

# **The do’s and don’ts of presentations**

### **The importance of presentation skills**

* While at university, you may have to speak in front of others for assessments, projects, group work, or interviews.
* Presentations need careful planning, just like essays, even though they're spoken.
* It's common to feel nervous, but these tips can make it easier and even enjoyable!

### **The do’s!**

* Focus on the key message - know and understand your topic.
* Do your research and check your facts so that you can feel secure in your knowledge - this will boost your confidence.
* Plan the structure:
	+ Introduction: tell the audience what you're going say
	+ Content: say it
	+ Conclusion: tell them what you've said
* Engage with your audience - think about using a whiteboard, PowerPoint, quizzes, surveys, or polls.
* Tell a story.
* Keep a conversational tone.
* Time your speech, stay calm and breathe - remember a bottle of water.
* Equipment: check, test, check, and test again! If you are using slides, save them in more than one place. Have a back-up plan.
* Practice! Practice! Practice! Rehearse timings and go through the whole presentation.

### **The don’ts!**

* Don't read your presentation word for word.
* Don't spend too long researching your topic and gathering too much information and not leaving enough time to craft it into a presentation.
* Don’t cram in too much information.
* Don’t use hard-to-read fonts or distracting backgrounds.
* Don’t be too text heavy and don't use complete sentences in your slides. Your voice should tell the story, and the slides should only support it.
* Don't talk too fast (or slow).
* Don't rely on slides - use cue cards or have your notes on a sheet of paper as prompts.
* Don’t have too many slides - limit the number of items per slide - and don't have too many animations.
* Don't rush.