerPoint to create presentations
2. PowerPoint is a very user friendly program
3. Most people have access to PowerPoint
4. PowerPoint is readily compatible with other Microsoft programs such as Word, excel, and Access
5. PowerPoint presentations (already created) can be quickly adapted to a poster

## **Creating a Poster in PowerPoint:**

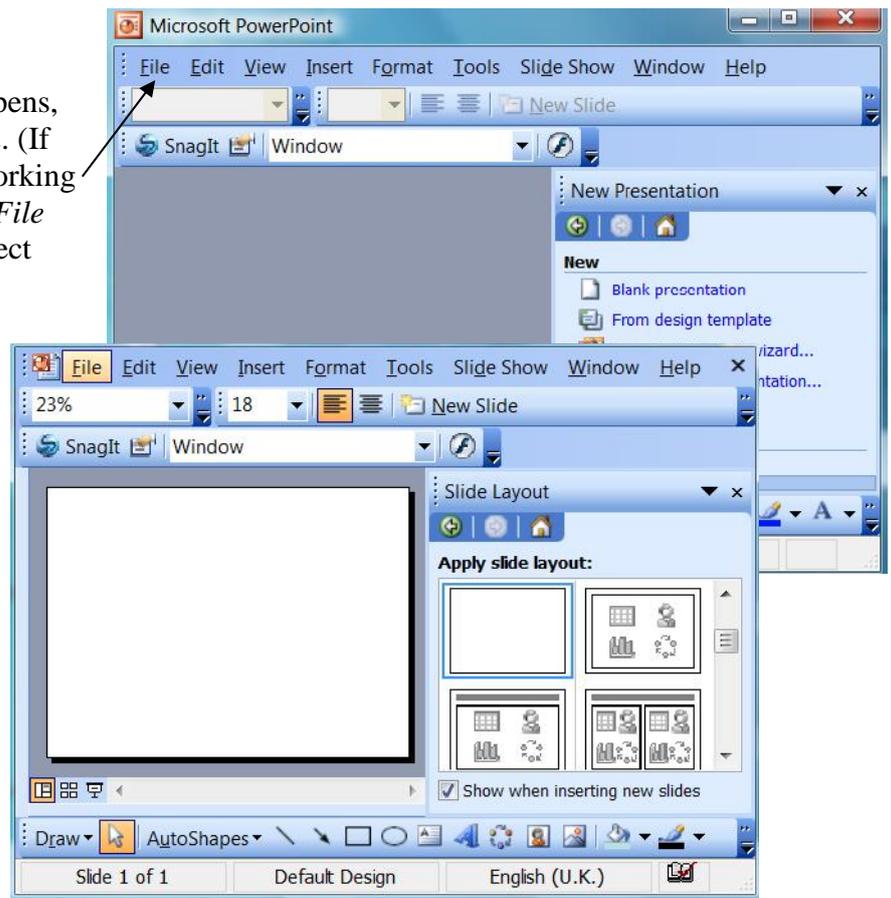
### **Materials needed:**

- **Text:** Your text can be typed in a word processing program such as Word. Text might include the following: Title, Authors, Abstract, Introduction, Methods, Data Collection, Results, Conclusions, References, Acknowledgements, Further Study
- **Graphics;** Charts, graphs, logos, pictures, drawings. Graphics can be created in many different programs and imported into PowerPoint.
- **Poster Guidelines from the Conference:** Size limitations, Format (Portrait or Landscape), title placement and Font size, Poster # placement (left or right corner?), etc.

