

# 10 tips for using tables

Tables can help you present text as well as data. Designed well, they can help users see relationships or features that might otherwise be hidden in content presented in paragraphs. Tables can sometimes help you cut back on text, making information faster to look up and understand.

<b>1</b>	<b>Facilitate comparison</b>	Present the characteristics users may want to compare as rows or columns of information.
<b>2</b>	<b>Support quick look-up</b>	Make relationships and attributes visible by presenting them as rows or columns of information.
<b>3</b>	<b>Show conditions or consequences</b>	Try an 'if-then' table to communicate a set of conditions or consequences that apply in different situations.
<b>4</b>	<b>Reduce repetition or clutter</b>	Consider a table if it will help you avoid repetition or reduce visual clutter.
<b>5</b>	<b>Keep table design simple</b>	Avoid multiple levels of header rows or columns. Consider breaking a complex table into two or more simpler tables.
<b>6</b>	<b>Write concisely</b>	Keep text concise in all table cells, especially headers.
<b>7</b>	<b>Guide the eye across the grid</b>	Provide grid lines or shading. Shading must offer sufficient contrast to guide the eye, but not so much as to make the content of each cell hard to read.
<b>8</b>	<b>Use appropriate alignment</b>	Align text to the left unless the cell is narrow. Right-align numbers if they have decimal points or when they are added up.
<b>9</b>	<b>Provide a title</b>	Use the <caption> tag or a heading to provide a meaningful title for the table.
<b>10</b>	<b>Use appropriate table markup</b>	Tag header and data cells with appropriate <th> and <td> tags. For more complex tables, associate data cells with header cells using headers and IDs.