## How to Read Visual Aids

Here is a quick overview of what visual aids are, where they may be found, and the characteristics of the most common types of visual aids.

### What is a visual aid?

**Visual Aid:** An image or graphic used to display information

Visual aids can be found in just about every kind of print and electronic media. They can appear within the body of the text, in boxes or sidebars, or in appendices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Electronic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><img src="image" alt="Print Visual Aid Icon" /></td>
<td><img src="image" alt="Electronic Visual Aid Icon" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Each visual aid has a **title** and **caption** with a brief explanation. They are often referred to as “tables” or “figures” and numbered to keep track of them.

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### Common Types of Visual Aids

**Tables:** Tables are text-based graphics that display information using words and numbers arranged in columns and rows.

![Table Example](image)

**Graphs:** Graphs display information on a grid using an x/y axis. There are different types of graphs, such as line graphs and bar graphs.

![Graph Example](image)

**Charts:** Charts use shapes to convey information, such as percentages, timelines, or processes. There are different types of charts, such as pie charts and flow charts.

![Chart Example](image)

**Diagrams:** Diagrams are schematic drawings that show how something works, such as a physical structure, a process, or even a concept.

![Diagram Example](image)

**Maps:** Maps are used to describe a territory or identify a location.

![Map Example](image)

**Pictures:** There are different kinds of pictures that can be used as visual aids, such as political cartoons and drawings of people, places, things, and events.

![Picture Example](image)

**Photographs:** Photographs are also used as visual aids to convey information about people, places, things, and events. The types and uses of photos can vary greatly because of the different types of devices used to take them, such as cameras, telescopes, microscopes, and even MRI machines.

![Photograph Example](image)

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