

# How to Add Alternate Text to Images in PowerPoint

## Adding Alternate Text

### See Figure 1

- 1) Select the picture, image, clip art, shape, or graph
- 2) Right click for the context menu
- 3) Select “Edit Alt Text” from the drop-down menu
- 4) The Alternate Text menu will pop up on the right-hand side of the screen. Alternate Text should be concise about one to two sentences and should describe the image. If the image is complex focus on describing how the image is important to the text, rather than describing each individual element.

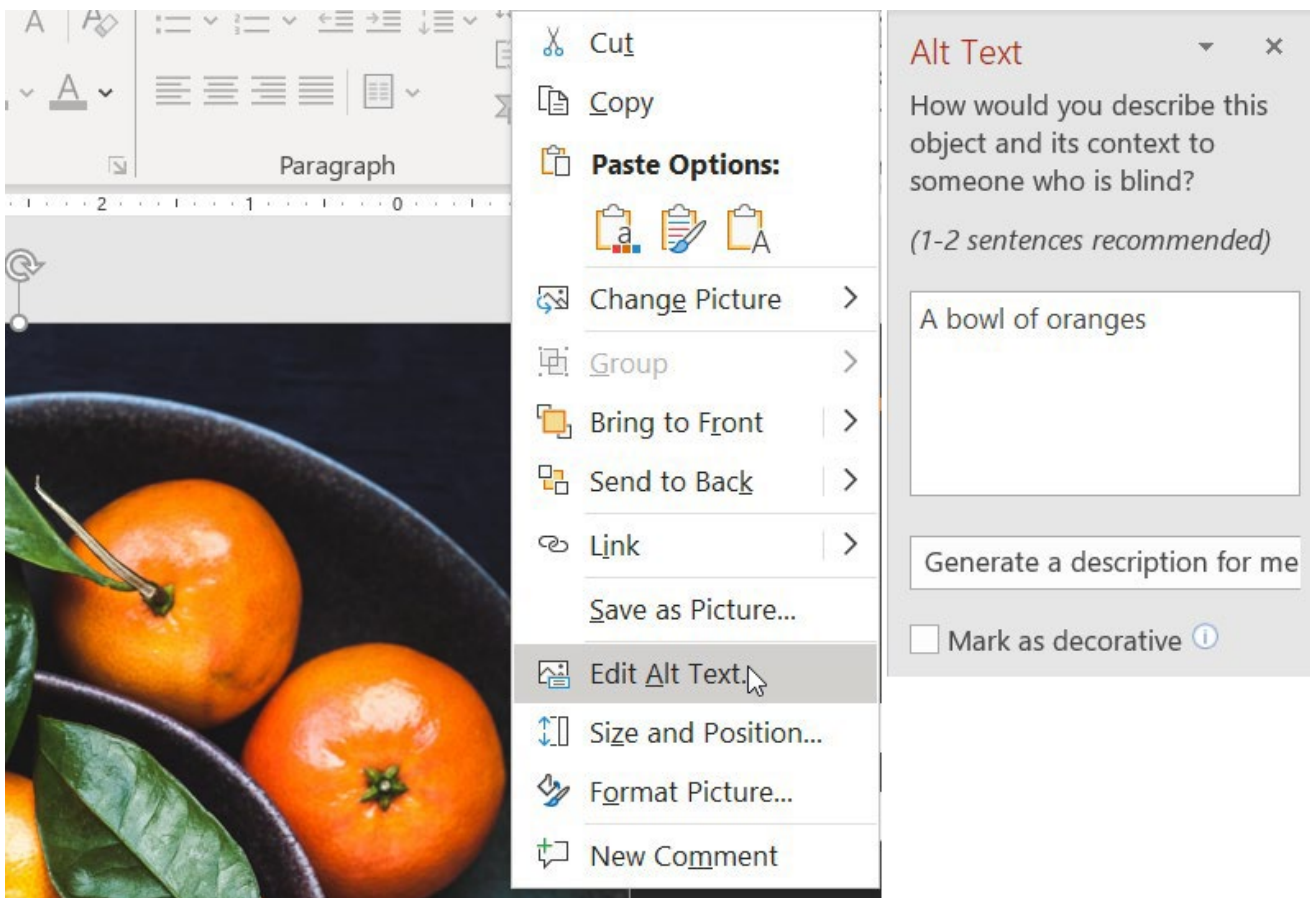
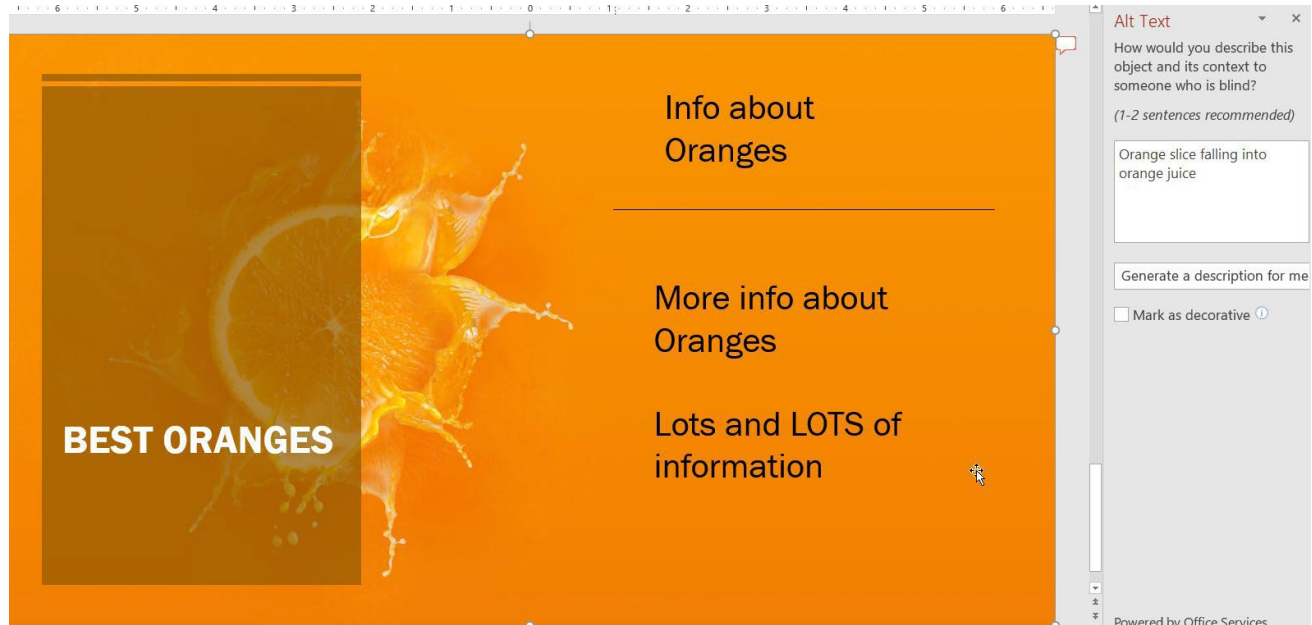


