



Providing PowerPoint presentations online

General guide for designers

For Blackboard Vista 4.x

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Introduction

Providing a copy of your PowerPoint presentation through **MyLO** is generally much appreciated by students; however you need to address a number of issues if that access is to be trouble-free:

- Firstly, PowerPoint (.ppt) files can be substantial in size – e.g. because of added images, special effects or narration. It is easy to exceed the 1 MB recommended limit for file size uploads to the File Manager in **MyLO**. Large file sizes cause considerable download delays for students on 56k modems or similar home Internet facilities.
- Secondly, students need either the PowerPoint software installed on their computer, or the PowerPoint Viewer plug in to view the .ppt presentation.

You may also be concerned about intellectual property rights and not wish students to be able to download and modify your work directly.

This guide lays out ways to address these issues and concerns. It covers how to prepare your PowerPoint presentations, through to their online distribution via **MyLO** directly, or via **Lectopia**, the UTAS e-media delivery service.

Preparing your PowerPoint (.ppt) presentation

PowerPoint is a versatile and powerful teaching tool. In addition to text you can add colour images, graphs and more to your slides. You can also add spoken commentary (see 'Narrating your PowerPoint presentation' near the end of this guide).

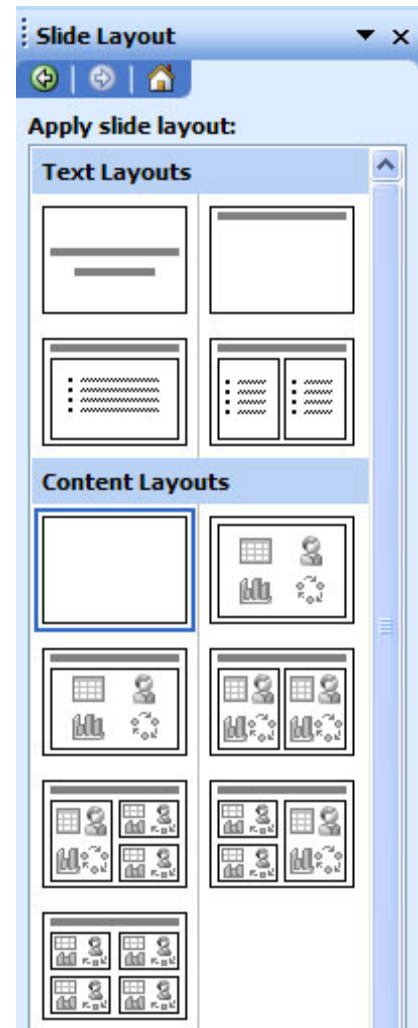
Naming your .ppt file

Files will not work properly if they are named incorrectly, or lack the appropriate extension. Follow these conventions closely:

- Keep all letters in lower case.
- Avoid spaces or non-standard characters – use hyphens or underscores to separate words (e.g. **jee129_propulsor_options**).
- Unit code → Keep names to fewer than 25 characters.
- Make sure the correct extension is added to the end of the file name (i.e. “.ppt”) – e.g. **jee129_propulsor_options.ppt**.

PowerPoint Slide layout

- Use landscape mode for your slide presentation. This is the default layout for PowerPoint. Portrait mode is not handled very well by PowerPoint and your slides can lose a lot of information when the **Lectopia** system (if used – see later) tries to turn them into a format suitable to be put online or for printing.
- Choose a slide layout (template) that has separate title and text sections (see picture on right)
- Choose uniform backgrounds and do not clutter the slide with too much detail. Keep the background simple – avoid images and other ‘special effects’ as this will significantly increase file size. If you need an image on all slides add the image to the ‘slide master’, rather than inserting on each page
- Choose a layout that automatically sets up bullet points/numbering in the text.
- Use a dark background with light text as this is generally easiest to read. (Dark text on a light pastel coloured background is also acceptable.).
- Keep a good margin on all sides of the slide.
- Keep all the points on a slide justified to the left.



Slide sequence

- Prepare both a **title** (beginning) slide to introduce the presentation (as the first slide is automatically presented to students when using **Lectopia**), and a **final** (end) slide free of content. This can be used as a signal that you have reached the end of your presentation.

