PowerPoint 2016 and 2019 cheat sheet: Ribbon quick reference

Find the most popular commands on the Ribbon in Microsoft PowerPoint 2016 and 2019 for Windows.

by Preston Gralla | June 2020

For the most part, the Ribbon interface in PowerPoint 2016 and 2019 is intuitive to use, but it's not always easy to figure out where each command is located. To help, the charts below detail the most commonly used commands on each Ribbon tab; we've also included keyboard shortcuts.

Note that if you're using PowerPoint 2019, some screen elements might look slightly different than what you see here, but the functionality is largely the same (with a few additional features).

File tab
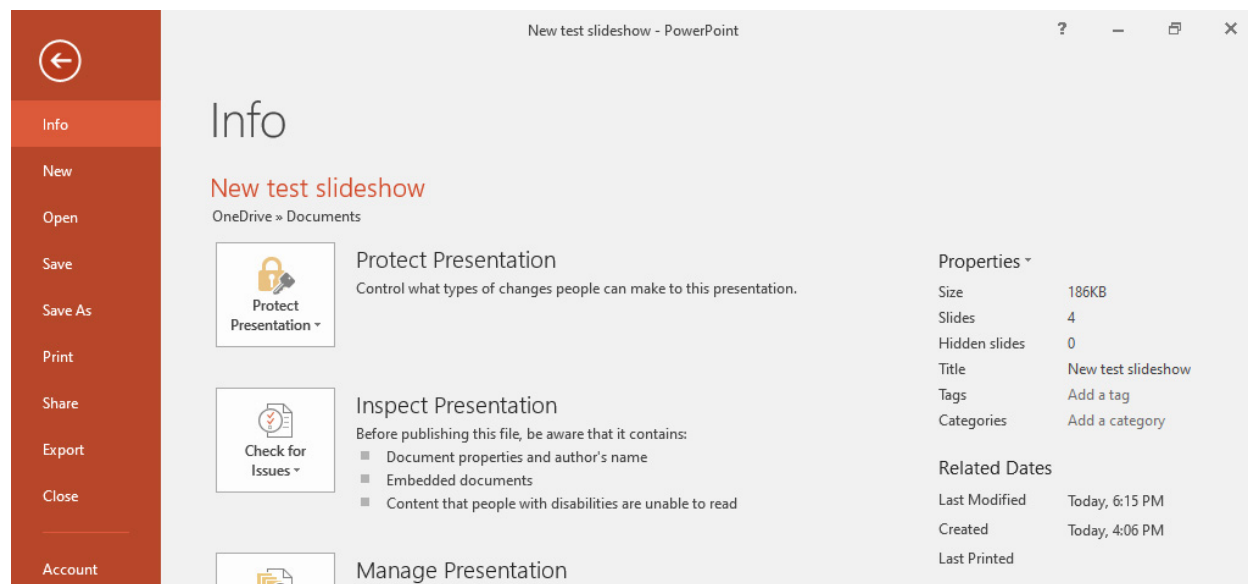
The File tab behaves differently from the other Ribbon tabs. Rather than seeing a set of commands on the Ribbon above your presentation, when you click the File tab, you're taken to an area that Microsoft calls "Backstage."

Instead of making changes within a presentation, Backstage lets you work with the presentation as a whole and with PowerPoint overall. You'll find common tasks such as opening, saving, printing and sharing a presentation, as well as special screens for managing the presentation (the Info screen shown above), your Office account (the Account screen), and how PowerPoint behaves overall (the Options screen).

Useful File tab/Backstage commands		
Action	PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location	Keyboard shortcut
Go to the File tab	File tab	Alt-F
Start a new presentation	File tab > New	Ctrl-N *or* Alt-F, N
Open a presentation	File tab > Open	Ctrl-O *or* Alt-F, O
Save a presentation	File tab > Save	Ctrl-S *or* Alt-F, S
Save a presentation with a different file name in a different location	File tab > Save As	F12 *or* Alt-F, A
Print a presentation	File tab > Print	Ctrl-P *or* Alt-F, P
Set a presentation's permissions	File tab > Info > Protect Presentation	Alt-F, I, P
Inspect a presentation	File tab > Inspect Presentation	Alt-F, I, I
Manage a presentation by checking it or recovering unsaved changes	File tab > Manage Presentation	Alt-F, I, R
Share a presentation via email, the web, SharePoint, etc.	File tab > Share	Alt-F, Z
Convert a presentation to a different file format	File tab > Export	Alt-F, E
Close a presentation	File tab > Close	Ctrl-W *or* Alt-F, C
Manage your Office, Windows and OneDrive accounts	File tab > Account	Alt-F, D
Customize PowerPoint	File tab > Options	Alt-F, T