Figure 1 : Steps to Provide Alternate Text

## Ensure ALL Images have Alternate Text

PowerPoint comes with backgrounds which may include multiple images or shapes that are actually images. Double check that even “background” figures have alternate text. In the screenshot below, the background orange color and depiction of a slice of orange splashing into orange juice is an image and needs an alternative text.



## Description for Decorative Images:

Some files may have image elements that are only used for decoration or visual purposes. Examples include a line, drawn to create visual space, or a picture of a vine around a boarder purely for decorative purposes, etc. These images require specific steps to make them invisible to screen readers. If the vine motif were an important part of a curriculum or a representation of part of the study it would need standard Alternate Text.

### See Figure 2

- 1) Select the decorative image
- 2) Right click for the context menu
- 3) Select “Edit Alt Text” near the bottom of the menu
- 4) The Alternate Text menu will pop up on the right.
- 5) Type “Null” or “” into the description box to indicate there is no meaningful alternative text for this item. You can click the check box for “Mark as decorative text”, however, this option can sometimes create errors when converting to Adobe PDF.

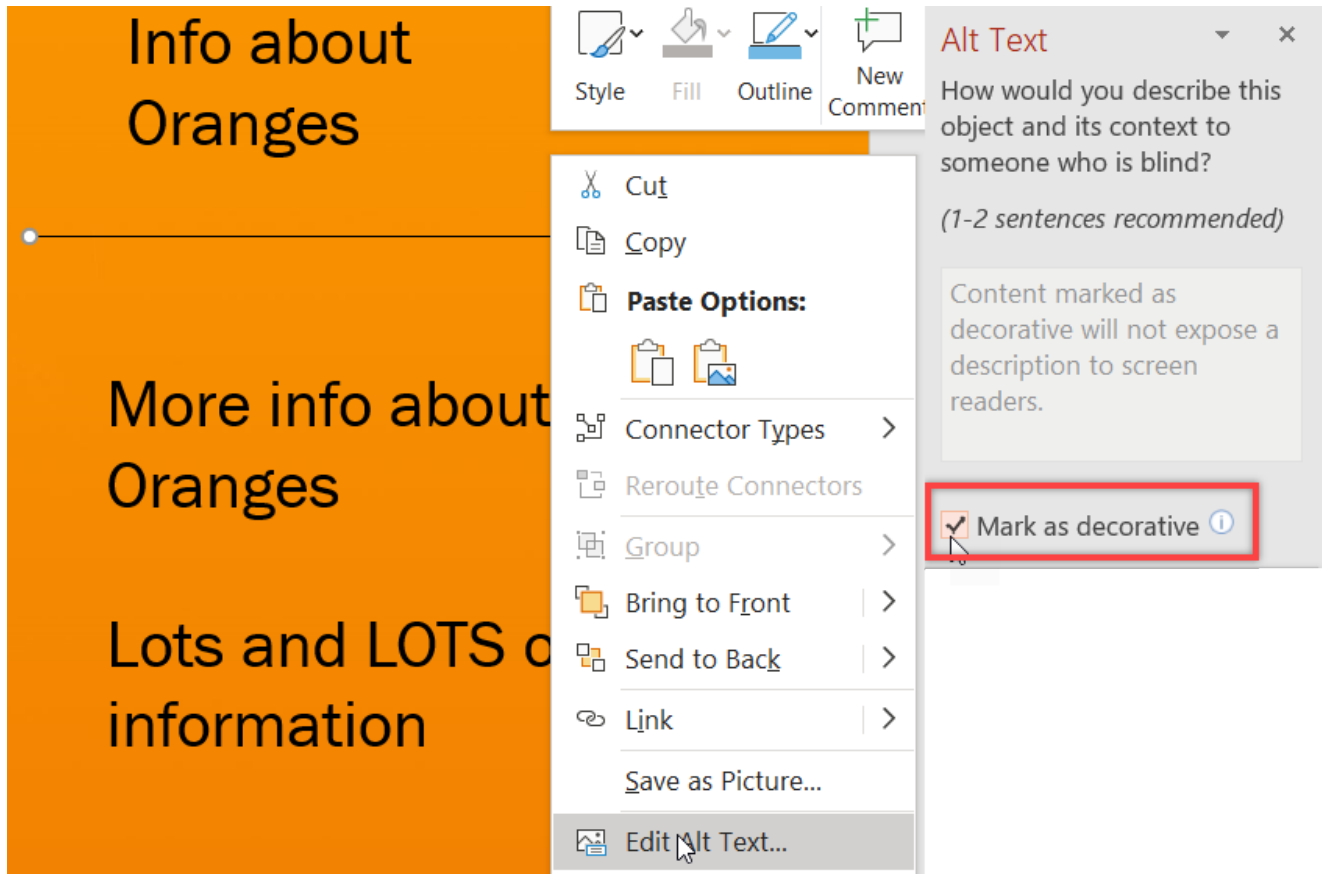


Figure 2 : Steps to Not Provide Alternate Text for Decorative Images

## **Additional Information**

### **Provide Additional Descriptions for Complex Images/Charts**

#### **Explanation**

If charts and graphs are complex and require additional explanation beyond what can be provided in the alternate text, provide this additional explanation in the surrounding text. Alternate text descriptions should be short and concise while conveying equivalent information. Some images and/or charts will require descriptions longer than should be entered into the alternate text description area. In these cases, it is appropriate to further explain the image or graph on the slide itself.

### **Text Boxes**

#### **Explanation**

Text boxes represent a mix of visual and textual elements. The language within a text box is typed directly onto the page, however, the border of a text box is often viewed as an image. After adding a text box, select the border, and follow the steps to add provide a “null” or “empty” alternative text for the border of the text box.

#### **Best Practice**

Another option is instead of using text boxes, convert the content of the text boxes to regular text. Select a slide option that will allow you to use a content placeholder instead of a text box. The visual effects of a text box can be achieved by using a bordered paragraph.

### **Smart Art**

Smart Art is a combination of images and texts that allows users to build visual graphs that include a text component. However, this combination creates errors when converted to PDF. If you use Smart Art make sure that the information that you include in the text is repeated elsewhere in your file. Then make the entire Smart Art into an image by using an image tool like Snagit or “print screen”. If you have not included the text in the Smart Art elsewhere in your file you should consider using a more accessible format such as a Table or a list instead of a Smart Art graphic.

### **Avoid Using Images of Text**

#### **Explanation**

Authors should present information as text rather than using an image of text. This will enable people who require a particular visual presentation of text (e.g. a particular font size, foreground and background color, font family, line spacing or alignment) to be able to adjust the text presentation as required. If for any reason, the document author cannot format the text to get the same effect, then an image of text may be used. However, the entirety of the information presented in the image must be represented elsewhere in the file.

## Exception

If a particular presentation of text is essential to the information being conveyed, then it is acceptable to use images of text. Note: Logotypes (text that is part of a logo or brand name) are considered essential. When non-text content is presented as images of text, the text alternative shall be the text in the image.

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