## Using PowerPoint:

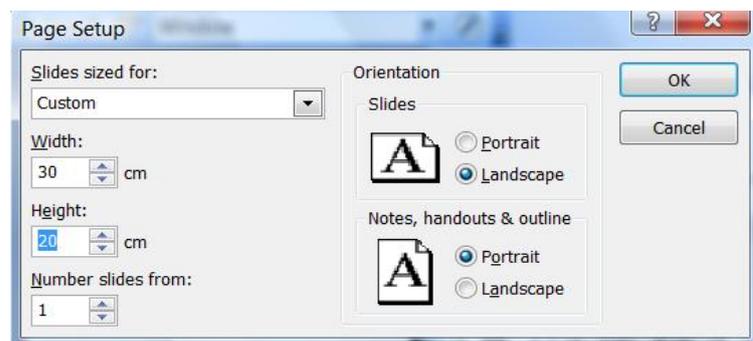
### Creating a NEW poster:

- 1) When PowerPoint first opens, select *Blank Presentation*. (If you have already been working in PowerPoint, go to the *File* menu, click *New*, and select *Blank Presentation*).
- 2) Select the blank layout. Blank is the preference of choice for posters because we will later create our own background texture and colour, and will insert our own title and text... so we don't need a template at this point.



### Sizing the Poster:

- 1) Under the *File* menu, choose *Page setup*
- 2) In the *Slides Sized for* box, select *Custom*
- 3) Type in the width and height of the poster (usually in inches, although some default to cm). The maximum width and height

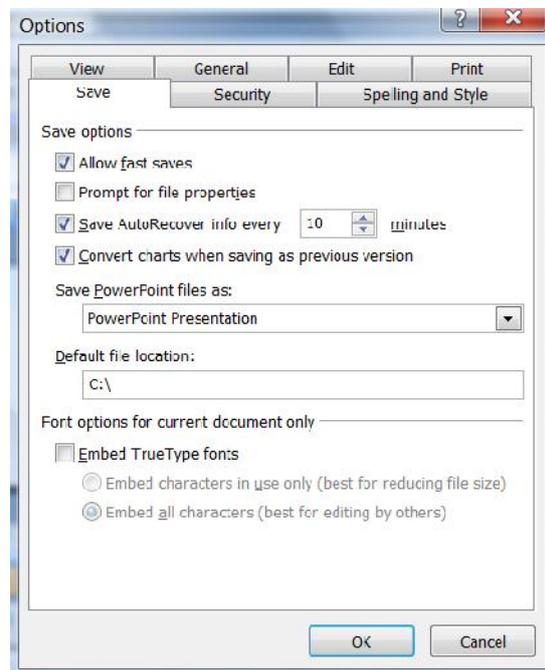


PowerPoint can go is 54 inches (some will allow you to type in 56" ... do not go above 54). If your poster is wider or higher than 54", create the poster in a proportional dimension smaller than 54".... i.e. If you need a poster 72" x 48", then enter 1/2 the size... 36" and 24" and inform your printer that it needs to be scaled up to 72" x 48".

## Saving your Poster:

- 1) Save your poster soon and often!!! To save your poster go to *File Menu*, then click SAVE and save the poster in a folder where you can easily remember its location.
- 2) To set the PowerPoint to save automatically go to the Tool Menu and choose options. Click *Allow fast saves* which will allow the latest changes to be added to your program when you save, rather than resaving the entire program each time you save. Also, click the *Save AutoRecover info every \_\_\_ minutes*. Set the minutes for 10-15 minutes.

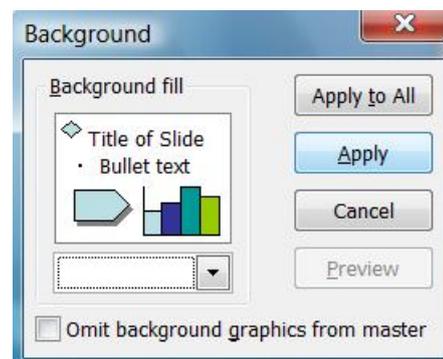
*(Warning: when the program is AutoRecovery saving, you will be slowed down or stopped in your ability to create on the poster until the AutoRecovery save is complete)*

