

The AOTA Poster Presenter’s Handbook

Updated: December 2024

This handbook has been prepared to help you develop and present a successful poster presentation at AOTA INSPIRE | Annual Conference & Expo. The contents should assist you in providing participants with a positive, practical, educational experience and ensuring that your professionalism and expertise are appropriately presented.

Introduction

AOTA INSPIRE | Annual Conference & Expo offers learning and networking opportunities for occupational therapist practitioners and students. The sessions have been selected to represent current issues and to share best practices. The mix of general sessions, educational breakout sessions, and poster sessions will allow attendees to customize their own experience and to leave the conference with knowledge and tools they can use immediately.

This handbook has been prepared to help you develop and present a successful poster presentation at AOTA INSPIRE | Annual Conference & Expo. The contents should assist you in meeting these goals:

- Provide participants with a positive, practical, education experience.
- Ensure that your professionalism and expertise are appropriately presented.

We strive for excellence in each of our programs, and we know you will too. Our staff is on hand to assist you in any way through all phases of program planning and implementation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call on us.

AOTA Conference Team

conference@aota.org

301-652-6611

<https://inspire.aota.org/>

Important Dates and Deadlines

Please send your questions to conference@aota.org. Include your poster number and title in all e-mail inquiries. Regular updates to Primary Speakers will be provided over the next several months. Primary Speakers are responsible for forwarding the updates to any Additional Speakers in the session.

As a reminder from the Call for Papers instructions – all emails come from conference@aota.org. To ensure you receive all communication, please be sure to add this email to your approved senders list or have your IT department add it.

Important Dates to Remember

Week of December 16	Speaker Update Email on Registration and Hotels
Week of December 16	PowerPoint Template sent to all Institute, Short Course, Student, Workshop, & Scientific Research Panel presenters
Week of January 13	Speaker Update Email on Conference Mobile App & Handouts
Week of January 20	Industry Partner Presentation upload email will be sent to all didactic sessions
February 3	Early Registration Ends
Week of February 10	Speaker Update Email on Room Setup & Presentations (different versions will be sent based on your type of session)
February 20	Presentations Upload Deadline on Industry Partner Site for all didactic sessions

February 27	Housing deadline
March 3	Accessibility services request due. Send email to conference@ota.org
March 3	Advance Registration Ends
March 7	Handouts Due
March 27	Speaker Update Email on Onsite Resources

Poster Presentation Guidelines

OTA will provide a poster board, push pins, and one chair for each presentation. The author should prepare all materials in advance. The poster board will be 4 feet tall by 8 feet wide with a cork background and mounted on stands.

Poster may be set up **15 to 30 minutes** before the start of the session depending on the end time of the previous poster session. To locate your assigned poster board, look for the 3 or 4-digit session number your abstract was assigned (example of poster number Poster 1-001, 2-001, etc. look for number 001.) **It is important that you DO NOT move locations.** The numbers allow attendees to easily locate the poster presentation they are interested in reviewing. OTA also goes through the poster hall during the poster sessions and removes any no show posters for the CE Transcript. If you are in the wrong spot you run the risk of having your session removed from the program/app and will not receive the speaker verification email.

Presentations should be taken down immediately after the session ends. Display materials not removed following the conclusion of the session will be discarded to allow the next group to set up in a timely manner.

A poster session is a graphic presentation of the author's presentation. A poster is not simply a research paper tacked onto a board. The author illustrates their findings by displaying graphs, photos, diagrams, and a small amount of text on the poster. The authors will then hold discussions with the attendees who are circulating among the poster boards. Many authors find it helpful to present a brief introduction to answer the obvious questions and allow the remainder of the time for more in-depth discussions. **The author must remain by the poster board for the duration of the poster session.**

Highlight the author's name and contact information in case the viewer is interested in contacting for more information.

No audiovisual equipment is permitted for poster presentations.

