

Tips to help you nail your presentation!

(and calm your natural nerves)

Before any presentation, it's totally normal to feel nervous and sometimes even very anxious. Presenting can be daunting, but it's also exciting and a really great way to showcase your work and your findings on your given project.

Below, we've listed some tips to support in preparing for your presentation, and hopefully support you with calming your nerves. Try to remember, most people feel some sense of nervousness before presenting - it's normal. Feel free to share your feelings and thoughts on TalkCampus with other students who get it. They could have some great tips and tricks to help you not only nail it, but enjoy it too.

Prepare



Practice



Pause



Prepare

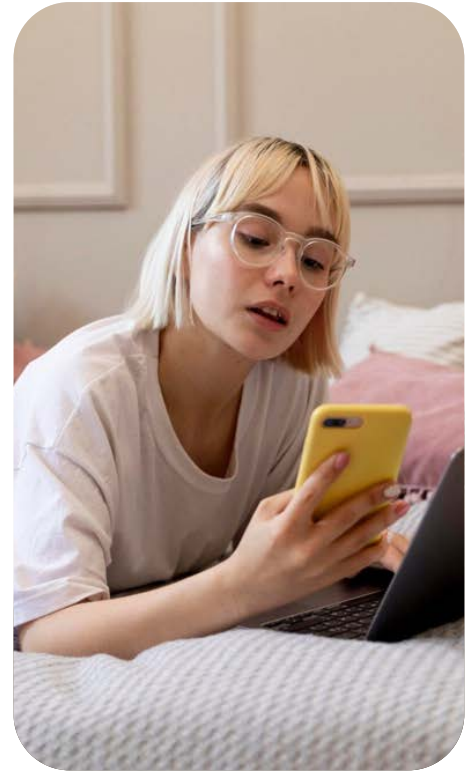
The more prepared you are for your presentation, the easier it'll be to control the angst and the nerves. Understand what your teacher or professor is asking you to do, what they are marking, and what they are expecting of you.

Use slides, but don't overwrite them. Sometimes having additional notes or flash cards in your hands, with some slides on a screen behind you can be a nice way to shift the focus from you.

Use visuals, bullet points and minimal text on what you are showing on screen, and avoid reading your note cards (if you're using them) word for word. Aim for a couple of minutes per slide as a general rule.

Make sure you've got everything set up correctly and have a back up plan for any tech issues you may encounter!

Use positive self talk - if you've worked hard on this, be proud. Say to yourself it's going to go well. Negative talk will build up in your brain - there's no need for that if you're prepped. You could visualise the presentation going well; imagine the feeling of confidence and control, and people looking engaged and friendly as you talk. These positive images will help you to feel calmer ahead of the real thing.



Practice

The easiest way to avoid needing to read your notes or flash cards word for word is practicing. If you're in a study group, or live with housemates, see if you can practice a couple of times with them. I'm sure you can return the favour and support them with a project or classwork too! If you're alone, practice in front of a mirror or camera. Watch yourself back. You could even send a short video to someone you know and ask for feedback.

Time yourself. If your professor has given you a timecap, make sure you stick to it. You'll feel more comfortable going into it if you know that you're sticking to all the right rules and aren't going to be stopped mid conclusion.

Record yourself. Watching yourself back might feel uncomfortable at first, but it's a brilliant way to practice your pacing, posture and avoid using too many filler words such as 'umm', 'eeerrr' and 'like'. It's also a good way to have a laugh!

Pause

When it comes to nerves and anxiety, one of the best things you can do is practice mindful breathing. Taking a few deep breaths in, and long breaths out can really help recenter and calm you. Another one is taking two sharp breaths in through the nose, and a longer breath out through the mouth. Do this in your practice runs, in the lead up and in the moments beforehand.

During the presentation - smile, make eye contact and stand tall even if you're nervous. Good body language will help you feel and appear ready and confident.

Don't rush, you've practiced this, you've got the timings right - make sure you pause, take a breath (or two!), and allow the audience to absorb what you're saying.

Take water, pause and have a sip. (This also helps with the dry mouth that can often accompany presentations - we've all been there!)

Have fun! Engage the audience, talk to them, not at them. If you'd like - you could even ask them to join in and ask questions as they pop up. Sometimes it can be a nice distraction to get people involved. And remember, mistakes are normal - and every person who's done a presentation will have experienced them. Try to laugh it off, or practice moving on smoothly.



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