

# Our brand



# Our brand is adapting

## Read why we're making changes now

Decades of research mean we can see a future where no one needs to worry about their MS getting worse. And we have a plan to reach that future, fast.

We've been building a community across England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Our volunteers, local groups and digital services mean we're in a strong position to provide information and support, bring people together and help make their voices heard.

Our new five-year strategy '[Every MS Story](#)' launched in 2020. And our plans are ambitious. We want to help even more people, whatever their age, background, type of MS or relationship with MS.

The coronavirus pandemic has changed life for everyone. And for many people living with MS life has been particularly tough.

We need a brand that responds to this challenging world, reflects our vision, aligns with our goals and powers our strategy.

That's why we worked with our existing community, people new to the MS Society and colleagues to develop 'fearless ally', a new essence to underpin our brand. And we've updated these guidelines to help colleagues, agencies, suppliers and partners feel confident using our brand.

**Together we can stop MS.**

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## Introducing our brand

Our brand is everything we are.  
And in everything we do.

It's what people feel whenever they think about the MS Society.

It lives in our work - helping people live well with MS, making sure their voices are heard, connecting them, working to stop MS.

And it's woven into the way we communicate - in person, on the phone, by email or letter, through our website and in every social media post.

# Learning about us

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# The essence of our brand

When you or someone you care about has MS, life can be tough.

We understand MS. And one day we will stop it. But right now, however MS affects your life, we're here for you.

**In us, you have a fearless ally.**

The above copy is for internal use only



## We are fearless

We're committed to improving every aspect of life with MS – for everyone affected.

We fund world-leading research into breakthroughs to slow, stop and even reverse disability progression.

We stand up for people affected by MS to governments and organisations across the UK. We fight for everyone in our community to get the support they need.

We run bold campaigns to show the reality of life with MS and raise money to support our work.

**Together we will stop MS.**



## We are an ally

We're always here with expert information and the services people need to understand MS, manage their condition and live well.

We bring people together so we can support each other and make sure no one has to be alone.

We listen to what matters most to our community. And we provide support and tools so we can all campaign for change and protect our rights.

We won't stop until we have treatments that work for everyone.

**Together we will stop MS.**

# Our work

## Where we work

In England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. With our partners in the global MS community.

## What we do

- Help people live well with MS.
- Connect people and making sure their voices are heard.
- Work to find effective treatments and prevent MS.

## How we work

On the phone. Online. In person.  
In and with our community.

## Who we work with

A community – people living with MS, friends, families, carers, scientists, researchers, health professionals, campaigners, volunteers – and together we will stop MS.

# How we do it

## By living our values

### We work together

We support each other so no one has to face MS alone. We work as a community, because together our voices are louder.

### We're expert

Our community are experts: people with MS, scientists, researchers, carers, health professionals, policy makers fundraisers and volunteers. Everything we do is underpinned by evidence and the experiences of people with MS.

### We're bold

We're not afraid to show the realities of life with MS, the highs and the lows. We campaign for what is right and fair. We are always open to new ideas. And one day we will stop MS.

### We're ambitious

Stopping MS is within our grasp. Stopping it from progressing. Stopping it from controlling lives. Together we're working to a future where everyone can live well with MS.

## By always being accessible

Everyone should be able to use our resources and read our words. We work to make our content accessible from the outset of every project. Here's some basics to get you started.

### We use accessible formatting

- Printed text must be at least 12pt font size, 14pt online
- We align text to the left – we never align on both sides as it creates unnecessary gaps.
- We avoid CAPITALISATION, underline and *italics* as they change the shape of words and make them harder to read
- We use 'and' instead of '&', and 'number' instead of '#'
- We write dates like this: **Thursday 28 September**. We don't use terminal letters –st, –nd, –rd or –th and always try to include the day of the week.

### We write in Plain English

#### That means

- using short sentences and exploring one idea per paragraph
- lots of sub-headings (to help with context and memory)
- using common words instead of unusual or complicated ones
- using the active tense over the passive tense wherever we can. For example 'We processed your application' instead of 'Your application was processed'
- starting sentences with linking words like 'But', 'So' or 'And' if it seems natural.

## By always being inclusive

Everyone's MS is different. And we all have different lived experiences depending on where we live, our gender, sexuality or our heritage. There is no one size fits all.

But there are groups of people within our MS community who are under supported and underrepresented in our work:

- younger people with MS
- LGBTQ+ people
- people with Black, Asian or minority ethnic heritage
- people with advanced MS and the people who care for them.

We want to be here for everyone with MS. So we make sure people who are under supported right now can see themselves reflected in our work. We want people to feel included, seen and heard. That means we value diversity and actively reach out to different groups to better understand what support they want and need.