The material should be well labeled and legible from a distance of 2 yards. Lettering should be **bold**. If you will be posting typed material, use a large font size (20–24-point font) on white, pale yellow or cream-colored non-glossy paper. Use 1-inch margins. Avoid use of fancy fonts. Use upper and lowercase letters. Simple serif fonts such as "Times New Roman" are easier to read than sans serif fonts such as "Geneva."

Plan & Prepare

- Many posters can be designed using a PowerPoint slide template.
- When developing the poster, presenters should incorporate reviewer feedback, which is available on the submitters dashboard: <https://www.aievolution.com/aotaproposals/>
- Posters should be well laid out and formatted, visually appealing with the use of color, and present a professional image. Do not laminate the poster because of potential glare from overhead lights.
- Keep in mind that your information must be concise; focus on summarizing the information of your presentation.
- Select the most notable aspects of your research because not all the information can be presented. For presentations on research, usually the Results and Discussion sections are the emphasis of the poster presentation. Next in emphasis would usually be the Conclusion, Methodology, Abstract, and Literature Review.

- Because this is a formal and professional presentation, posters **should not** contain arts and craft items such as glitter, handwritten or hand-colored items, pictures cut out of a magazine, and so forth.
- Leave about 4 to 8 inches between the columns of your poster.
- Ideally you should stand near the last column so that readers can ask you a question after viewing all the poster sections.
- The most natural way for a reader to proceed is left to right, so begin your abstract in the upper left corner and end with your Conclusions or Summary in the lower right corner.
- Arrange your material in columns that can be read top to bottom. Thus, a viewer can read the far-left column, and then step to the right to read the next section, which will allow another viewer to start reading the first column. Leave a reasonable amount of space between columns.
- Don't put key information (e.g., a photo or table of results) at the very bottom of a column so that a reader must squat down to see the information clearly.
- Define different sections clearly. Use headings of reasonable size (larger than the text) to identify the start of each major section. Use colored backgrounds to delineate sections.

Planning Sections of the Poster Board*

*Please note the sections and headings will vary depending on the type of poster you are doing, General, Research, CAPs, etc.

Title

- Center the title at the top of the poster
- Place author names under the title; don't forget to include the appropriate credentials after the names. Include the sponsoring institution or worksite under the presenters' names.
- The title should be readable from a distance of 20 feet, be bold and dark, and be in a simple serif font. Reasonable font sizes range from 135 to 210 point.
- Author names should be readable from a distance of 10 feet and be in a bold and dark simple serif font. Reasonable for sizes range from 72 to 150 point.

Headings of Each Section of the Poster

(i.e., Abstract, Methodology, Discussion)

- Use consistent font style for all headings
- Use simple serif font
- Use the boldest and darkest font possible
- Make font size large enough to be easily read from a distance of 4 feet. Reasonable font sizes might range from 48 point to 60 point

Text

- Use consistent font style for all text
- Use simple serif font
- Use the boldest and darkest font possible
- Make font size large enough to be easily read from a distance of 4 feet. Reasonable font sizes range from 24 point to 36 point.
- Use double or 1.5 spacing

Abstract

- Be sure to include the following: Objective – Statement of the Problem or Research Question(s), Brief Methodology, Results, Discussion, and Conclusion.

Background or Literature Review

- Should be one or two paragraphs in length.
- Highly synthesized section – abbreviated Introduction and literature review section ending with the purpose, hypothesis or research question, or research objective.

Methodology

- Include design, participants, instrument(s), and procedures.

Results

- Should comprise majority of poster. Although often one of the short portions of a written paper, it is the major portion of a well-designed poster.
- Include main findings.
- Report factual data in enough detail to support conclusions drawn.
- Factual data should be followed by tables and figures.
- Tables and/or figures will have a greater visual appeal if they are in color. Be sure and label or title each table or figure or note explanation at the bottom of the table or figure.
- May relate results with research question(s) if not in Discussion section.

Discussion

- May relate results with research questions(s) if not in Results section.
- Include interpretations of the results.
- Include a concise comparison with literature reviews.
- Include research or practice implications.

Conclusion

- Include summary of findings and implications.
- Identify future lines of inquiries or research.