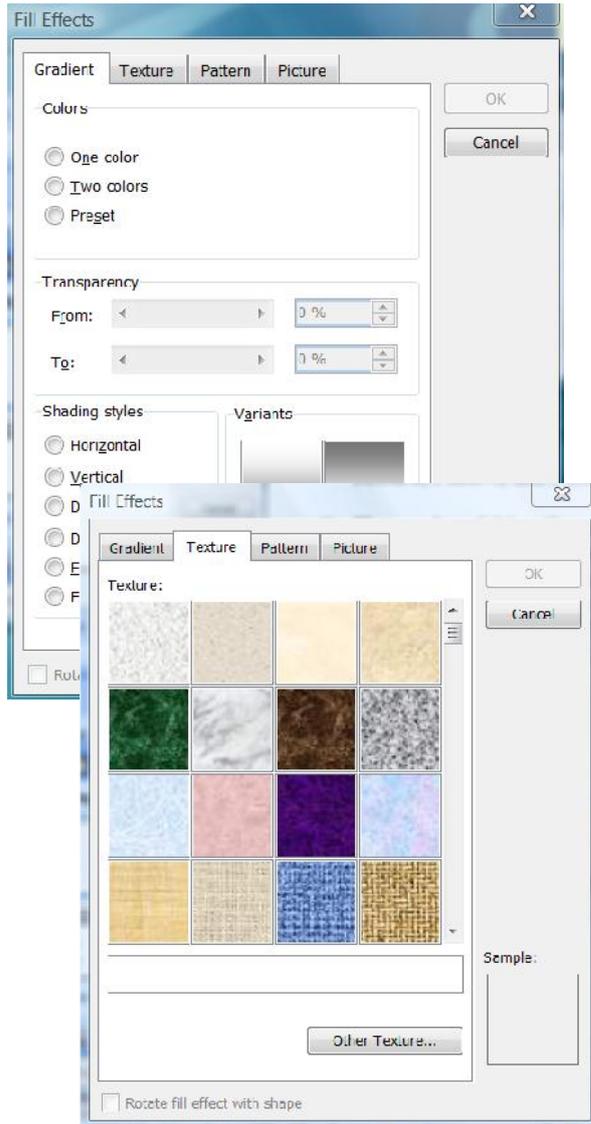


## Poster Backgrounds:

One of the great features of PowerPoint is its option for backgrounds. A couple of quick tips... the background should not distract from the poster content. Therefore the colours should be soft... and if textured should be fitting with the poster. Gradient colours should be light to lighter or dark to darker... not light to dark (the text cannot change colour so light text is lost in the light background or vice versa)

- 1) To place a background on your poster, go to the *Format Menu*, and select *Background*. The Background menu to the right will appear on your screen. Below the "graph" area there is a white bar with an arrow to the right. Select the arrow for the menu, then select *Fill Effects*.





- 2) The *Fill Effects* window, to the left, offers four folders. *Gradient*, *Texture*, *Pattern*, and *Picture*.
- 3) The *gradient* folder allows you to choose one, two, or a preset arrangement of colours. As mentioned above, you will want to be careful to choose colours which are compatible and colours which are “light to lighter” or “dark to darker”
- 4) The *Texture* folder is MOST often the background of choice, with lighter earthy colours being most popular. 24 textures are provided with PowerPoint and additional textures can be found on websites and added in by clicking *Other Textures*. Select the texture you like, then hit *APPLY* in the background window.

### Poster Titles:

The poster title is the first level of communication with the viewer... it should clearly communicate the essence of your poster. It should be readable from 15 feet away, and should be bold.

