# Best Practices for Accessible Presentations

Use of colors can be helpful in a presentation, but it can be an issue if members of your audience have some form of colorblindness. In particular, using red and green (for example, using a "stoplight" motif) causes problems for those who are red/green colorblind, the most common form.

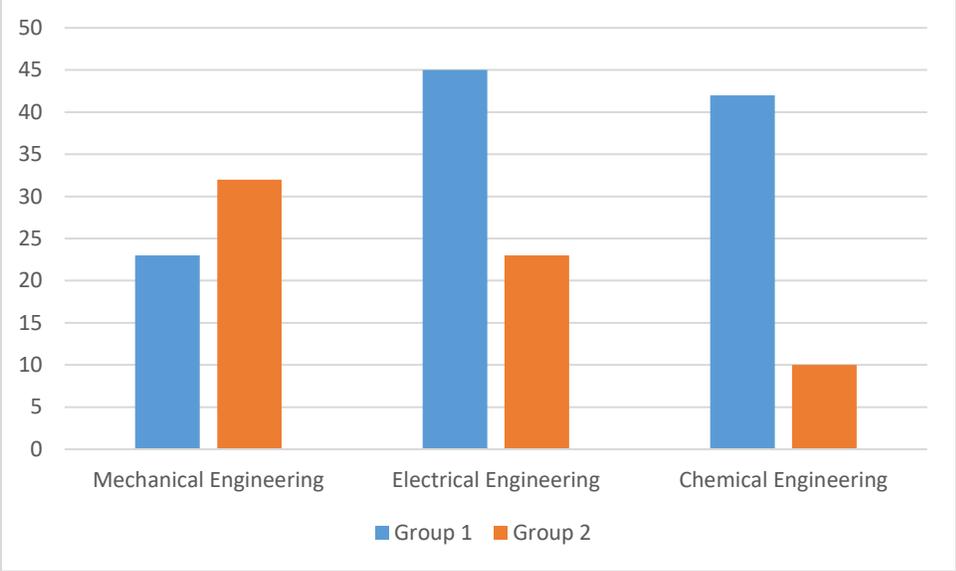To avoid problems, combine colors with patterns or linetypes.
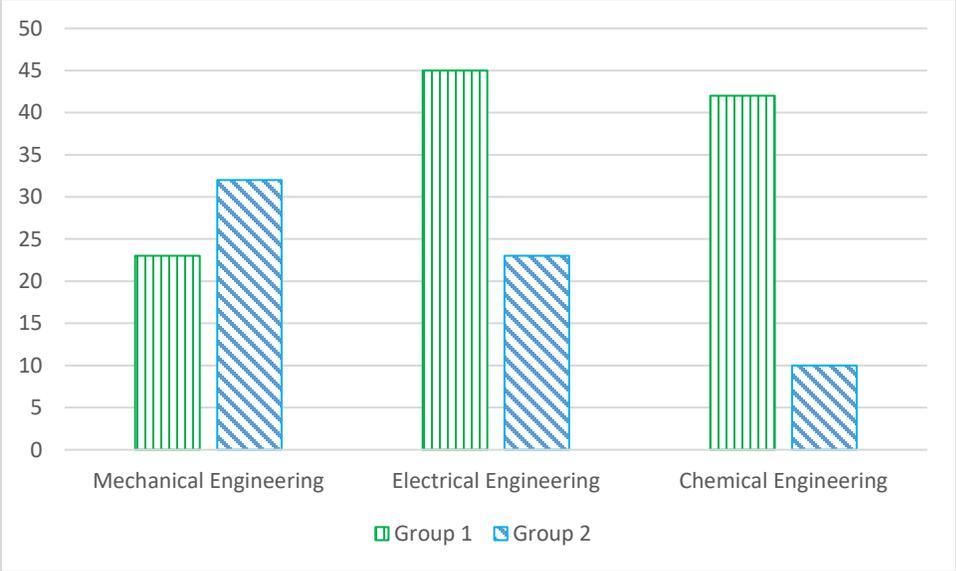
Instead of this:
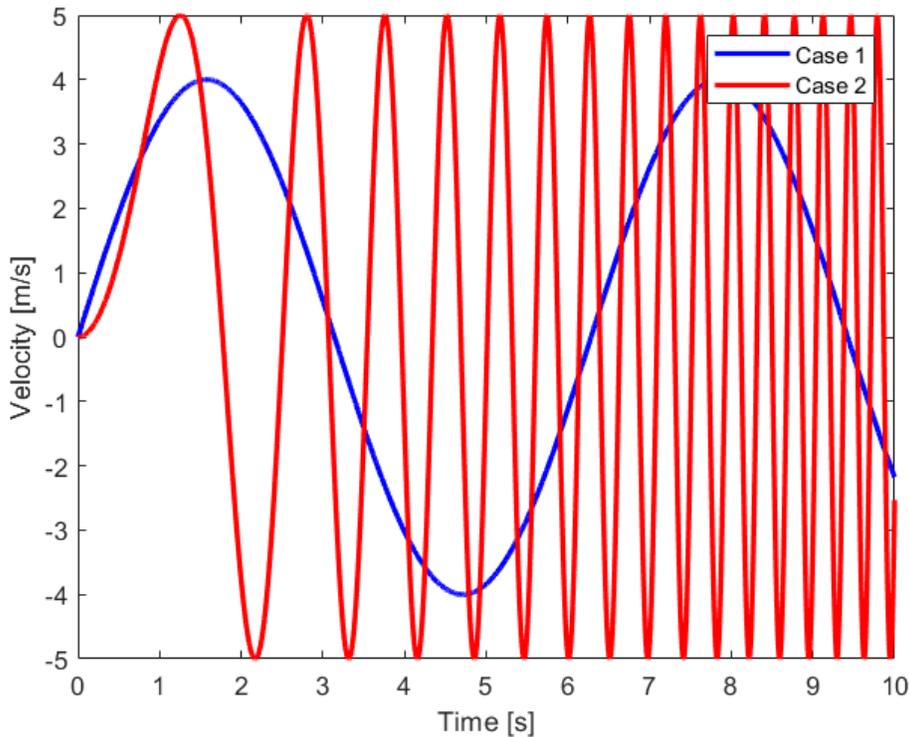
Use this:
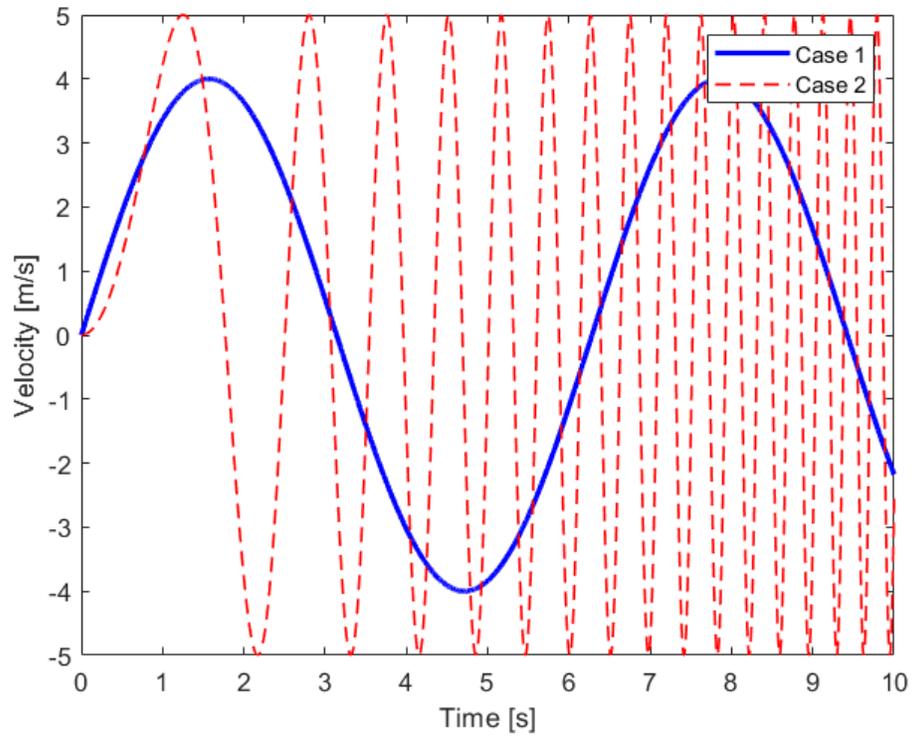
With the combination of colors and linetypes, people are better able to distinguish between the two cases on the graph.