Special Considerations for Critically Appraised Papers

Follow the instructions above in the [Title](#), [Headings of Each Section](#), and [Text](#),

- Make the changes recommended by reviewers and the Evidence Exchange in the feedback for your submission. Your CAP does not need to be resubmitted, but your CAP was accepted with the understanding that you would make these changes. If you have questions about the reviewer's comments, please let us know.
- Your CAP should be titled: "Critically Appraised Paper: [Insert title of original article]". If your CAP is not titled correctly in your submissions, please email conference@ota.org with the corrected title and make sure that your poster is correctly titled before printing.
- At the beginning of your discussion with attendees, be sure to make it clear that this is not your original research, but rather a critical appraisal of the findings and methods of an individual published article.

- Be prepared to succinctly summarize your CAP. The purpose of a poster presentation is to encourage dialogue between the presenter and individuals in attendance about the methodology and clinical implications of the individual article.

Accessibility Guidelines

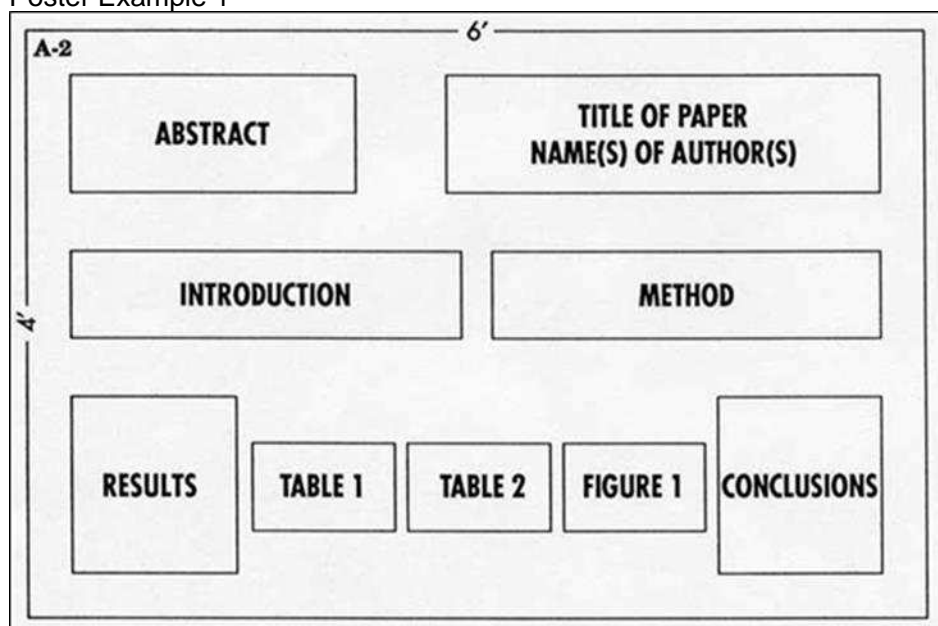
Poster presenters should consider all possible audience participants when creating the poster, including those who are blind or have low vision, those who are deaf or hard of hearing, and those with mobility or physical challenges.

- Keep push pins off the floor; they can puncture wheelchair and scooter tires.
- Offer to describe your poster to attendees who are blind or have low vision.
- If you have access to a laptop computer with voice output software, prepare a brief description of your poster for listeners who are blind or have low vision.
- Consider modifying your poster font and layout to make it accessible to attendees with low vision.
- If your poster includes links for video of any kind, you must have captions available for that video