Home tab
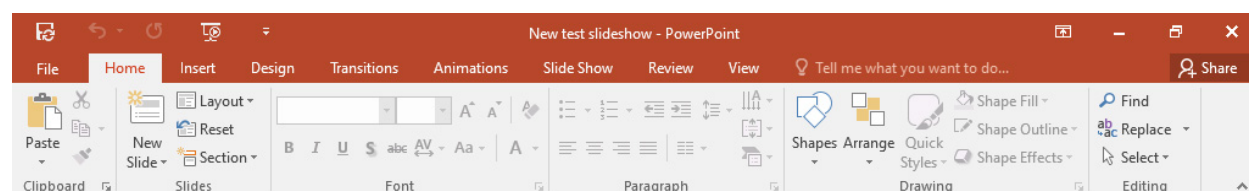
The Home tab contains many frequently used PowerPoint features, such as tools for creating and changing the layout of slides; changing fonts and font attributes; creating drawings; and searching for and replacing text.

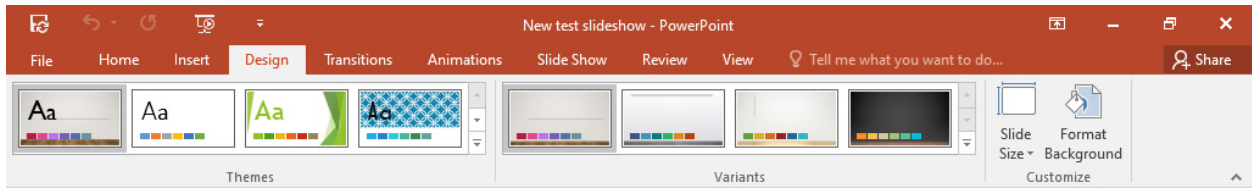| Useful Home tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Home tab	Home tab	Alt-H
Copy selection to the clipboard	Home tab > Clipboard group > Copy	Ctrl-C *or* Alt-H, C
Delete selection and copy it to the clipboard	Home tab > Clipboard group > Cut	Ctrl-X *or* Alt-H, X
Paste from the clipboard	Home tab > Clipboard group > Paste	Ctrl-V or Alt-H, V
Use the Format Painter	Home tab > Clipboard group > Format Painter	Alt-H, FP
Create a new slide	Home tab > Slides > New Slide	Alt-H, I
Select a slide layout	Home tab > Slides > Layout	Alt-H, L
Reset a slide to its default layout	Home tab > Slides > Reset	Alt-H, Q
Format text (font, size, bold, italic, underline, color, etc.)	Home tab > Font group	*Use Alt-H to see shortcuts in Font group*
Format paragraphs	Home tab > Paragraph group	*Use Alt-H to see shortcuts in Paragraph group*
Change text direction	Home tab > Paragraph group > Text Direction	Alt-H, AX
Align text	Home tab > Paragraph group > Align Text	Alt-H, AT
Create a shape or drawing	Home tab > Drawing group, then select a shape	Alt-H, SH
Arrange objects on a slide	Home tab > Drawing group > Arrange	Alt-H, G
Set the fill for the selected shape(s)	Home tab > Drawing group > Shape Fill	Alt-H, SF
Set the shape outline for the selected shape(s)	Home tab > Drawing group > Draw Shape	Alt-H, SO
Set the shape effect for the selected shape(s)	Home tab > Drawing group > Shape Effect	Alt-H, SE
Find a word, phrase or heading	Home tab > Editing group > Find	Alt-H, FD *or* Ctrl-F
Find and replace a word or phrase	Home tab > Editing group > Replace	Alt- H, RR