Titles & text

- Use the **Click to add title** feature to enter a title that is short and identifies the content of each slide. This is particularly important if you are to use **Lectopia** to deliver your PowerPoint slides (see below).
- Use point form and keywords.
- Try not to exceed 3-5 points per slide.
- Use simple sans serif fonts like Arial, Helvetica, Geneva or Verdana as they are easier to read on the screen.
- Use a minimum font size of 24 points bold for body text.
- Texts in italics are difficult to read, so use normal fonts.

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- Avoid underlining as this is reserved for links
- Avoid using all UPPERCASE – it's very hard to read. Rather, use a mix of upper and lower case in body text. Use CAPS for headings only and even then only when essential.

Images

- Place graphics off-centre, leaving room for text and better balance.
- When inserting scanned pictures, use a medium-sized resolution, such as 150dpi. (The larger the resolution of your images, the larger the PowerPoint file will be overall.)
- Where possible, insert compressed or 'web friendly' images (e.g. in GIF or JPEG format) – see below.

Reducing the size of image files

You should reduce the size of the image files **before** you add them to PowerPoint. There are three main ways to reduce their size:

1. By cropping the image
2. By reducing the physical size of the image
3. By saving/converting the file to a compressed format (e.g. JPEG).

Photo editing software such as *Photoshop*, *Fireworks* or *Paintshop Pro* are ideal for editing image files; however simple software such as *Microsoft Paint* or *Microsoft Office Picture Manager* can also be used. The instructions below are for use with *Paint*.


Cropping

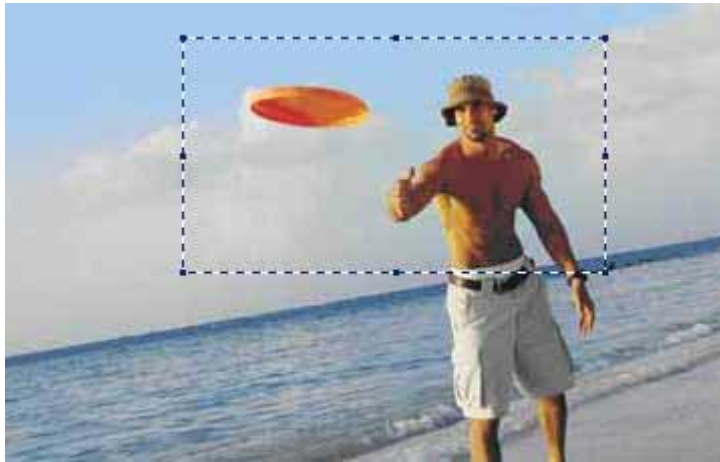
Image file sizes can be made much smaller by cropping the image to display only the area you need.

1. Open your image file in *Paint*.



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- Using the Select tool,  click and drag a box over the area of the image that you want to display.



- On the toolbar, click on **Edit >> Cut**.
- On the toolbar, click on **Image >> Attributes**. Type in 1 for width and height.
- On the toolbar, click on **Edit >> Paste**.



You are now left with just the area of the image that you want to display.

- On the toolbar, click on **File >> Save As**. Give your file a name, and under the option **Save as type:** choose **JPEG** if your file is a photo or **GIF** if your file is a diagram (see more information below about file types).

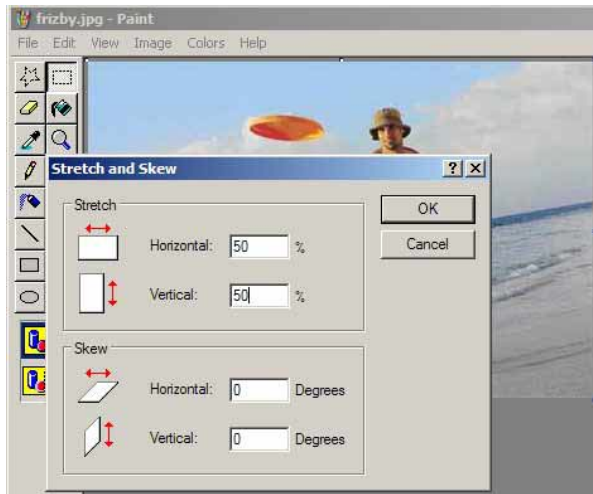
Physical size

Ensure that the physical size of the image file is no bigger than you need. For example, if you want to display an image that is 5 cm x 5 cm, don't insert the image at 10cm x 10cm then resize it. Instead, resize the file first then insert it.