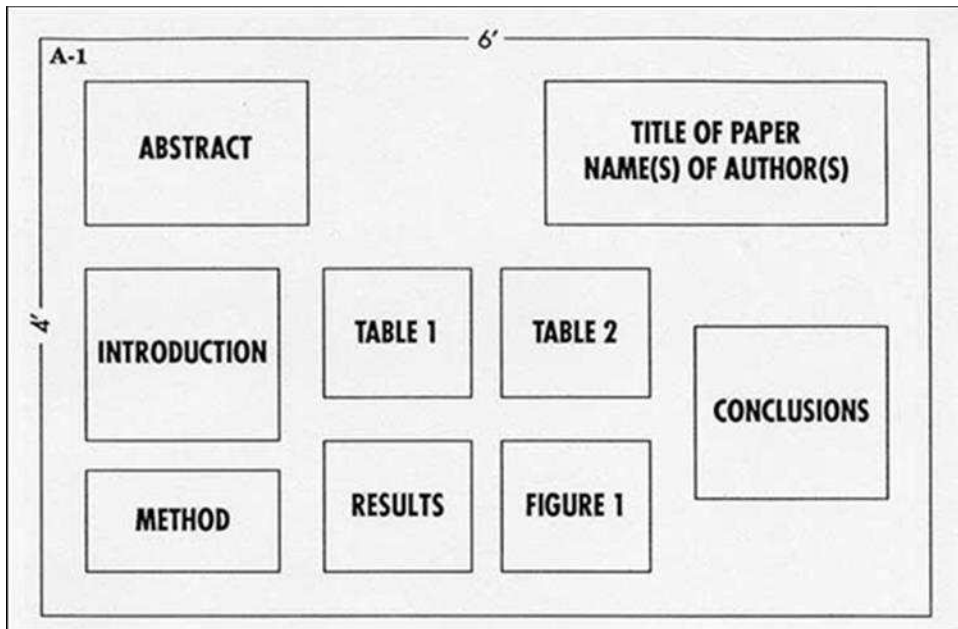
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Poster Layout Examples

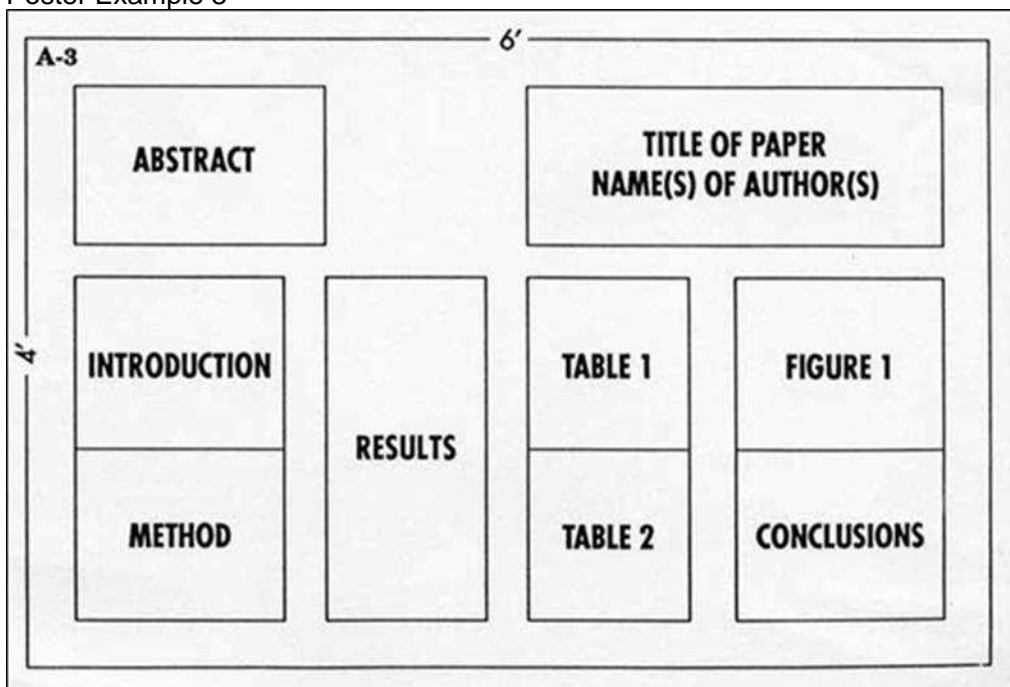
Poster Example 1



Poster Example 2



Poster Example 3



Poster Printing Options

AOTA does not partner with any company for poster printer, we pulled together a list of companies that previous poster presenters have suggested in a discussion thread on [CommunOT](#).