Insert tab

If you need to insert something into your presentation, whether it be a picture, table, screenshot, video or more, here's where to go.

| Useful Insert tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Insert tab	Insert tab	Alt-N
Insert new slide	Insert tab > Slides group > New Slide	Alt-N, SI
Insert a table	Insert tab > Tables group > Table	Alt-N, T
Insert a picture from your computer	Insert tab > Images group > Pictures	Alt-N, P
Insert an online picture	Insert tab > Images group > Online Pictures	Alt-N, F
Insert a screenshot	Insert tab > Images group > Screenshot > Screen Clipping	Alt-N, SC, C
Insert or edit a Photo Album	Insert tab > Images group > Photo Album	Alt-N, A1
Insert a shape	Insert tab > Illustrations group > Shapes	Alt-N, SH
Insert a chart	Insert tab > Illustrations group > Chart	Alt-N, C
Insert a Zoom slide (in PowerPoint 2019	Insert tab > Links group > Zoom > Summary Zoom *or* Section Zoom *or* Slide Zoom	*Summary Zoom:* Alt-N, Y2, M *Section Zoom:* Alt-N, Y2, C *Slide Zoom:* Alt-N, Y2, D
Insert a hyperlink	Insert tab > Links group > Link	Alt-N, I *or* Ctrl-K
Insert comments	Insert tab > Comments group > Comment	Alt-N, L
Insert a header or footer	Insert tab > Text group > Header & Footer	Alt-N, H
Insert slide numbers	Insert tab > Text group > Slide Number	Alt-N, SN
Insert an object	Insert tab > Text group > Object	Alt-N, J
Insert an equation	Insert tab > Symbols group > Equation	Alt-N, E
Insert a symbol	Insert tab > Symbols group > Symbol	Alt-N, U
Insert a video	Insert tab > Media group > Video	Alt-N, V
Insert audio	Insert tab > Media group > Audio	Alt-N, O
Create a screen recording	Insert tab > Media group > Screen Recording	Alt-N, R

Design tab

Want to change your presentation's theme, customize things like slide sizes, and give your slides a makeover? The Design tab is the place to be.

| Useful Design tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Design tab	Design tab	Alt-G
Add or change a theme	Design tab > Themes group	Alt-G, H
Set a variation of the current theme	Design tab > Variants group	Alt-G, V
Set size of slides	Design tab > Customize group > Slide Size	Alt-G, S
Format the background	Design tab > Customize group > Format Background	Alt-G, F

Transitions tab
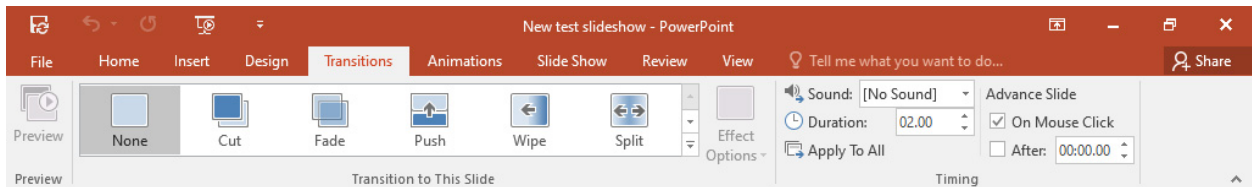
Here's where to go to create and customize transitions between slides.

Useful Transitions tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Transitions tab	Transitions tab	Alt-K
Preview transitions	Transitions tab > Preview group > Preview	Alt-K, P
Select a transition	Transitions tab > Transition to This Slide group	Alt-K, T
Set options for transition effects	Transitions tab > Transition to This Slide group > Effect Options	Alt-K, O
Add sound to transitions	Transitions tab >Timing group > Sound	Alt-K, U
Set the length of a transition	Transitions tab >Timing group > Duration	Alt-K, E
Apply transition to all slides	Transitions tab >Timing group > Apply to All	Alt-K, L

|		
Advance slide on a mouse click	Transitions tab > Timing group > On Mouse Click	Alt-K, M
Set the time for automatically advancing the slide	Transitions tab > Timing group > Timing	*After:* Alt-K, F *Time:* Alt-K, I

