# Poster Design Tips — Quick Reference

## Know your audience

**Ask yourself:**
- Who is my audience?
- What do they already know?
- What should they know after they’ve visited my poster?
- How will I convey the “take-home” messages of my poster?

## Design considerations

### Design around your message
- Allocate space according to what’s most important

### Think visually
- If you can, use graphics instead of text
- When using text, make it easy to read:
  - Bullets are more concise & easy to read
  - Break up your text with plenty of white space
  - Ensure your text is large enough to read at a distance
  - Use simple fonts

*Long paragraphs of text are hard to read, especially at a distance. Your audience will quickly lose interest in your poster and move on. Remember, a poster is not a “mini-paper.” It’s up to you to decide what essential information needs to be included, and to present it in a way that your audience will understand.*

### Use high-quality images
- Avoid stretching or distorting images
- Images should not be pixilated or fuzzy when printed at full size (use a minimum resolution of 150dpi at full size)

## Colour

### More isn’t always better
- Stick to a few colours that complement one another
- For printed media, light backgrounds and dark text work best
- Avoid using primary colours together—they can be hard to read
- Use contrasting colours to enhance readability
- Colours on screen may not translate exactly in print
- Be careful with gradients & transparencies: not all large-format printers support them.

## Need more help?

**www.uab.ca/uri**

uri@ualberta.ca

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**Poster = icebreaker**

- Keep text to a minimum — let your visuals tell the story.
- Think of your poster as a way to start a conversation about your research, or as an outline for your oral explanation — don’t make the poster do all the work!
**Poster Design — additional resources**

**Design Ideas and Examples**

Flickr poster sessions: [http://www.flickr.com/groups/postersessions/pool/](http://www.flickr.com/groups/postersessions/pool/)
Better Posters blog: [http://betterposters.blogspot.ca/](http://betterposters.blogspot.ca/)
Mike Morrison’s #BetterPoster template (YouTube channel with templates and videos to explain them): [https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvFo8Iva2rr3uEBk4ERHY_Q](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCvFo8Iva2rr3uEBk4ERHY_Q)

**Poster Templates**

Colin Purrington’s Poster templates (also has great poster design tips!): [http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design](http://colinpurrington.com/tips/poster-design)
U of A Visual Identity Toolkit: [https://www.ualberta.ca/toolkit/downloads/templates/posterpresentations](https://www.ualberta.ca/toolkit/downloads/templates/posterpresentations) (also has U of A logos, etc.)

**Creative Commons (or Similarly Licensed) Images**

Creative Commons: [http://search.creativecommons.org/](http://search.creativecommons.org/)
Flickr Commons: [http://www.flickr.com/search/?w=commons&q=&m=text](http://www.flickr.com/search/?w=commons&q=&m=text)
Pixabay: [https://pixabay.com/](https://pixabay.com/)

**Other resources:**

URI Poster Resolution Tip Sheet: [https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8ySx_ReZQLccmZEMG5CY1ET38qY1ZrSmFZWnVwcEFFbndZ/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B8ySx_ReZQLccmZEMG5CY1ET38qY1ZrSmFZWnVwcEFFbndZ/view)

**Recommended minimum font sizes for large-format posters:**

- **Title** — at least 60pt bold
- **Headings** — at least 36pt bold
- **Main text** — at least 32pt
- **References/Captions** — at least 28pt

*Note, these are guidelines only. A good rule of thumb is that the text should be legible at a distance of 3ft (1 meter) from the poster.

**Large-Format Printing**

SUBPrint: [https://subprint.ca/](https://subprint.ca/)

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