We're a national charity, working across all 4 nations of the UK. So we make sure people from each nation are represented throughout our work.

## By using the right words

### How we talk about MS

When we write it out in full, MS is spelt without capitals: multiple sclerosis.

If we talk about MS, we'll use the word condition not disease. If someone describes their MS as a disease, then we'll use their own words in a quote.

We say 'someone lives with MS', not 'suffers with MS'.

### How we talk about disability

We follow [the social model of disability](#).

We believe people are disabled by barriers in society, not by their medical condition. So when we talk about disability we talk about 'disabled people' rather than 'people with disabilities'.

All people with MS meet the disability definition under the Equality Act 2010 from the day they're diagnosed. But many don't see themselves as disabled, particularly if they don't have advanced symptoms. So we talk about symptoms not disability. Words and phrases we don't use include: 'the disabled', 'suffering from a disability' or 'handicapped/handicap', 'wheelchair-bound', 'sufferer'.



## How we talk about ourselves

We always say 'we', or 'us' if at all possible. So instead of saying 'The MS Society has launched a new campaign', we'd say 'We launched a new campaign'.

- We never refer to ourselves as 'the Society'.
- We rarely refer to ourselves as the Multiple Sclerosis Society except on legal documents – our brand is MS Society.

# Messaging you can use to explain who we are and what we do

## Describing ourselves to people who might not know what MS is (cold audiences)

Over 130,000 people in the UK have multiple sclerosis (MS). It's unpredictable, and different for everyone. It's often painful and exhausting, and can cause problems with how we walk, move, see, think and feel. But it doesn't have to be this way.

We fund world-leading scientists as they search for new treatments. We make sure everyone can access expert information and services to help them live well with MS. We speak up together, to make sure

everyone's voice is heard and rights are protected. We support one another when times are tough and celebrate together when they are good. We make sure no one has to feel alone.

Together we are a community of people living with MS, friends, families, carers, scientists, researchers, healthcare professionals, campaigners, volunteers. We're here for anyone who wants to join us. And together we will stop MS.

## Describing ourselves to people who know us or know MS (warm audiences)

### [short]

We're the MS Society and we're here for you. Funding world-leading research, sharing information, making voices heard and campaigning for everyone's rights. Together we are a community. And together we will stop MS.

### [medium]

We're the MS Society. We're here by your side through the highs, lows and everything in between.

Together we fund world-leading research. We provide information and services so everyone can live well with MS. We make our voices heard and campaign for everyone's rights. And we support one another so no one has to feel alone.

Together we are a community. And together we will stop MS.



[long]

We're the MS Society. We're here by your side through the highs, lows and everything in between.

We fund world-leading scientists as they search for new treatments. We make sure everyone can access expert information and services to help them live well with MS. We speak up together, to make sure everyone's voice is heard and rights are protected. We support one another when times are tough and celebrate together when they are good. We make sure no one has to feel alone.

Together we are a community of people living with MS, friends, families, carers, scientists, researchers, healthcare professionals, campaigners, volunteers. We're here for anyone who wants to join us. And together we will stop MS.

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Scotland



Cymru



Northern  
Ireland

## Our logo

Our orange triangle brings a sense of hope and forward momentum.

We use national versions of the logo for our work in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Our local MS Society groups each have their own version of our logo. They can generate them automatically using our [web to print](#) service. They follow the same layout as our national logos.

Colleagues can find our logos on our intranet Axon, or email [brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk)

## Minimum size offline



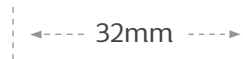
The minimum size you can use the logo at is 25mm wide.



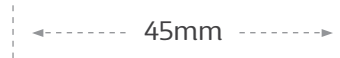
In some exceptional circumstances it might have to be smaller, for example on pens or badges. You must contact the [Marketing and Brand Team](#) for permission first.



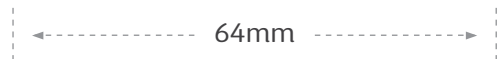
A5



A4



A3



These are our logo sizes for A series paper sizes (A5, A4, A3).

If you're working on a larger size format, like a banner, contact the [Marketing and Brand team](#).

