

easelly



Crash Course IN Infographics



A
RESOURCE
FOR



Educators

Those Who
Want to
Illustrate
a Point



Marketers

What Are Infographics?

An infographic uses visuals—sometimes supported by text—to represent information or data, often with the aim of educating or informing an audience.

Why Do Infographics Matter?

Infographics are an effective way to educate or inform an audience. They can be used to make complex data easier to understand and digest.

5x

We receive **5x as much information** as we did in 1986¹

Users only read roughly **1/4** of the words on a webpage³

We process the equivalent of **100,000+ words (that's 34GB!)**² on an average day. And that's not even including time spent at work!

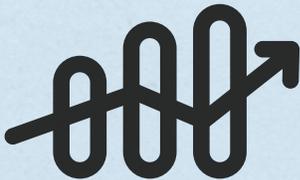
100,000+

Visual Information on the Rise

There are **4x** as many visuals in literature since 1990⁴

Visual information has increased by over **9000%** on the internet⁵

As of 2015, there are **62 million search results** for "infographic" and that number is projected to increase



70% of marketers plan to increase their use of original visual assets in 2015⁶

People Like Pretty Pictures

We are **30x** more likely to read an infographic than a text article

90% of information transmitted to the brain is visual

Color images make people **80%** more likely to read something

Images Are Great Teachers

There's a **70%** rate of understanding for text-only labels, and a **95%** rate of understanding for text and picture labels⁹

People follow instructions **over 3x better** with text and illustrations versus those following text-only instructions¹⁰

People recall **80%** of what they see and do, 20% of what they read, and 10% of what they hear¹¹

65% of people are visual learners

It only takes **150ms** for a symbol to be processed⁷ and another 100ms to attach a meaning to it⁸

A Checklist for Every Good Infographic Ever

Infographics support **focused data** with **good design** to tell a **shareable story** in a clear and concise manner.

The quotes come from industry experts.

Focused data:

- ✓ **Use relevant data**
“A great infographic allows the viewer to grasp the implications of big data.”
– [@Steveology](#)
- ✓ **Fact-check**
“If the data you’re working with is untrustworthy, then your infographic will be too.”
– Tiffany Farrant-Gonzalez
- ✓ **Credit your sources**

“A great infographic allows the viewer to grasp the implications of big data.”
– [@Steveology](#)

Clear design:

- ✓ **Limit your color palette**
- ✓ **Use simple graphics**
- ✓ **Use data visualizations that most clearly illustrate the data**
- ✓ **Convey the message at a glance**
“Take a lot of data, or a number of concepts, and boil it down to one image.”
– [@mvolpe](#)
- ✓ **Establish a connection between sections**
- ✓ **Good infographics utilize the hierarchy of information**
See “The Simplest Infographic Structure” section
- ✓ **Make sure the graphics and numbers match**
- ✓ **Limit width to 735 pixels (it’s the standard)**
- ✓ **Anything over 5000 pixels tall will lose attention**
“Too many infographics now are too darned big.”
– [@TDefren](#)

Shareable story:

- ✓ **Answer an interesting question to grab audiences**
“A good infographic starts with a good ‘why’ question.”
– [@ConversationAge](#)
- ✓ **Use rational data to elicit an emotional response**
- ✓ **Graphics should tell the story**
“A great infographic tells a meaningful story in an instant.” – [@Jowyang](#)
- ✓ **Use as little text (as possible) in a clear font**
“If your infographic is supplemented with 1,000 words, you’ve missed the mark.” – [@mikemacfarlane](#)
- ✓ **Make the file as small as possible (compressed .jpeg) without sacrificing fidelity**
- ✓ **Don’t forget to sign it with an embed code**

The 7 Common Types of Infographic

Visual Article



Lorem ipsum
dolor sit amet
consectetur adipiscing elit!