- Open your image file in *Paint*.
- On the toolbar, click on **Image >> Stretch/Skew**.

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- Under **Stretch**, type in a percentage of the image size, e.g. 50% or 200%. Make sure you type in the same number for horizontal and vertical.



- Click on **OK** to resize the image.



- On the toolbar, click on **File, Save As**. Give your file a new name, and under the option '**Save as type:**', choose **JPEG** if your file is a photo or **GIF** if your file is a diagram (see more info below about file types).

Note: The more sophisticated image editing software programs provide many more options for resizing, cropping and optimising images.

File type

Images that are to be accessed online should generally be saved as either JPEG or GIF files. JPEG and GIF are compressed file formats, so your file size is reduced. To get the best quality compressed image, you must save as the correct file type for that particular image.

JPEG/JPG

JPEG is the compressed file format recommended for colour photographs. JPEG files display colours well that blend and fade.

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GIF

GIF is the compressed file format recommended for illustrations or images using blocks of colour.

Save as JPEG



Save as GIF



Converting your PPT presentation to a 'web-friendly' form

You have a number of options with respect to the slide show presentation itself, and print handout/download formats to facilitate note taking/annotation by students.

There are two major options for distribution of PowerPoint based presentations:

1. Through **MyLO** directly – i.e. files uploaded to the file manager of the online unit concerned, then links placed to the files on the homepage/folder or learning module.
2. Through **Lectopia** – i.e. files uploaded to the **Lectopia** server (using the **Lectopia Staff Tool**), for access by students – usually through their **MyLO** course.

Both alternatives involve converting the .ppt presentation into a number of file types much smaller than the original .ppt file and less dependent on students having the PowerPoint software on their machines.

Option 1: Uploading a presentation directly to your MyLO course

Slideshow presentation

Files less than 1MB in size

If your original .ppt file is under 1MB in size you can choose to upload this as the main slideshow presentation. (Be aware that students will need PowerPoint or PowerPoint Viewer – available as free download from the Microsoft website.)

Files larger than 1 MB

If a file is over 1MB in size, you will need to convert it using **Impatica** software. **Impatica** will preserve pretty well all the features of your PowerPoint presentation (including special effects), and shrink the files by up to 90% of the original. [Converting your presentation into colour PDF files will not dramatically reduce file sizes (compared to **Impatica**) and you will lose most of your special effects.]

You can download **Impatica** from the UTAS **eMedia Services** website at <http://www.utas.edu.au/itr/emedialimpatica.html>.

For instructions on how to process your PowerPoint presentation with **Impatica**, and their subsequent uploading to **MyLO**, see the **Quick guide to using Impatica and making Impatica presentations available to students through MyLO** [PDF] – available from the **Impatica** page of the eMedia Services website (see above).

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Advantages of this option

- You have total control over the files and their location in **File Manager**.
- You will have master copies of all files on your local machine.
- You can choose to have the **Impatica** version of the slideshow presentation viewable only, or available as a download to students.
- You can embed audio and video components into your PowerPoint presentation, yet produce reasonably small files with **Impatica**.

Presentation print/handouts/downloads

In addition to the slideshow itself, we recommend that you convert the PowerPoint presentation into a printable, black & white PDF with layout of 3 slides per page (to facilitate student note taking).

1. Open the PowerPoint file for conversion.
2. Select **File >> Print**. The print dialog box appears.
3. Next to **Printer**, choose **Print to Adobe PDF** from the drop down menu. You will need Adobe Acrobat (not just the Reader) installed on your computer.
4. Next to **Print what**, select **Handouts** from the drop down menu.
5. In the **Handouts** selection menu, choose **3 slides per page** from the dropdown menu.
6. Check the box next to **Pure Black and White**.
7. Click **OK**.
8. Next to **Save in** choose the destination for the file. Click **Save**. Your file is now in PDF format in the destination chosen.
9. Upload the file to **MyLO**.