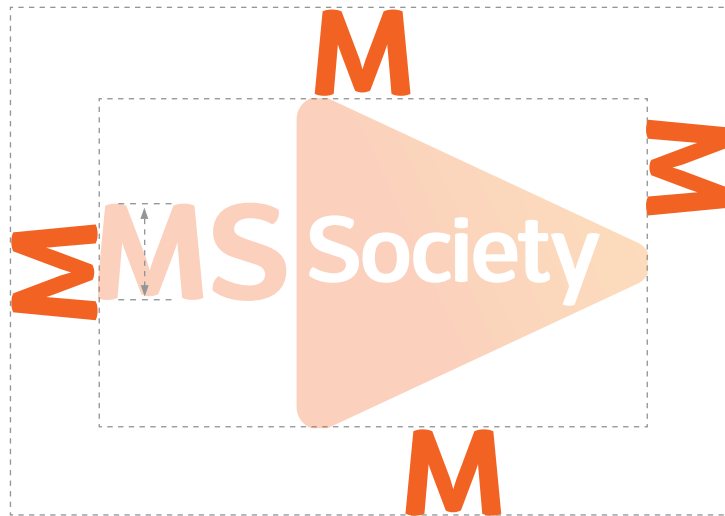


### Minimum size online

The smallest our logo can be online is 160 px wide.

Some third party platforms will ask for logo images with particular dimensions to fit their site design. It can be tricky to stick to their measurements and not warp our logo. Contact the Digital and Content team if you need any help.

If you need a favicon (a small logo for web browser display) please contact the [Marketing and Brand Team](#).



## Space around our logo

Our logo always has a clearance area around it.

You can measure the space it needs by measuring the height of the 'M'.



## Dos and don'ts

Our orange logo is used on a white background. Our reversed logo (white) allows us to put it on different coloured backgrounds.

Only use our logo on photography if there is enough contrast to allow it to stand out and be legible.

If you need the white logo, contact the [Marketing and Brand Team](#).



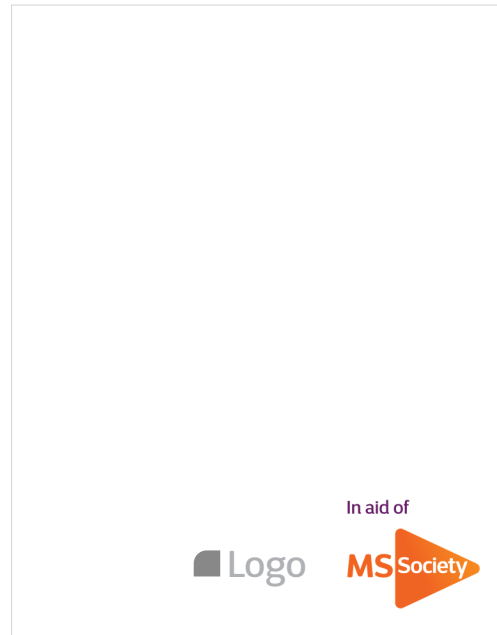
**Don't:**

- Adjust the shapes
- Recolour or tint
- Rotate
- Distort
- Add effects like drop shadows or glows
- Change the composition of the logo elements

Supported by



In partnership with



## Partnership logos

People or organisations fundraising for us should always use a partnership logo (not our standard logo).

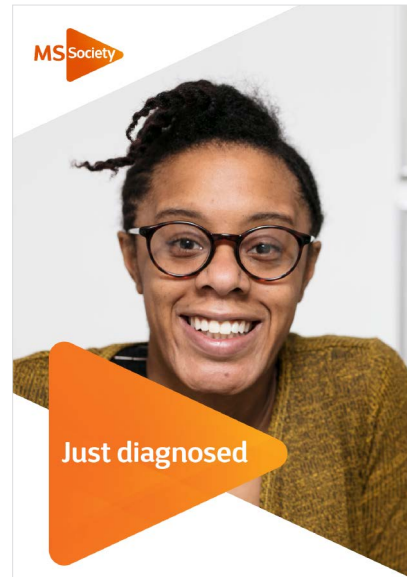
Partnership logos include 'in aid of', 'in partnership with' and 'supported by'.

There are versions for each nation.

The partnership logo can be placed with other logos. The other logos should never be larger than our own. The space around our logo must still be in place.

To find out which logo to use, please email [brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk)

Do not create your own logos.

