

# PowerPoint COOL^ TRICKS...

## Black out the screen:

It is often very useful to black out the screen and refocus all the attention to you, the presenter. There are a few different ways to accomplish this:

- **Most presentation remotes have a black out function button.** Press the button once and your screen goes black. Press it again and your slide comes back on.
- Both PowerPoint and Apple Keynote allow the user to **press the “B” key to black out the screen.** Press “B” again and your previous slide is restored.

The inherent problem with these two techniques is that they restore the slide that was on the screen when you blacked it out. If you are transitioning to a new part of your topic this can be a little confusing to your audience.

A better way is to **build in a black slide.** Simply create a slide with a black background or a full-frame black box covering the entire slide. An alternative, if you are using a background for your presentation is to build a blank slide with just that background.

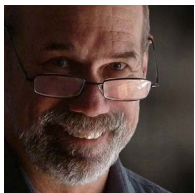
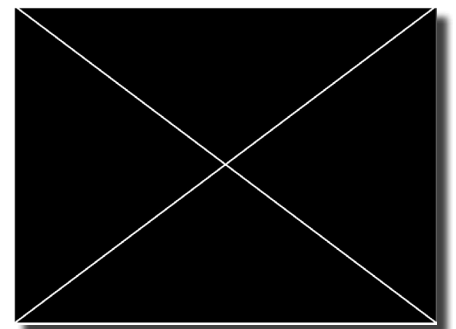
The benefit of this strategy is that when you move past this built-in slide you are displaying a new slide — a great way to transition into a new area. Another positive is that this technique can help you remember that this is an opportunity in your presentation to pause and perhaps tell a story or have a discussion with your audience.



Two more tips:

I place a small blue dot, that no one notices, in the lower corner of my black slide that tells me that the projector and all the technology are still working. This is often the slide that is on the screen when I am being introduced or when I am beginning my presentation.

Finally, I have a setup black slide with a white outline that I use to adjust my projector and laptop when I first arrive.



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Tom Nixon is a recognized authority on all things PowerPoint. Whether he is creating a high-stakes presentation for the CEO of a \$40 billion company in India or leading a hands-on workshop for public health experts at the CDC in Atlanta, Tom knows how to build and deliver powerful, persuasive PowerPoint. For more information please visit [TomNixonDesign.com](http://TomNixonDesign.com), call 770.289.0752 or email [tomn@tomnixondesign.com](mailto:tomn@tomnixondesign.com) to discuss.