Animations tab
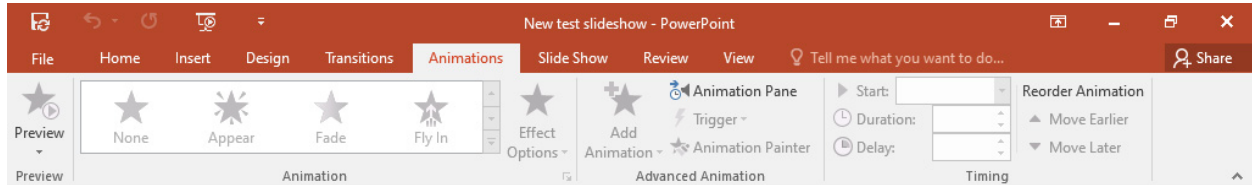
Here's where to go to create and customize animations for your presentations.

| Useful Animations tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Animations tab	Animations tab	Alt-A
Preview animations	Animations tab > Preview group > Preview	Alt-A, PP
Select the animation type	Animations tab > Animation group	Alt-A, S
Select animation effect options	Animations tab > Animation group > Effect Options	Alt-A, O
Set animation start trigger	Animations tab > Timing group > Start	Alt-A, T
Set animation duration	Animations tab > Timing group > Duration	Alt-A, DU
Set animation delay	Animations tab > Timing group > Delay	Alt-A, DE
Change the order of the sequence of the animation	Animations tab > Timing group > Reorder Animation	*Move earlier:* Alt-A, E *Move later:* Alt-A, L

Slide Show tab
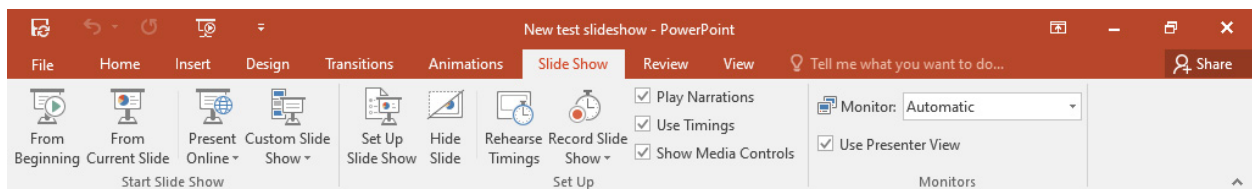
When it's time to give your presentation, there's one place to go: the Slide Show tab. Here are its important commands.

| Useful Slide Show tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Slide Show tab	Slide Show tab	Alt-S
Run the slide show from the beginning	Slide Show tab > Start Slide Show group > From Beginning	Alt-S, B
Run the slide show from the current slide	Slide Show tab > Start Slide Show group > From Current Slide	Alt-S, C
Present a slide show online	Slide Show tab > Start Slide Show group > Present Online	Alt-S, DO
Create a custom slide show	Slide Show tab > Start Slide Show group > Custom Slide Show > Custom Shows	Alt-S, MW
Set up a slide show	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Set Up Slide Show	Alt-S, S
Hide/unhide a slide	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Hide Slide	Alt-S, H
Rehearse your slide timings	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Rehearse Timings	Alt-S, T
Record a slide show from the current slide	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Record Slide Show > Record from Current Slide	Alt-S, NR
Record a slide show from the beginning	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Record Slide Show > Record from Beginning	Alt-S, NB
Play narrations	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Play Narrations	Alt-S, P
Use timings	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Use Timings	Alt-S, U
Show media controls	Slide Show tab > Set Up group > Show Medial Controls	Alt-S, W
Select a monitor	Slide Show tab > Monitors group > Select Monitor	Alt-S, O
Use the Presenter View	Slide Show tab > Monitors group > Use Presenter View	Alt-S, V

Review tab
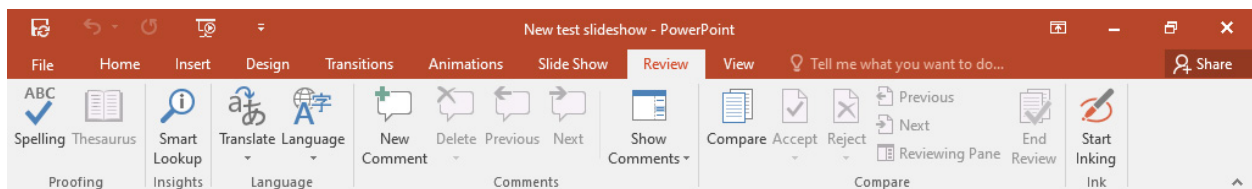
Need to check spelling, translate text, review other people's comments or compare different versions of a presentation? This is the tab for you.

