Create a Poster

UC DAVIS
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL
& ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

fact sheet

Use posters to raise awareness and/or to provide information for action.

Posters should stimulate interest and discussion.

Some key "dos"
- Emphasize images and graphics
- Use as little text as possible
- Make sure every item in your poster is necessary.

Produce supporting handouts to provide more details.

Posters use pictures to attract attention (from UC Davis Postharvest RIC)

1. Preparation and Layout
- **Message:** Write out the 2-3 main points to be communicated
- **Title:** A title can call for action
- **Layout:** Sketch your poster to see what components best go where.
  - Lay out your information to read like a book. In English that means flowing from left to right and from top to bottom.
- **Flow:** Use arrows or identifiers (sequences of letters or numbers) to guide your reader through the poster.
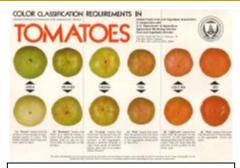- **Pre-evaluation:** Get feedback from others before you finalize the poster.

2. Illustrations and images
- People look at pictures first.
- Graphics should dominate the poster.
- Graphics should be self-explanatory.
- Use graphics to emphasize the main point(s). Avoid visuals that distract from your message.

3. Text
- Use short sentences
- Use simple words.
- Be concise, clear and convincing.
- Avoid jargon, acronyms, and unusual abbreviations.

4. Fonts
- Use fonts that can be read from at least 1 meter away.
- Print the title across the top of the poster in characters of 80-150 points. Subheadings should be minimum 60 points. General text should be minimum 24 points.
- Don't mix fonts.
- Choose easy to read fonts such as:
  - Arial
  - Century Gothic
  - Franklin Gothic Medium
  - Lucida Sans.
- Add **emphasis** by using **boldface**, underlining, or **color**.
- Limit use of all capital letters

> **ALL CAPITALS TEXT CAN BE HARD TO READ.**

5. Use of Color
- Color can be distracting if overused - 2 to 3 colors should be enough.
- Use a neutral (gray) or dark background to emphasize color in images and a white background if you need to reduce the impact of colored images.

A poster is primarily a visual (not a text) presentation