The Office for National Statistics (ONS) uses infographics to explain and offer insightful stories for the general public in an easy to understand and consumable manner, about the data we collect.

**ONS infographics should be:**


These guidelines set out the standards and best practice for developing ONS corporate infographics.

**What is an infographic?**

An infographic is a self-contained visual story, presenting information, data or knowledge clearly, with meaning and context, and without bias.

An infographic is not a visual list, a group of large numbers with supporting graphics, a collection of stats, or codependent on another release, article, or report.
Work together

This framework outlines the processes and key roles required to deliver high quality and consistent corporate infographics.

Please ensure that these key roles are carried out by professionals with the appropriate skill sets, for further information contact the teams listed on the back cover.

Outline story
Before starting work ensure everyone understands the story the infographic is going to tell. Meet in person or over the phone.

Concept ideas
Turn the story ideas into rough concepts. Include titles, data presentation and annotation. Then focus on refining story structure and flow.

Visual design
Apply design rules to the concept (see ‘Visual Design Rules’). Refine hierarchy and flow. Focus on story clarity.

Review
Review the final design and discuss whether the story is effective. Be honest and open, anything can be refined at this stage.

Sign Off
Send to required parties to seek sign off before releasing.

Release
Release to required channels, e.g., website, media relations, social media.
‘If it isn’t a challenge it’s not worth doing’.
- Data visualisation Guardian Masterclass

You are a storyteller. Don’t just copy and paste data. Construct a story with context and flow.

Know your audience and purpose
Who is the target audience? Tailor the infographic to your audience, consider which release channel is appropriate e.g., website, social media

Let the data lead the story...
...but don’t assume you know what the story is e.g., what about an emerging trend, is the story relevant to the audience?

Add context
Challenge yourselves to highlight or introduce something to improve the story e.g., annotate key dates on a time series chart

Always be accurate
Keep checking back with your sources, as manipulation of data will occur throughout the developmental process

Organise the information
Left to right, top to bottom - is how this will be read

Keep it simple - show don’t tell
Not just large numbers, combine white space with simple visuals

Teach users something new
Will the user learn something? Yes = success, No = time to refine or rethink
Tell the best possible story

Here are five examples of common infographics. All follow ONS’ infographic style. Use them as starting points to help structure story flow and hierarchy of information.

**EXAMPLE ONE**
Capturing the state of industry or trend

**More older people divorcing**

**DIVORCE RATE 1950 TO 2011**

- 1971: Divorce Reform Act made it easier to divorce
- 1993: Record high 165,000 divorces

**RISE IN DIVORCE RATE AMONG OLD MEN**

Per 1,000 married men

- All men: 13.6
- Men 60+ yrs: 1.6 in 1991 vs 2.3 in 2011 (73% increase)

**LENGTH OF MARRIAGE IN 2011 FOR MEN 60+ YRS**

- 0-9 yrs: 14%
- 10-19 yrs: 20%
- 20-29 yrs: 21%
- 30-39 yrs: 26%
- 40-49 yrs: 17%
- 50+ yrs: 2%

Average marriage length: 27.4 yrs
Consumer Prices Index (CPI)

The CPI measures the change in the general level of prices charged for goods and services bought for the purpose of household consumption in the UK. It forms the basis for the UK Government's inflation target that the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee is required to achieve.

**APPROX 700**
SEPARATE GOODS AND SERVICES ARE SELECTED TO REFLECT TYPICAL HOUSEHOLD SPENDING
(Fixed for a 12 month period)

Commonly thought of in the context of a 'shopping basket', the prices of goods and services are collected on the second or third Tuesday of each month in 2 ways...

By price collectors (VIPS from Research International acting on behalf of ONS)

**110,000 PRICES for 560 items**

By ONS centrally

**70,000 PRICES for 140 items**

INDEX WEIGHTING

As we spend more on some items than others, the components of the index are 'weighted' to ensure that it reflects the importance of the various items in the average shopping basket, and the amounts we spend in different regions of the country and in different types of shops.

16% FOOD & CATERING

9% ALCOHOL & TOBACCO

41% HOUSING & HOUSEHOLD EXPENDITURE

8% PERSONAL EXPENDITURE

26% TRAVEL & LEISURE

These items are reviewed every year to reflect UK shopping and purchasing patterns using a wide range of information to keep price with general spending habits.
CALCULATING THE INDEX

Individual prices of goods and services are compared to prices in the previous January.

Combined together using weights from current year to produce overall average price index.

The final stage is to link the average price index with the figures for earlier years.

FINAL PRICE INDEX

Develop a simple diagram to highlight process and to add focus.

Call out boxes used to present detailed information e.g., definitions, calculations.

HOW THE INDEX IS USED

THE CPI MEASURES PRICE CHANGES, NOT PRICE LEVELS.

Reference date of 2005 is arbitrary, providing simply a convenient benchmark for comparison. The choice of date has no more effect on the measurement of price changes between one month and another.