| Useful Review tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Review tab	Review tab	Alt-R
Run a spelling check	Review tab > Proofing group > Spelling	Alt-R, S or F7
Find synonyms for selected word	Review tab > Proofing group > Thesaurus	Alt-R, E
Run Smart Lookup	Review tab > Insights group > Smart Lookup	Alt-R, RS
Translate selected text	Review tab > Language group > Translate	Alt-R, L
Select a language	Review tab > Language group > Language	Alt-R, U
Insert a new comment	Review tab > Comments group > New Comment	Alt-R, C
Delete a comment	Review tab > Comments group > Delete	Alt-R, D
Go to previous comment	Review tab > Comments group > Previous	Alt-R, V
Go to next comment	Review tab > Comments group > Next	Alt-R, N
Show all comments	Review tab > Comments group > Show All	Alt-R, PP
Compare different versions of a presentation	Review tab > Compare group > Compare	Alt-R, G
Accept change	Review tab > Compare group > Accept	Alt-R, A2, A
Reject change	Review tab > Compare group > Reject	Alt-R, J
Go to previous change	Review tab > Compare group > Previous	Alt-R, F
Go to next change	Review tab > Compare group > Next	Alt-R, H
Show/hide the Revisions pane	Review tab > Compare group > Reviewing Pane	Alt-R, I
Exit comparison	Review tab > Compare group > End Review	Alt-R, W
Use digital ink	Review tab > Ink > Start inking	Alt-R, K1
Hide digital ink	Review tab > Ink > Hide digital	Alt-R, K2

View tab
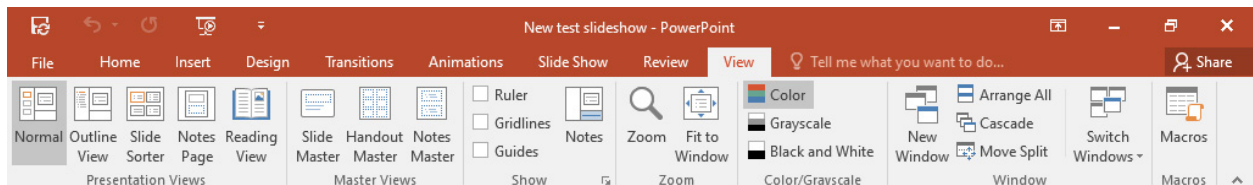
The View tab has commands for changing the view of the presentation and master, as well as displaying a variety of items including the ruler and grid lines, zooming in and out and splitting the window.

| Useful View tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the View tab	View tab	Alt-W
Switch to normal view	View tab > Presentation Views group > Normal	Alt-W, L
Switch to outline view	View tab > Presentation Views group > Page Break Preview	Alt-W, PO
Switch to slide sorter	View tab > Presentation Views group > Slide Sorter	Alt-W, I
Switch to notes page	View tab > Presentation Views group > Notes Page	Alt-W, T
Switch to reading view	View tab > Presentation Views group > Reading View	Alt-W, D
View the slide master	View tab > Master Views group > Slide Master	Alt-W, M
View the handout master	View tab > Master Views group > Handout Master	Alt-W, H
View the notes master	View tab > Master Views group > Notes Master	Alt-W, K
Show/hide ruler	View tab > Show group > Ruler	Alt-W, R
Show/hide gridlines	View tab > Show group > Gridlines	Alt-W, G
Show/hide guides	View tab > Show group > Guides	Alt-W, S
Show/hide notes	View tab > Show group > Notes	Alt-W, PN
Zoom in or out of the presentation	View tab > Zoom group > Zoom	Alt-W, Q
Fit the presentation to the window	View tab > Zoom group > Fit to Window	Alt-W, F
Change color settings	View tab > Color/Grayscale group > Color *or* Grayscale *or* Black and White	*Color:* Alt-W, C *Grayscale:* Alt-W, O *B&W:* Alt-W, B
Open a new window with the existing presentation in it	View tab > Window group > New Window	Alt-W, N
Stack all of your open windows	View tab > Window group > Arrange all	Alt-W, A
Cascade all of your open windows	View tab > Window group > Cascade	Alt-W, E
Move the splitter that separates different panes of the window	View tab > Window group > Move split	Alt-W, V
Switch between open windows	View tab > Window group > Switch windows	Alt-W, W
Work with macros	View tab > Macros group > Macros	Alt-W, PM