Option 2: Uploading a presentation to the Lectopia server

Note: You will need a **Lectopia** staff account and hence have access to the **Lectopia Staff Tool**. To create an account you first need to make a **Lectopia** booking (see the **Making a Lectopia booking** link on the **Lectopia** homepage (at <http://www.utas.edu.au/itr/lectopia/index.html>)).

While **Lectopia**'s main function is to deliver recorded lectures or other audio/video recordings, you can use the system to display PowerPoint presentations. The system converts the PowerPoint presentation into a range of PDF versions (8 in all – from one slide per page, through to 9 slides per page, Black and White.) – all significantly smaller in file size than the original PowerPoint file.

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Making a booking for your PowerPoint presentation

You need to create a 'placeholder' in the recording list (e.g. with topic title of the PowerPoint presentation) to accept the .ppt file for uploading. To do this:

1. Open the **Lectopia** staff Tool and click on the unit concerned from the unit list to open the recording schedule/list for the unit.
2. To create a 'placeholder' (assuming there isn't one already created) click on the **Upload New Recording** button at the foot of the list.
 - a On the first page enter the 'speaker' (producer) of the PowerPoint presentation and its topic (title of PowerPoint presentation). Ignore the other entries in the mandated fields (unless you want to change them). Click **Next**.
 - b On the second page, leave the type of recording details as is, and click **Next**.
 - c On the '*Please upload the source file for the audio recording*' page, simply ignore the entries and click on the **Close** button (top right hand corner).
You now have a placeholder for your PowerPoint presentation on the Recording List.
3. Under the 'PPT' column, click on the **Upload** link, and in the text dialog box that appears, enter the title for the presentation, browse for the .ppt file on your computer, and then click the **Upload File** button.

Making the Lectopia-based PowerPoint presentation available to students

Once uploaded, you can create a specific link to the **Lectopia** 'recording' (and its associated PPT file) from within **MyLO**, or create a more general link to all **Lectopia** recordings for the unit over the semester.

To create a Lectopia link:

1. From the **Build** tab in **MyLO**, navigate to the page you want to place the link on (folder, learning module).
2. From the **Add content Link** pull-down menu select **Lectopia Link**, and then **Create Lectopia link**.
3. In the **Create Lectopia Link** dialog box, enter a title for the PowerPoint recording, then click **Configure**. This takes you to the **Lectopia** system.
4. Navigate to the unit and choose your preferred option – a link to all recordings (PowerPoint presentations) for the unit, or a link to a single recording. (If the latter, click on the radio button of the recording concerned). Click **Next**.
5. Check the summary presented, then click **Save**.

Advantages and disadvantages of this option

- Conversion into a range of 'web friendly' PDFs is done for you.
- **Lectopia** cannot handle any embedded audio or video, nor most other 'special effects'.

Narrating your PowerPoint presentation

Once you have finished producing your slides, you can add a commentary to each slide. You might do this by recording 'live' during a classroom presentation, or by pre-recording the commentary on your own computer (home/office).

The following companion guides take you through the recording process and subsequent conversion of the PowerPoint file into a form suitable for web delivery (using **Impatica** software):

- **Narrate your PowerPoint lecture** [PDF]
- **Quick guide to using Impatica and making Impatica presentations available to students through MyLO** [PDF]

See the UTAS **Impatica** website (<http://www.utas.edu.au/itr/emedialimpatica.html>) for these guides- and other support documentation and information about **Impatica**.

Related guides

From the **Teaching & Learning Online** website (under **Resources >> Content & file management tools**)

- **Preparing files – formats and tips** [Word]
- **Reducing the size of your course and content files** [Word]
- **PowerPoint presentations – Converting to PDF for the web** [Word]

From the UTAS eMedia Services website: **2008 Lectopia Staff Support Booklet** [PDF].