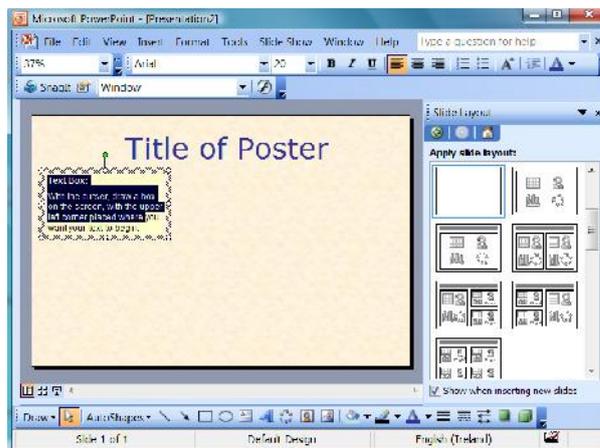
## Text for Posters:

Text can be typed directly into the poster, or it can be pasted in from a word processing document.



## Text Using PowerPoint:

- 1) Click the Text Box on the Draw Menu, or go to the Insert Menu and select Text Box.



- 2) With the cursor, draw a box on the screen, with the upper left corner placed where you want your text to begin. The box has “handlebars” on it to allow you to adjust the size and shape of the box. Begin typing your text. After typing a line or two, grab the handlebar on the right and bring it in to make your textbox width you desire.

- 3) Text can be quickly adjusted using the *Formatting* toolbar below.



 To quickly adjust the font size, use the large “A”, little “A” buttons.

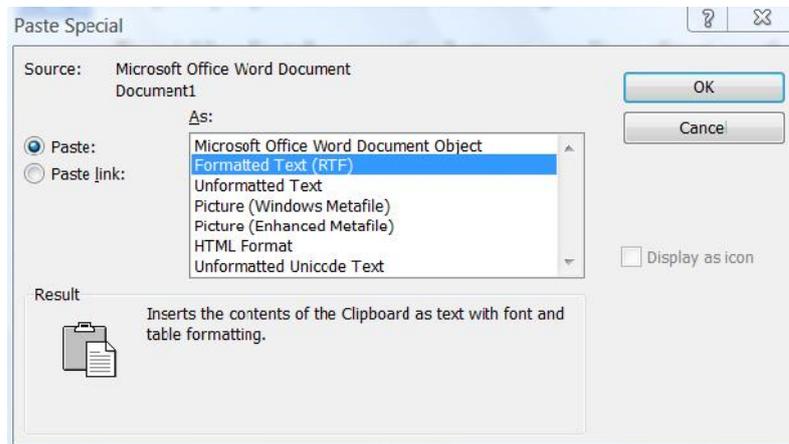
 To quickly adjust the separation between your lines of text, use the Increase and Decrease Paragraph Spacing buttons.

 Justification of the text can be quickly adjusted using these buttons. Left justified, centred, right justified and aligned.

- 4) To make another textbox with the same font characteristics, click the hatched edge of the box, then go to the *Edit Menu*, and select duplicate. The textbox will duplicate. Highlight the text, delete, and begin typing new text.... All font sizes, etc. will be the same as the original text box.

## Inserting Text from Another Program:

Do NOT use a simple cut and paste technique when inserting text from another program into your poster. Cut and Paste will create text boxes identical to the text in your program, but does not give you the option to manipulate and change the text... in other words using the following steps will give you much more flexibility and freedom.



- 1) Select the text in another program, and copy (Ctrl+C)
- 2) In PowerPoint, go to the *Edit Menu*, and select *Paste Special*. Select *Formatted Text*. Then click “OK”.
- 3) The text will enter as a text box. Work with the text in the same manner as discussed above for text created in PowerPoint.

## Changing the font:

- 1) Select the text you want to change
- 2) Click the right mouse button and select *Font* and click a font name in the font box. Alternatively, in the Formatting toolbar, click a font name in the Font Box.