Contextual tabs

Some tabs are not part of the basic Ribbon in PowerPoint (and other Office 2016 apps) but appear only in certain contexts. For instance, the Picture Tools/Format tab appears only when you've inserted an image into your presentation and your cursor is positioned in the image area. It lets you do everything from cropping the image to positioning it on the page.
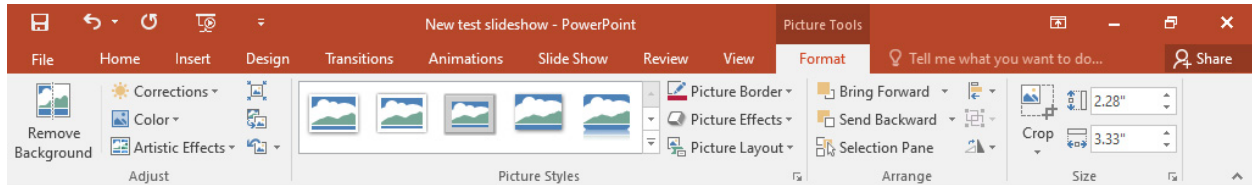
When you insert a table into your presentation and position your cursor in it, two new tabs appear: Table Tools/Design and Table Tools/Layout. The Design tab lets you control the table's style, including borders and shading, while the Layout tab lets you specify the number of rows and columns, merge and split cells, sort the table's data and more.
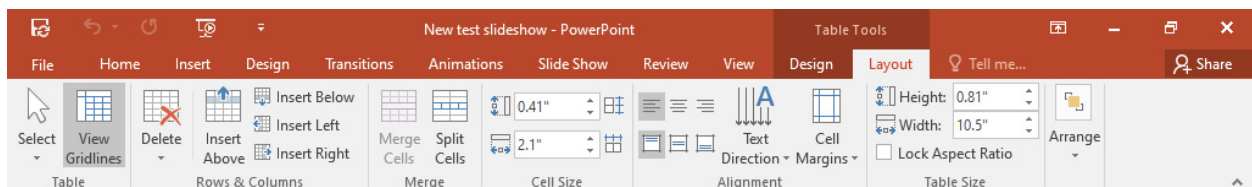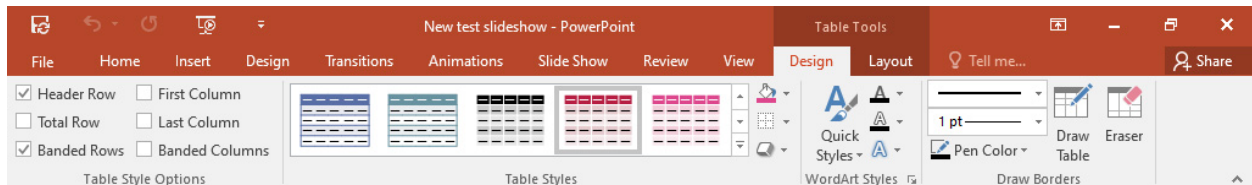
Similarly, when you insert a chart into your presentation and position your cursor in it, you see the Chart Tools/Design and Chart Tools/Format tabs. The Design tab lets you set what the chart looks like and what data appears in it, and the Format tab lets you control how it integrates with the page and do things like change the styles of the shapes and lines in the chart.
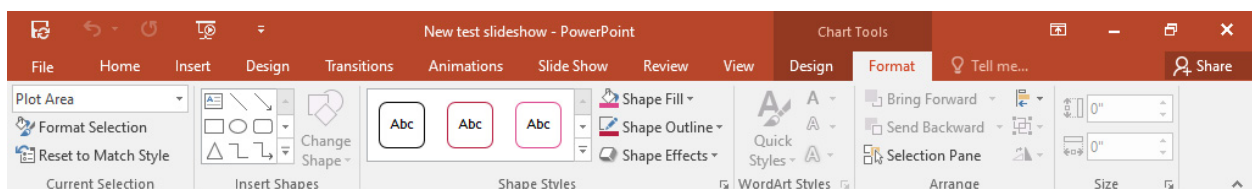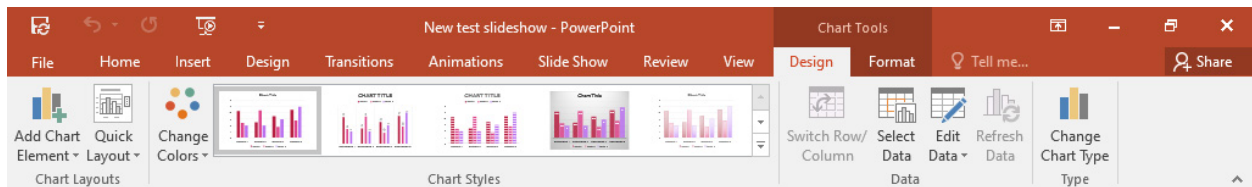
Following are some of the most commonly used commands from these contextual tabs. Note that these keyboard shortcuts work only in the appropriate context — for instance, if your cursor is on the picture you want to format.