- [PosterPresentations.com](#)
- [Make Signs](#)
- [Mega Print Inc](#)
- [Spoonflower](#)
- [PhD Posters](#)

Handout Guidelines and Instructions

Every poster presenter is required to provide a handout to all conference attendees and still “go green”. Handouts are not provided on site; they will be uploaded through the submission platform and available for all attendees in the [Conference App](#).

Over 90% of the 2024 Conference survey respondents rated handouts as an important part of their overall Conference experience. We encourage you to provide the handout(s) before the March 7, 2025, deadline to allow attendees time to review them as they build their conference schedule. Please note: you can still upload handouts after the deadline.

Guidelines

- Only PDF files are accepted. Maximum of 3 files per presentation.
- File size should not exceed 5MB (Many factors contribute to file size such as image size, formatting, embedded media files).
- A Poster handout can be:
 - A full copy of your poster
 - A modified copy of the poster with proprietary information removed
 - A list of resources
 - A summary of your poster
- Be sure to include your name, poster number, and title on all provided handouts.

Instructions for Uploading Your File(s)

All files will be uploaded through the [submission site](#). Only the primary speaker will have the ability to upload the handouts.

- Click on Conference Assignments under the AOTA INSPIRE 2025 section of the dashboard
- Click on the button that says “Submit Presentation”
 - First handout file you upload the button will be to the right of the session information box
 - Second and third handout file you upload the button will be at the bottom of the session information box
- If you need to edit or remove an uploaded handout, click on the Edit/Remove File hyper link next to the file name
 - Handouts are approved weekly.
 - If your handout has been approved you will not be able to edit. Email conference@acta.org to request the change.

Creating Your Handout

Use your best judgement, and whatever you decide to provide as the handout, use it to reinforce the information you present in a program. Handouts should supply the attendees with an outline of your salient points.

Poster sessions are much different than classroom lectures, workshop presentations, and other educational sessions at Conference. Attendees are participating in a number of sessions over several days and may visit many posters during the sessions. Provide in the handout what is needed to clarify your poster and perhaps resources for further discovery and your contact information in case someone desires more in-depth material(s) after the poster session or is not able to get to all the questions with you during the poster session.

Attendees are often looking for a copy of the poster in the handouts and it will require no additional work for you. Handouts do not have to be poster but do need to provide information that attendees can use when they return to their work setting. Informative handouts, uploaded early, can also boost traffic to your poster. Here are some ideas if you do not provide the poster:

- Poster with proprietary information removed, such as ongoing data collection, forms you have created, etc.
- Synopsis or outline of your poster
- List of resources, supporting documents or references
- Key points of your poster
- Get creative!

Some examples of information that might be appropriate for a handout include the following:

- Drawings, diagrams, or charts
- Forms, checklists, or samples
- Glossaries or statistics (Use only if this information is critical in following your poster presentation.)
- Article reprints (Rarely necessary; interested persons can find this information from a reference.)
- Bibliographies (These can be made available to those interested but are not necessary for all participants. Instruct attendees to contact you after the presentation for a Bibliography, if interested.)

Always number your handout pages for easy reference during your presentation and include your session name and number on all handouts.

All handouts will be posted to the AOTA Conference App and attendees will be able to access the handouts prior to and after the event. This way, all attendees will have access to all handouts. AOTA does not reimburse presenters for printing expenses.

Handout Accessibility

Individuals who are blind or have low vision may not be able to read standard sized print on your handouts. As your handouts are provided electronically in PDF format, attendees will not be able to make changes on an individual basis.

If you are providing an alternative handout:

- Print on single-sided 8.5 x 11" paper and stapled at the top left corner
- Use letter orientation, unless a visual element requires landscape orientation, to achieve maximum visibility
- Left justify all paragraphs and do not use columns
- Keep a one-inch margin on all sides
- Use 18-point font for all text, including body text, footers, page numbers, references, disclaimers, and labels on charts and graphs. Larger fonts may be used for headings.
- Use a bold serif font (such as Times New Roman) for body text and a bold simple sans-serif font (such as Arial) for headings and other information that is set apart from body text. Do not use any compressed fonts. Make lines heavy/thick in charts and graphs.
- Use a minimum of 1.5 line spacing; use double spacing when possible

- Do not use small caps, italics, or all caps for text. Use initial caps and lower case for titles and text
- Use underlining for emphasis instead of italics
- Delete decorative graphics that do not contribute to the meaning of the information being presented.