Similarly, for a bar graph, use patterns along with your colors.

Instead of this:

Do this:

Now, people can distinguish between bars even if the colors all look the same to them.

You also want to choose your fonts wisely. Some fonts are easier to read than others for those with dyslexia or similar challenges.

A study was conducted on fonts, dyslexia, and readability and it was found that some of the better fonts for people with dyslexia are Helvetica, Courier< Arial, Verdana, and Computer Modern Unicode.

There is also a specific font intended to make reading easier for people with dyslexia, the OpenDyslexic font, which is freely available from OpenDyslexic.org

You also want to be aware of the impact of special effects in a presentation. Flashing lights, strobe effects, or things that flicker on the screen may seem like a great way to get people's attention, but they can cause problems for people with epilepsy or some other neurological disorders, with certain frequencies being more problematic than others. Avoid these effects whenever possible; if you do need to use something that flashes, you should be aware that the most common rates to trigger seizures are between 3 Hz and 30 Hz (https://epilepsysociety.org.uk/about-epilepsy/epileptic-seizures/seizure-triggers/photosensitive-epilepsy#:~:text=What%20rate%20of%20flashing%20light,varies%20from%20person%20to%20person.) Some people are sensitive up to 60 Hz, so to be safe, avoid that larger range of frequencies.

And finally, provide information in multiple forms. Whenever possible, use closed captioning on videos and make sure that a screen reader will work on documents. At minimum, when presenting you should have all important information both in what you say and in what you show. Use microphones when presenting in person, as they can be linked to systems designed to accommodate those who are hearing-impaired and encourage everyone else to use a microphone as well, even if you speak loudly; people may be reluctant to self-identify and ask you to use the microphone, so don't force them to do so.