Useful contextual tab commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Go to the Picture Tools/Format tab	Picture Tools/Format	Alt-JP
Select a picture style	Picture Tools/Format tab > Picture Styles group	Alt-JP, K
Sharpen, soften or change the brightness/contrast of a photo	Picture Tools/Format tab > Adjust group > Corrections	Alt-JP, R
Change the color saturation or tone of a photo, or recolor it	Picture Tools/Format tab > Adjust group > Color	Alt-JP, I
Go to the Table Tools/Design tab	Table Tools/Design	Alt-JT
Go to the Table Tools/Layout tab	Table Tools/Layout	Alt-JL
Insert a row in the table	Table Tools/Layout tab > Rows & Columns group > Insert Above *or* Insert Below	*Insert above:* Alt-JL, V *Insert below:* Alt-JL, E
Insert a column in the table	Table Tools/Layout tab > Rows & Columns group > Insert Left *or* Insert Right	*Insert to left:* Alt-JL, L *Insert to right:* Alt-JL, I
Delete cells, columns, rows or the whole table	Table Tools/Layout tab > Rows & Columns group > Delete	*Delete columns:* Alt-JL, DC *Delete rows:* Alt-JL, DR *Delete table:* Alt-JL, DT
Go to the Chart Tools/Design tab	Chart Tools/Design	Alt-JC
Select a chart style Chart	Tools/Design tab > Chart Styles group	Alt-JC, S
Add or change chart elements such as axis titles, data labels or a legend	Chart Tools/Design tab > Chart Styles group > Add Chart Element	Alt-JC, A
Go to the Chart Tools/Format tab (when cursor is on a chart)	Chart Tools/Format	Alt-JA
Arrange the chart on the page	Chart Tools/Format tab > Arrange	Alt-JA, AP

Other Ribbon tabs and icons

Depending on your version of Office and the device you use, you might have access to additional main Ribbon tabs such as Draw, which lets users with touch devices annotate and draw on their presentations. PowerPoint 2019 also adds a Help tab to the right end of the main Ribbon tabs. There are also icons to the right of the Ribbon tabs for opening the share pane and using the Tell Me feature.

Other useful commands		
Action	**PowerPoint 2016/2019 Ribbon location**	**Keyboard shortcut**
Launch the Help pane (in PowerPoint 2019)	Help tab > Help	Alt-Y, H
Show online training (in PowerPoint 2019)	Help tab > Show Training	Alt-Y, S
Go to the "Tell Me" text box	"Tell me what you want to do" text box	Alt-Q
Open/close the Share pane	Share button	Alt-ZS

Preston Gralla is a contributing editor for Computerworld and the author of more than 45 books, including Windows 8 Hacks (O'Reilly, 2012) and How the Internet Works (Que, 2006).