For example...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INDEX 2005</th>
<th>INDEX 2011</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>100.00</td>
<td>116.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16.9% ANNUAL RISE IN INFLATION

Inflation is the percentage change in the latest index compared to the value recorded twelve months previously.

www.ons.gov.uk

Office for National Statistics
Personal Well-Being 2012/2013

The personal well-being questionnaire conducted annually takes the pulse of the national mood, here are this year's findings.

77% Satisfied with their life nowadays

81% Feel that the things in your life are worthwhile

72% Felt happy yesterday

21% Felt anxious yesterday
Household Debt in Great Britain 2008-10

£848 billion
PROPERTY DEBT

£943 billion
TOTAL DEBT

£95 billion
FINANCIAL DEBT

3.1% increase since 2006/08
10.3% increase since 2006/08

Total debt figures based on July estimates
Financial figures based on May estimates

HOUSEHOLDS WITH DEBT

Every 4 in 10 households

£75,200
Median average property debt

Every 5 in 10 households

£3,200
Median average financial debt

Households considering their debt to be a heavy burden

Property debt
15.2% change since 2006/08
13.6%

Financial debt
18.0% change since 2006/08
16.2%

Highest counts of property debt

Highest counts of financial debt
UK Family size

1.7

OVERALL AVERAGE DEPENDENT CHILDREN PER FAMILY

1.6
FOR LONE PARENTS AND COHABITING COUPLES

1.8
FOR MARRIED COUPLES OR IN CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS

FAMILIES WITH DEPENDENT CHILDREN

+5%
Since 1996

3.7M
FAMILIES

-2%

3.0M
FAMILIES

-3%
1.1M

LOCATIONS WITH HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

TOWER HAMLETS
28%

NEWHAM
25%

BIRMINGHAM
24%

COMPARING FAMILIES WITH 3 OR MORE DEPENDENT CHILDREN ACROSS EUROPE

Netherlands

Ireland

Cyprus

Belgium

Finland

France

UK

Denmark
Be consistent with design

These rules provide the basics for a designer to develop an infographic to corporate ONS house style.

Title = Dax Medium 42pt
Introduction if required = Open Sans regular 13pt

SUBTITLE = OPEN SANS BOLD 22PT
Body copy = Open Sans Regular 13pt

When visualising the data, use the appropriate chart or method in its simplest form. If using icons, be sure they layer or become part of the storytelling in considered ways, think beyond just using them to support large numbers.

USING ANNOTATION
Use annotation to help tell the story, along with adding context or to highlight

Highlight to show more detailed view or comparison to point
Zooming in to show more detail, creates a cleaner visual

COLOUR CHOICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRIMARY COLOURS (RGB)</th>
<th>SECONDARY COLOURS (RGB)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0.132 .209</td>
<td>144.176 .201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>255 .149 .14</td>
<td>255 .211 .32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65 .64 .66</td>
<td>255 .66 .14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>128 .128 .128</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>204 .204 .204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>168 .189 .58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>49 .64 .4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

When using colour always consider the saturation and luminance contrast, as this ensures that it can be seen by all and maintains readability.

www.ons.gov.uk
Sources / methodology: List them across the page until here and then onto the second line = open sans regular 15pt

Office for National Statistics

Templates with grids are available to help align elements
Use icons from the existing icon library
Contact the Design team for further information

Safe page scroll area. Ensure that story entry points and hook is above this to get the viewer to scroll down

Background colour (RGB) 242.242.242 used to differentiate from other website backgrounds

Extend footer down as required for source list.
A QUICK CHECKLIST

Use as a quick reference, not as a substitute for following process.

☐ Double-checked the data is correct?

☐ Checked that all the data is visualised correctly?

☐ The design follows the visual design rules close enough?

☐ Someone else understands the story? (without prior explanation)

☐ The design is easy to follow, with all elements aligned?

☐ Would additional context help improve the story?

☐ Does the title frame the content correctly?

☐ Is the story presented self-contained and without bias?

CONSIDER DISTRIBUTION

Depending on channel, adjust final infographic for distribution.

Web

This is the main distribution method. Refer to the ONS web standards and house style guide for publishing on the ONS website.

Always use the dedicated ‘infographic’ Tridion schema.

For a richer user experience consider publishing in conjunction with other outputs eg short stories. Contact the Editorial Team for further information.

Social Media

The Social Media team can maximise reach to users utilising a number of digital channels. Infographics may need optimisation, check first.

Media coverage

The Media Relations team can maximise press coverage both locally and nationally.

For all contact details see back cover.
For general infographic and editorial queries contact:
idp@ons.gsi.gov.uk

For design queries contact:
ons.design@ons.gsi.gov.uk

For data visualisation queries contact:
datavis@ons.gsi.gov.uk

For social media queries contact:
social.media@ons.gsi.gov.uk

For publishing queries contact:
publishing.support.team@ons.gsi.gov.uk

Office for National Statistics