## Changing the size of text:

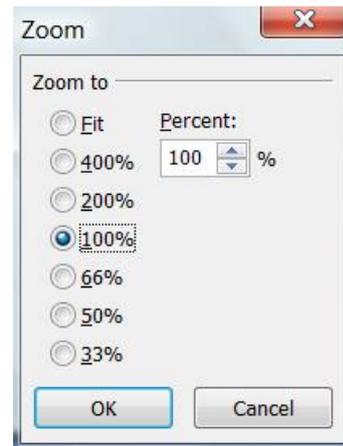
- 1) Select the text you want to change
- 2) Click the right mouse button and select *Font* and click a font size in the font box. Alternatively, in the formatting toolbar, click a new size in the font size box.

## Changing the colour of text:

- 1) Select the text you want to make a different colour
- 2) Click the right mouse button and select *Font* and click a font colour in the font box. Alternatively, to apply the colour most recently applied to text, click *Font Colour* in the drawing toolbar at the bottom of the page. To apply a different colour, click the arrow on the right of the *Font Colour* button, select the colour you want, and then click the button.

## Viewing the text to see what it will look like on your poster:

The upper right hand corner of your PowerPoint screen has a “zoom” feature. It is best to work on your poster in the “fit” mode, but when you wish to see proper sizing, select 100%. What you see on the screen will be what you see on the poster. (remember: if you are making your poster proportionally smaller i.e. ½ the size and asking the printer to double it, you need to double the zoom as well... so for a 48 x 72 poster created at 24 x 36, you need to select 200% to see the actual size!)



## Graphics:

Graphics are central to your poster. Remember, a picture is worth a thousand words. Choose graphics (graphs, charts, photos, drawings) which will allow you to reduce your text to a minimum.

## Insert and edit a picture:

DO NOT import jpg files into the poster. JPG files are great files for compressing images, but the methods of compressing them makes them very questionable for printing. They look OK on screen, but they often will not print, or will only print partially. We recommend that you use TIF files.

## Insert an imported picture:

- 1) In the Slide view, select the slide you wish to add the picture to
- 2) From the Insert menu button, point to Picture, and then click From File
- 3) Locate the folder that contains the picture you want to insert
- 4) Double-click the file or click Insert

## Graphics File Types PowerPoint can Import:

You can insert many popular graphics file formats into your poster, either directly or with the use of separate graphics filters. You don't need a separate filter to insert the following file formats:

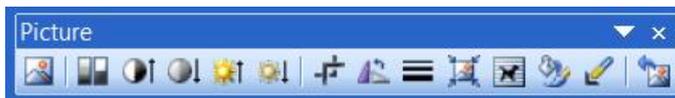
- Enhanced Metafile (.emf)
- Joint Photographic Experts group (.jpg) **NOTE: DO NOT USE**
- Portable Network graphics (.png)
- Windows Bitmap (.bmp, .rle, .dib)
- Windows Metafile (.wmf) graphics
- Tagged Image File Format (.tif)

However, all other file formats in the list that follows do require a separate filter. If you didn't install the filter you need when you installed PowerPoint, you can rerun Setup and add the filter.

## Edit a picture:

When you select a picture, the Picture toolbar appears with tools you can use to change the brightness or contrast of the picture or to crop, re-colour, or add a border to it.

