

# How to create great charts

*Best practice presentation of research results*

## Some basic principles

### 1. Consistent colours (and fonts)

- Pick colours to match the brand (style guide or colour picker).
- Pick colour to consistently represent the same thing (eg. 2014 data).
- Think about how it will look printed in Black and White (if multiple bars).

**Golden rule:  
Consistency**

### 2. Reduce clutter

- Don't present the same information more than once on a chart (if you have the % on the bars, you don't need the % axis showing as well).

### 3. Think about order

- Put 'other' and 'don't know' bars last.
- If not sequential, sort bars so that the largest finding is at the top.
- If showing multiple years, make sure the latest data is in a logical position (first for bar chart, last for column chart).

## What sort of chart should you use?

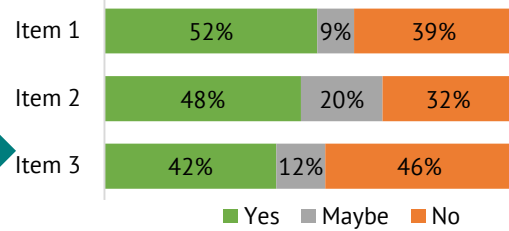
### Bar



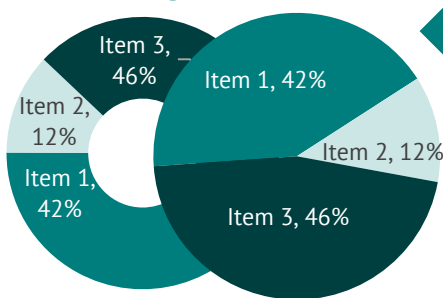
For multiple values – usually multiple response

For multiple variables where total = 100% for each (eg. Satisfaction rating)

### Stacked Bar



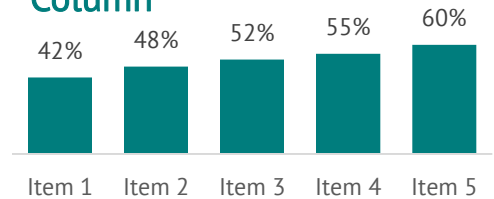
### Doughnut / Pie



For total = 100% (eg. Gender, yes/no)

For timeline or sequential (eg. Age)

### Column

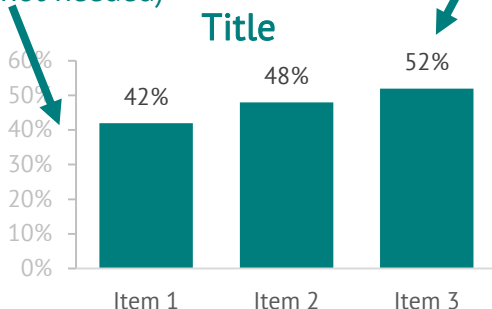


## Tips and tricks

- You can edit individual bars and data labels if you click on them twice (to change colour, move label etc).
- To keep your chart formatting when pasting into Word/PowerPoint, use paste special > 'picture (enhanced metafile)'.
- Consider your axis range (does it need to start at 0?).
- Use meaningful colours (green for positive, orange for negative).

## Chart Design

Delete axis if you have data labels (repeated info so not needed)



Add data labels

Format bar so 'gap width' only 50%

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### Things to avoid

- 3D charts
- Gradient bars
- Switching colours