Makes a piece of writing more visual

Best used to:

- cut down on text
- make a plain article more interesting
- increase sharing potential

List



Supports a claim through a series of steps

Best used to:

- support a specific claim or argument

Map



Showcases data trends based on location

Best used to:

- compare places and cultures via setting-centric data

Versus



Compares two things in a head-to-head study

Best used to:

- highlight differences between two similar things
- highlight similarities between two unlike things
- prove one option is superior/inferior to the other

Data Visualization

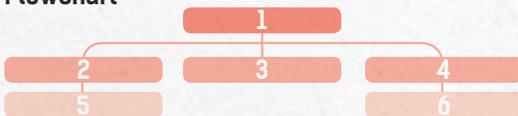


Communicates data through charts, graphs, and/or design

Best used to:

- make data-driven arguments easier to understand
- make facts and statistics more interesting to absorb

Flowchart

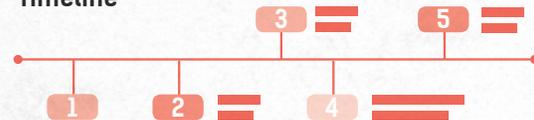


Provides a specialized answer to a question via reader choices

Best used to:

- provide personalized answers for readers
- showcase how multiple situations can reach the same conclusion

Timeline



Tells a story through a chronological flow

Best used to:

- show how something has changed over time
- make a long, complicated story easier to understand
- show how one thing leads to another

The 13-Step Guide to Building an Infographic

Steps 1-4 will help you make your rough outline

Steps 5-10 will help you design your infographic

Steps 11-13 will help you ensure the quality

1 Consider your audience

Who are you creating this infographic for? What would they be interested in knowing?

2 Create a thesis/question

If there was a question your infographic is going to answer, what is it?

3 Focus it

Now that you know your question, remove any and all information that isn't in support of answering that question or addressing the topic behind it.

4 Tell a story to create flow

In terms of design, people read left to right and top to bottom. But equally important is that your infographic has a narrative; make sure there is a logical flow to your points, and that each one leads into the next.

5 Brevity is the soul of wit

The appeal of infographics is that they take big, complex things, and they make them into something almost anyone can understand. Too much information, too much text, or too many graphics can make it difficult to understand and unappealing to read.

6 A picture is worth a thousand words

Text can be necessary for minute clarifications, but your graphics should be doing all the heavy lifting. What can be summarized or represented graphically?

7 Limit color and font choices

Though there are exceptions to this rule, two fonts and three colors is usually more than enough. Be consistent with font sizes too.

8 Make it viewable and legible

Your infographic should be readable and coherent even if it isn't quite full size.

9 White space is good

Don't clutter up your design—give the graphics and text room to breathe.

10 Don't get too big

735 pixels wide and fewer than 5000 pixels tall is ideal. 8000 pixels tall is an absolute limit; the smaller it is, the easier it is to download, share, and view.

11 Use accurate data

Double check that decimal points are in the right place and that there aren't too many zeroes in spots. Ensure stats are true, sources are reliable, and that graphics accurately represent their content.

12 Credit your sources

You can do this next to each fact, or in a reference list at the end of your infographic.

13 Sign it

Don't forget to credit yourself, your site, and anyone else involved.



Use the news

Topics inspired by sites like news.google.com and news.yahoo.com are great for media pitches



Help a Reporter

HARO (www.helpareporter.com) is a daily email newsletter with story ideas that could turn into infographics



Check what's trending

Reddit, Twitter, and Facebook will all tell you what's popular via their Trending Topics sections

How to Come up with a Winning Idea for an Infographic

Ideas come from a lot of places, but for infographics, access to new data and timely topics is particularly important.