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- Slide presentations should be well laid out and formatted, be visually appealing with the use of color, and present a professional image.
- Keep in mind that your information must be concise focus on summarizing the most notable aspects of the information for your presentation.
- Organize your presentation using headings followed by “bulleted” or numbered sub-points. Avoid using a narrative format for sub-points as this is difficult and lengthy to read.
- Create multiple slides for a section to keep the correct font size instead of shrinking the font to keep it on one slide.

Speaker Agreement

The following policies were agreed upon during the submission process under Policies Governing Accepted Proposals. Certain sections that apply to the submission process only and didactic sessions have been removed.

Handouts

Session handouts are an important part of session attendees’ overall Conference experience and serves as a resource after the participant leaves your session. If my proposal is accepted, I will make every effort to upload a handout for attendees by the suggested deadline of late-February 2025 to allow attendees time to review them as they build their conference schedule. NOTE: Handout does not need to be a copy of the session slides or actual poster.

Schedule

AOTA reserves the right to assign the day and time that accepted proposals will be scheduled. In addition, AOTA reserves the right to publish any submission, in whole or in part, in any form by any printed, visual, electronic, or auditory means.

Registration

All OT, OTA, and student speakers whose proposals are accepted for presentation must register for at least one day of the conference.

Promotion is Prohibited

The exclusive promotion or sale of goods, services, or products during educational sessions at conference is prohibited. Speakers who are found to be engaging in such practices will have their sessions halted.

Copyrights, Royalties, and Trademarks

Speaker warrants that no literary or artistic work or other property protected by copyright will be performed, reproduced, or used, nor will the name of any entity protected by trademark be reproduced or used by Speaker during your speech and presentation (including but not limited to any exhibits, movie clips, videos, graphics) unless Speaker has obtained written permission from the copyright or trademark holder. Speaker covenants to comply strictly with all laws respecting copyright, royalties, and trademarks. Speaker shall indemnify and hold AOTA, its officers, agents, and employees harmless from all claims, losses, and damages (including court costs and attorney fees) with respect to any such copyright, royalty, or trademark rights.

Continuing Education

All presenters will receive a CE letter for presenting. The CE letter will be sent via email after conference to all speakers and authors on the session. If you need to update the speakers/authors, email conference@aota.org.

This is a separate record from your CE transcript for the sessions you attend. You will not need to add the session(s) you present to your CE transcript. The CE letter will include the session number, title, and date/time for presenter verification.

If you have any questions regarding amount of credit earned for presentation, please contact your state licensure board.

Copyright Information

You, the presenter, are responsible for securing copyright permission for any and all copyright-protected material(s). This is not only AOTA's policy, it's the law.

Presenter warrants that no literary or artistic work or other property protected by copyright will be performed, reproduced, or used, nor will the name of any entity protected by trademark be reproduced or used by Presenter during your speech and presentation (including but not limited to any exhibits, movie clips, videos, graphics) unless Presenter has obtained written permission from the copyright or trademark holder. Presenter covenants to comply strictly with all laws respecting copyright, royalties, and trademarks. Presenter shall indemnify and hold AOTA, its officers, agents, and employees harmless from all claims, losses, and damages (including court costs and attorney fees) with respect to any such copyright, royalty, or trademark rights. Visit www.copyright.com

Inclusive Language

All presenters should use person first language at all times during their presentation. This means that the person is emphasized first, and the disability noted second. For example:

- Use: person with a disability Not: disabled person
- Use: woman who is blind Not: blind woman

Presentation Resources

[AOTA Official Documents](#)

[AOTA Practice Guidelines](#)