

## Cheat Sheet for Creating Tip Sheets

1. Leave lots of white space.
2. Arial font is most readable for the screen; Times New Roman is best for print. Generally use no smaller than 12-pt type.
3. Add 4 to 6 points of extra spacing between logical groupings to keep ideas together graphically. Don't double-space the entire document.
4. No more than 10% of text should be formatted in a font different than the default font.
5. Things related logically should be related visually. To show connection use:
  - Spacing
  - Nesting
  - Size and formatting
  - Color
6. Headings should be bold and flush left on the page for easier scanning.
7. Use numbering for things in sequence. Use bullets for things *not* done sequentially.
  - Indenting lists helps readability
  - But don't use numbers or bullets just for one item
8. A picture is worth a 1000 words, but it has a confusing effect if it does not enhance your point.
9. Highlight very important tips or very confusing points with a box or shading.
10. When writing step-by-step exercises review to see if each numbered item is really one separate step or action. Beware of including text that is parenthetical in the middle of an action.
11. Use **bold** for things seen on the computer screen and ***bold italics*** for things the user must type or say.
12. Stick to your conventions for all training materials
  - The more cues you use, the less useful they are!
  - If a red arrow signifies danger, it must be used the same way everywhere.
  - If you use a box to highlight something that is tricky, you need to do that everywhere. Don't highlight an important concept in a different way the next time you use it.
13. When writing tip sheets, keep your purpose in mind. If you want people to be able to use the tip sheet on their own, use the strategy of telling the person the task they are expected to do (the big picture), and then give the steps for doing it indented underneath.

Be aware: There is a big difference between people successfully following directions with you standing there versus being able to do a task on their own.