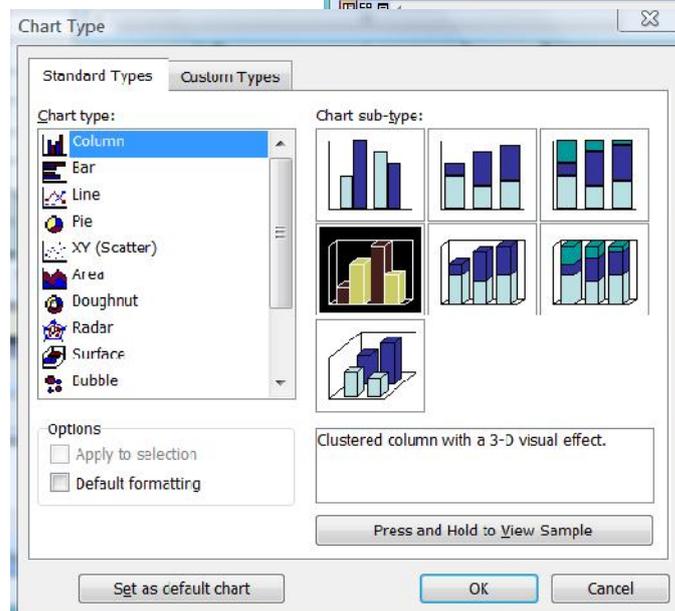
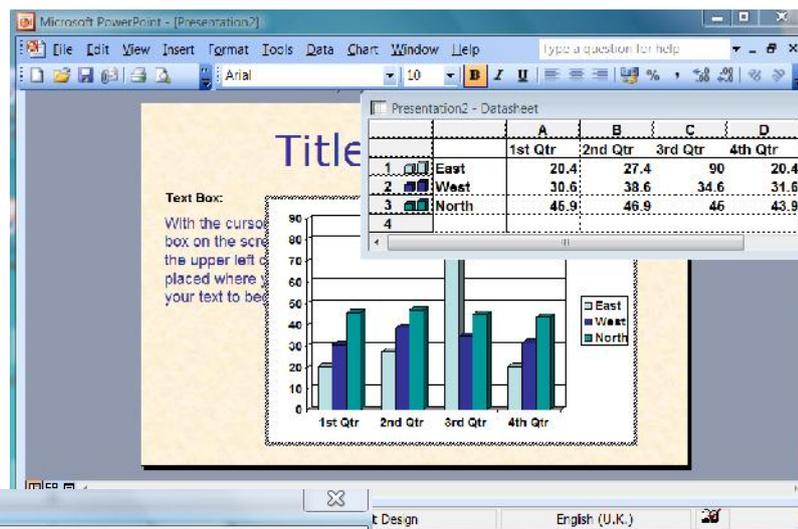
- 1) Select the picture you want to edit
- 2) On the Picture toolbar, select the options you want



## Charts and Graphs:

When you create a chart by going to the *Insert Menu* and then clicking *Insert Chart* PowerPoint goes to a program called Microsoft Graph which displays a chart and an associated datasheet. The datasheet provides sample information that shows where to type your own row and column labels data.

You can select the kind of chart you want (pie, bar, line combination) by going to the *Chart menu* and selecting *Chart Type*. Follow through to select the type of chart you wish to create and other options provided.



After you create a chart, you can enter your own data on the datasheet, import data from a text file, import a Microsoft Excel worksheet or chart, or copy data from another program. *Note: PowerPoint also comes with a program that creates organisation charts.*

### To insert a chart or graph:

- 1) Copy the chart/graph from the program you used.
- 2) In PowerPoint, in the *Edit Menu*, select *Paste Special*, then select *Picture (Enhanced Metafile)*. This imports the file in as a graphic file. It cannot be manipulated or change because it is not linked to the original. If you just *Paste* in chart/graph into PowerPoint, you can double click it and it will allow you to change data in the chart /graph, BUT when printed, the text tends to move around and the chart may change appearance. A graphic file is much better for printing purpose.

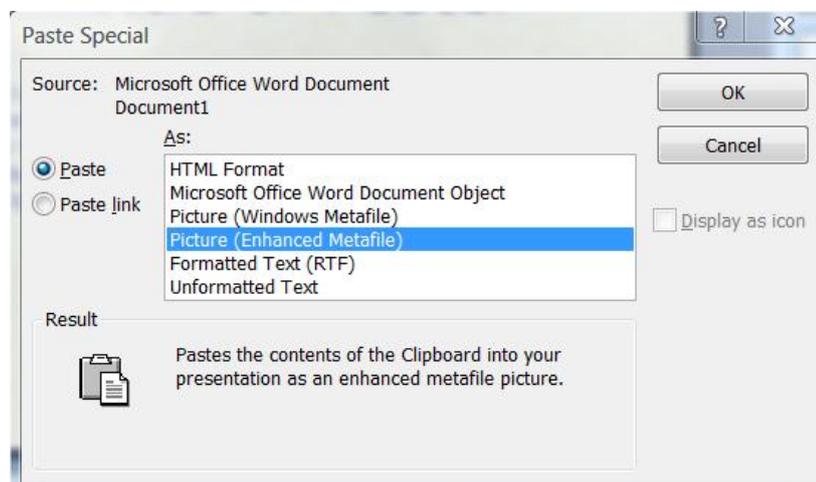
### Tables:

You can use Word, Microsoft Excel, or Microsoft Access to create a table. Microsoft Excel and Word can automatically format the table for you.

- For a table you can easily include in a PowerPoint poster, use Word.
- For a table that includes complex graphics formatting (such as bulleted lists, custom tabs, numbering, hanging indents, individual cell formatting, and cells split diagonally) use Word.
- For a table that includes complex calculations, statistical analyses, or chart, use Microsoft Excel.
- For a powerful sorting and search capabilities, use Microsoft Excel.

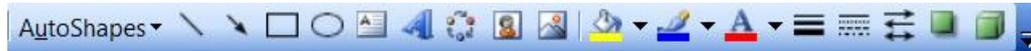
### To insert a table:

- 1) Copy the table from the program you used
- 2) In PowerPoint, in the *Edit Menu*, select *Paste Special*, then Select *Picture (Enhanced Metafile)*. This imports the file in as a graphic file. It cannot be manipulated or changed because it is not linked to the original. If you just paste in table into PowerPoint, you can double click it and it will allow you to change data in the table, BUT when printed, we find that text tends to move around and the tables may change appearance. A graphic file is much better for printing purposes.



## AutoShapes:

PowerPoint comes with a set of ready-made shapes you can use in your posters. The shapes can be resized, rotated, flipped, coloured, and combined with other shapes to make more complex shapes. The AutoShapes menu on the Drawing toolbar contains several categories of shapes, including lines, connectors, basic shapes, flowchart elements, stars and banners, and callouts.



You can add text to AutoShapes by just clicking in the shape and typing. Text you add becomes part of the shape; if you rotate or flip the shape, the text rotates and flips with it. Many have an adjustment handle (a yellow diamond) you can use to change a special aspect of a shape.

### Add a line:

- 1) Click AutoShapes in the Drawing toolbar, point to Lines, and click the line style you want.
- 2) Drag to draw the line. To constrain the line to draw at 15-degree angles from the first end point, hold down SHIFT as you drag. To lengthen the line in opposite directions from the right end point, hold down CTRL as you drag.

### Change the colour of a line or border:

- 1) Select the object you want to change
- 2) On the Drawing toolbar, click the arrow next to Line Colour. Or right mouse click and select *Format AutoShapes*

### Change the style of a line or border:

- 1) Select the line or border you want to change
- 2) On the Drawing toolbar, click *Line Style*
- 3) Click the style you want; or click *More Lines*, and then click a *style*

### Add or change a fill:

You can fill objects with solid or gradient (shaded) colours, a pattern, a texture, or a picture. Any time you fill an object, the new fill replaces the old one. If you change an object's fill, you can easily change it back to its default.

### Aligning images on your poster:

There are several ways to align objects. You can align objects relative to other objects and can also distribute them evenly (equal distances from each other) horizontally or vertically.

**Align objects:**

- 1) Select the objects you want to align... this may include text boxes, graphics, imported pictures, etc.
- 2) On the Drawing toolbar, click *Draw*, select *Align* or *Distribute*, and then click any one of the alignment options.

**Saving your poster:**

Save your final poster to a separate file and make sure you make a backup on another file.

- 1) On the *File* menu, click *Save As*
- 2) In the *File name box*, enter a name for the poster
- 3) Click *Save*