Explore existing infographics

Use Google Images, Pinterest, or one of the infographic directories for inspiration and to get an idea of what audiences like



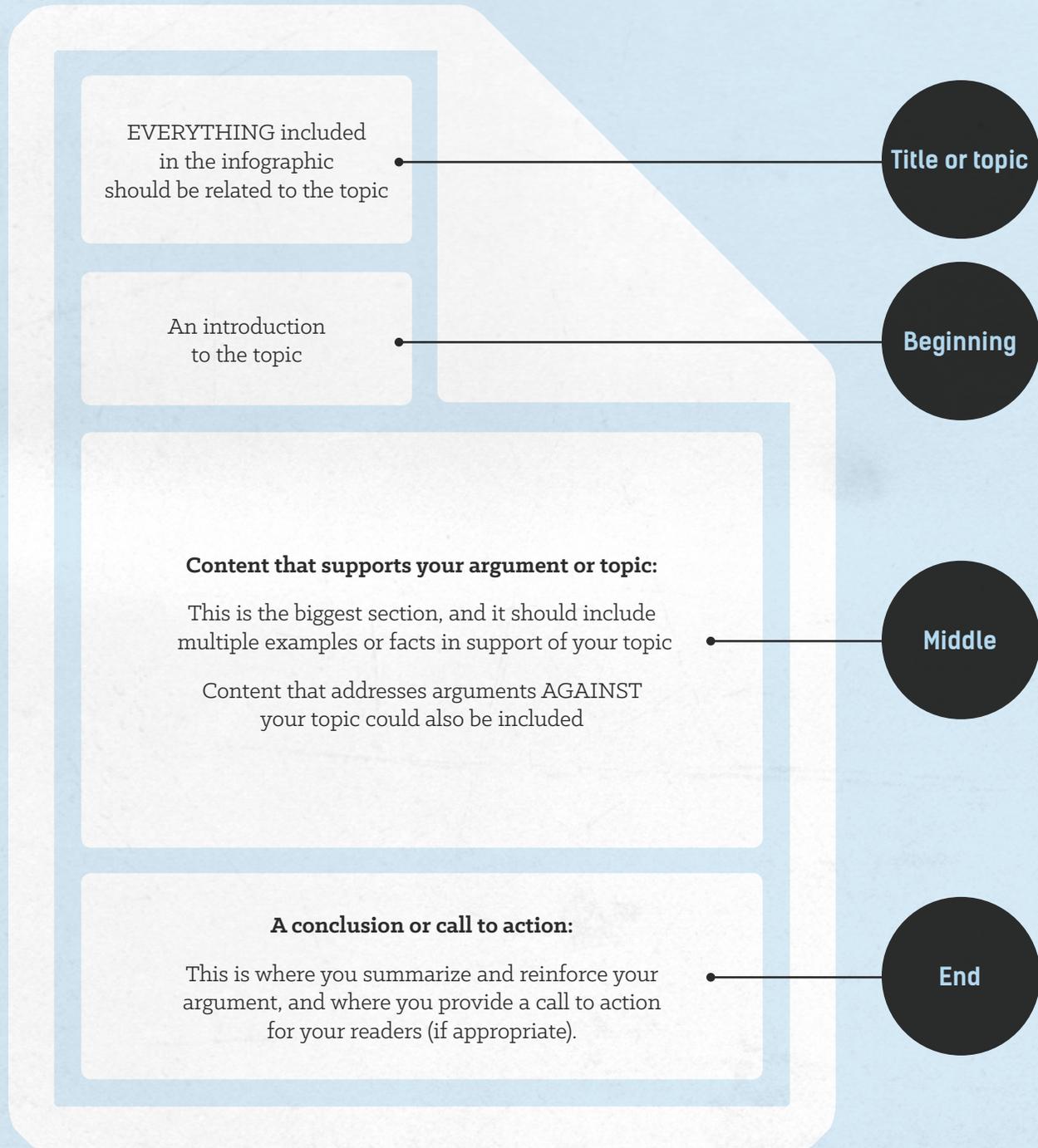
Lean on your own expertise

Try to create an informative infographic on a niche you know well



The Simple Infographic Structure

Every infographic benefits from this basic structure. Infographics follow the same structure as a good paper or news article.



How to Outline an Infographic

Collect your resources and content. They don't need to be finalized, but you should have a good idea of what you'll be including in the final version.



Use whatever you're comfortable with: paper, a whiteboard, Word, Illustrator, etc.



1

2

3

Create a 'wireframe.' Think of this as the skeleton of your infographic. Don't worry about making it perfect; this is your rough blueprint.



