

# Accessible Presentation Tips

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EMDRIA™ is committed to ensuring that all attendees can learn, engage, and participate fully. Use this checklist to create accessible, inclusive presentations that support a wide range of learning needs. These tips support in-person, remote, and OnDemand learning.

## 1. Presentation Basics

Using multiple learning supports—visuals, clear audio, examples, and interaction—helps attendees better understand and apply key concepts. Remember, your slides will be shared with attendees. This lets people listen without trying to write down everything you say.

**Important! No promotional content.** Your slides and spoken content cannot include advertising or promotion for your business or products.

### Presenter checklist

- ☐ I use visuals and examples to support my main points (not just text)
- ☐ I speak at a clear, measured pace and ensure audio quality is strong
- ☐ I use concrete examples and stories to illustrate key points
- ☐ I avoid promotional or commercial content in slides or narration
- ☐ I interact with the audience or ask reflection questions

## 2. Slide Design Tips (Use the EMDRIA Templates!)

Our PowerPoint and Canva templates are built with accessibility in mind. As you add your content, follow these best practices:

### Presenter checklist

- ☐ My text is 22-point or larger
- ☐ I use high color contrast (such as dark text on light background)
- ☐ I avoid placing text directly on top of images
- ☐ I keep slides uncluttered (one idea per slide when possible)
- ☐ My slides summarize my talk. They do not display everything I intend to say

## 3. Choosing and Describing Visuals

Visuals can help illustrate key ideas, express inclusivity, and support accessibility. Add text descriptions for images (alt text) so screen readers can describe the image to attendees who are blind or low vision. To add alt text, right-click on your image, select *View Alt Text*,

then write a brief description (example: “Three puppies sitting in grass.”). If a visual is purely decorative (like a decorative border), you do not need to describe it.

#### **Presenter checklist**

- ☐ Images reflect inclusivity and diversity
- ☐ Images are copyright-free and/or properly cited
- ☐ Images have alt text for screen readers
- ☐ Images do not have embedded text
- ☐ All video or audio clips include captions/subtitles

## **4. Video Recording Tips (For Pre-Recorded Sessions)**

High-quality video helps attendees stay engaged and reduces accessibility barriers.

#### **Presenter checklist**

- ☐ My background is neutral and uncluttered
- ☐ My face is well lit (light source in front)
- ☐ I closed unused applications to prevent notifications
- ☐ Audio is clear, echo-free, and easy to understand
- ☐ My camera is at eye level and an arm’s-length away
- ☐ I look into the camera when speaking
- ☐ I do not read word-for-word from the slides or my notes

## **5. Charts, Graphs & Tables**

Data visualizations need a little extra attention to be fully accessible. Remember, screen readers can only read text, not graphics.

#### **Presenter checklist**

- ☐ During my presentation, I verbally summarize/describe any charts or graphs
- ☐ Each chart or graph has alt text summarizing its key message (*Example: “Bar chart showing 2016 had the highest apple sales. USDA data.”*)
- ☐ Tables use simple structures and clear column headers

## **6. Accessibility tools in PowerPoint and Canva**

Both Microsoft PowerPoint and Canva include built-in accessibility features that can help you check your slides, fix issues, and create content that works well for all learners.

### **a. PowerPoint Accessibility Checker**

PowerPoint’s Accessibility Checker identifies issues and suggests fixes directly within the program. Go to **Review** → **Check Accessibility**.

### Presenter checklist

- ☐ I ran the Accessibility Checker before submitting my slides
- ☐ I reviewed all “Errors” and “Warnings” and corrected them
- ☐ I used the Reading Order Pane to make sure screen readers follow content in the correct sequence
- ☐ I used PowerPoint’s alt-text panel to describe important visuals

### b. Canva Accessibility Checker

Canva includes tools and guidance to help you design more accessible content, even if you’re using templates. Go to **File** → **Accessibility** → **Check Design Accessibility**.

### Presenter checklist

- ☐ I used Canva’s Accessibility Panel to check for issues
- ☐ I fixed all issues for typography, color contrast, and alternative text

## 7. Presenting with Live Closed Captions (Optional)

PowerPoint can automatically display live captions using your microphone. This can benefit attendees who are deaf or hard of hearing, English-language learners, and anyone in a noisy environment. Be sure to test out the Captions & Subtitles feature before using it during your session.

## 8. Resources & Learn More

These resources offer further guidance on creating accessible presentations, writing effective alt text, choosing inclusive imagery, and designing materials that work for a wide range of learners.

### a. Microsoft Accessibility

- **Make your PowerPoint accessible to people with disabilities** — <https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-powerpoint-presentations-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities>
- **Microsoft Accessibility Resources** — <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/accessibility/resources>

### b. W3C / Web Accessibility Initiative (WAI)

- **Making Events Accessible** — <https://www.w3.org/WAI/teach-advocate/accessible-presentations/>
- **An Alt Text Decision Tree** — <https://www.w3.org/WAI/tutorials/images/decision-tree/>

### c. Image Sources

Even on “free” sites, always double-check the license (look for CC0, Public Domain, or No Attribution Required). For collections that require attribution, include a simple citation on your slide or in a handout.

#### General Sources

- **Wikimedia Commons** — <https://commons.wikimedia.org>  
Massive archive of educational, scientific, and historical images. Licensing varies, so check each file’s details
- **Rawpixel** — <https://www.rawpixel.com/free-images>  
Includes diverse and global imagery; some collections require attribution
- **Flickr Creative Commons** — <https://www.flickr.com/creativecommons>  
Make sure to filter for CC0 or CC BY licenses
- **Unsplash** — <https://unsplash.com>  
High-quality photos with a very permissive license
- **Pexels** — <https://pexels.com>  
Free photos and videos; great diversity representation
- **Pixabay** — <https://pixabay.com>  
Royalty-free images, illustrations, and vectors

#### Government Sources

Almost all content is public domain, making it safe for educational presentations.

- **U.S. National Archives** — <https://www.archives.gov/research>
- **Library of Congress** — <https://www.loc.gov/pictures>
- **NASA Image Library** — <https://images.nasa.gov>

#### Diversity-Focused Image Libraries

Great for inclusive, human-centered imagery.

- **Nappy** — <https://www.nappy.co>  
Inclusive, diversity-focused images featuring Black and Brown individuals
- **Disabled And Here Collection** — <https://affecttheverb.com/disabledandhere>  
A disability-led stock photo library featuring disabled people in authentic contexts
- **The Gender Spectrum Collection (VICE)** — <https://genderspectrum.vice.com/>  
Authentic images of trans and nonbinary individuals; free for use with attribution