Your wireframe needs to

- have room for your title and introduction
- outline sections (if you're using them) and organize them in a logical flow
- make space for any images you plan to use
- note which facts or arguments are going where; show how they flow into one another
- include the rough renderings of any data visualization you plan to use

6 Best Practices for Designing an Infographic

Infographics are all about visuals; make sure yours looks its best.

1 Limit your color palette

Three colors are usually ideal, with one of those colors working as a contrast

Solid colors are better than gradients

Avoid anything too bright or hard to see (e.g. highlighter yellow)

2 Keep imagery simple

Use uncomplicated graphics that look good big and small

Things like drop shadows are rarely necessary

3 Be consistent with style choices

A limited color palette helps

Using 1940s imagery? Don't drop in something from the 1980s

1

2

3

4

5

6

4 White space is a good thing

Don't feel like every pixel has to be used

Spacing your content makes it easier to read and understand

5 Two fonts is more than enough

Keep font size consistent—three sizes (header, subhead, body) should suffice

Typography is great way to draw attention to a fact or figure

6 Size matters

Width should be 600 to 735 pixels

Anything taller than 5000 pixels will start to lose attention

Answer

1

a question with your infographic: for example, the title of this section addresses “how to create a marketable infographic”

2

Tie

your infographic into a popular or trending topic: this is the least universal suggestion, and one that varies depending on the topic, but if you’re trying to get your infographic noticed, tying it to something popular will garner that initial attention (and can help you decide where you can submit your infographic in the later steps)

Use

3

useful data: one interesting fact is worth more than a dozen middling ones; a fact like this can be the lynchpin for your infographic and the reason it’s shared by others

6 Best Practices for Creating Marketable Infographics

4

Make

information digestible: the main purpose of infographics is to distill facts down into something palatable for non-expert audiences; the use of graphics and succinct text is how most infographics accomplish this

Inform

5

your sources: sourcing your facts is good practice; letting your sources know you used them can bring in additional eyes

6

Cater

to short attention spans: it’s always tempting to include every fact, but keeping infographics short and sweet is a big part of what makes them so enjoyable to read

3 Free Ways to Market Your Infographic

Paying for SEO or a sponsored tweet will work wonders, but there are plenty of free options



Submit to blogs, collections, and directories.

Reach out to industry experts. Bloggers and prominent twitter users are always hungry for content.

Add your infographic to relevant collections and directories. Here are a few places to submit your infographic:

[Easel.ly](#)

[Charts Bin](#)

[Pinterest](#)

[Daily Infographic](#)

[Cool Infographics](#)

[Infographics Archive](#)

[Infographic Journal](#)

[Infographics Showcase](#)

[Visual Loop](#)

[Chart Porn](#)

[Daily Infographic](#)

[Flickr \(Infographics Group\)](#)

[Reddit's Infographics Subreddit](#)



Leverage social media

Make sure social bookmarking tools (e.g. “Share on Facebook” buttons) are next to the source site for your infographic.

Twitter follow button: <https://twitter.com/about/resources/buttons#follow>

Twitter share button: <https://twitter.com/about/resources/buttons#tweet>

Twitter hashtag button: <https://twitter.com/about/resources/buttons#hashtag>

Twitter “Tweet this” button: <http://clicktotweet.com>

Facebook like button: <https://developers.facebook.com/docs/reference/plugins/like-box/>

Facebook share button: <https://developers.facebook.com/docs/plugins/share-button>

LinkedIn follow button: <https://developer.linkedin.com/plugins/follow-company>

LinkedIn share button: <https://developer.linkedin.com/plugins/share-button>

Pinterest follow button: http://business.pinterest.com/widget-builder/#do_follow_me_button

Pinterest “pin it” button: http://business.pinterest.com/widget-builder/#do_pin_it_button



Include an embed code

An absolute necessity! This is our favorite resource: <http://www.siegemedia.com/embed-code-generator>

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⁵Google Trends

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Communication

Words

Bryce Bladon
brycebladon.com

easelly

Layout

Etienne Poulin
etiennepoulin.com