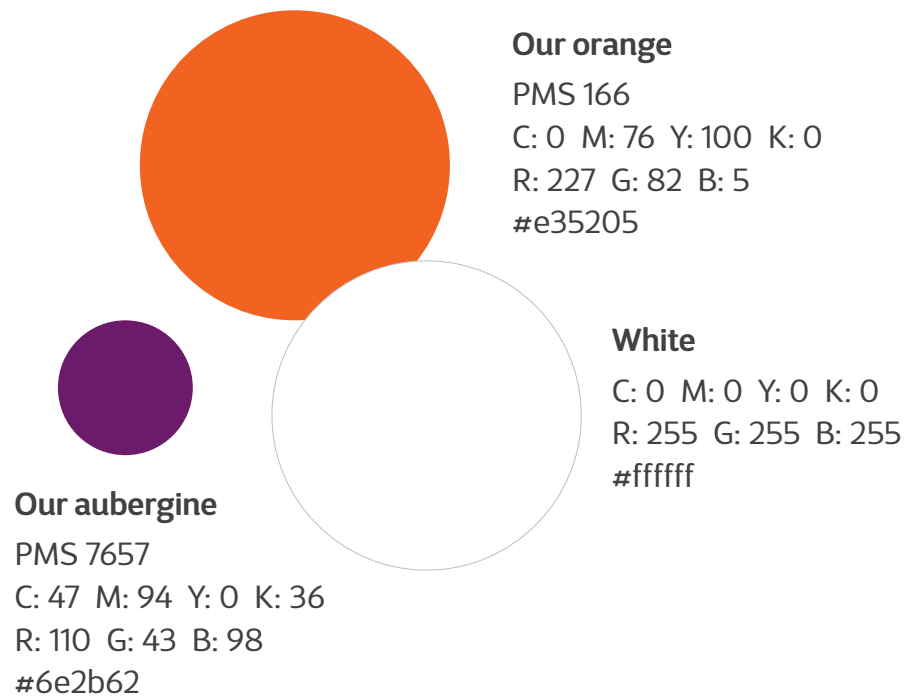


## The triangle

Our triangle is a key part of our identity.

It can be used to hold headlines or highlight copy. As a general rule, we only use one triangle per page, excluding the logo. This helps preserve its bold, distinctive status.

Avoid putting too much copy inside the triangle. Keep it short and snappy.



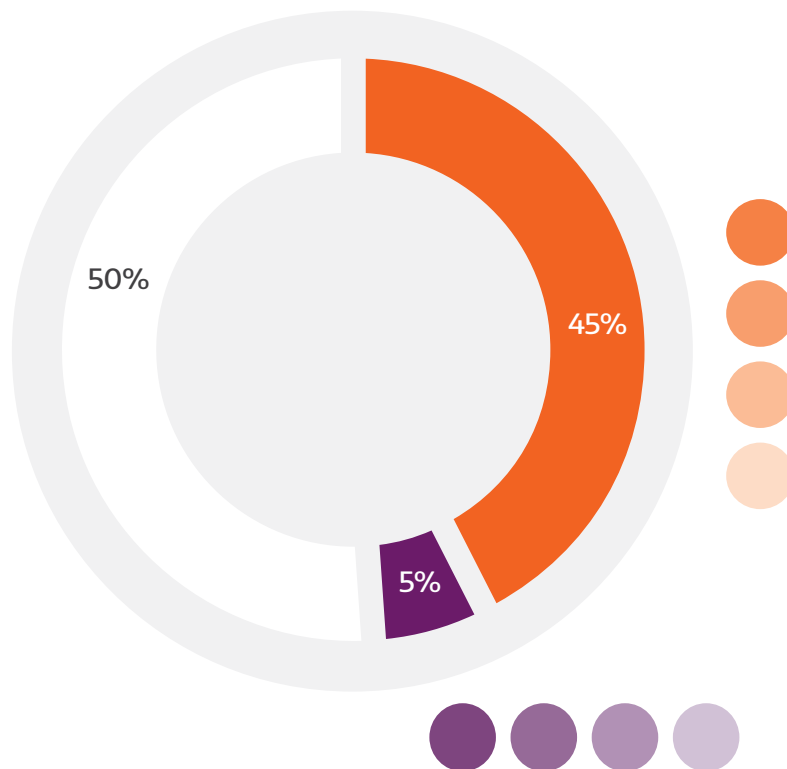
## Using colour

Our primary colours are orange and white.

Orange is strong, warm and energetic. It is a positive colour and brings hope for the future.

White gives our brand a clean, considered look.

We use aubergine as an accent colour. This is a colour we use in small quantities to lift or to add punch to a colour scheme.

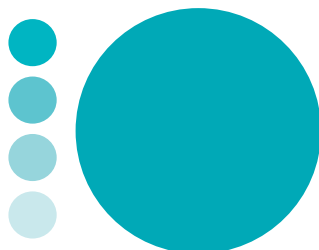


## Using our colours together

Our brand is predominantly orange, with accents of aubergine. White is an essential part of the palette as it allows the other two colours to stand out and complement each other more effectively.

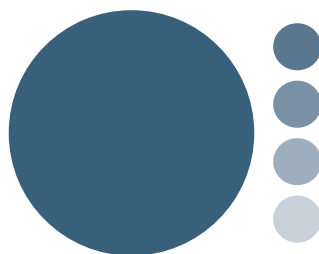
Orange must be used in proportion with white. It should not be over applied or used as an entire background.

Incremental tints at 20% of orange and aubergine can occasionally be used, but only on small areas such as charts and diagrams. Please contact the [Marketing and Brand Team](#) if you'd like more information.



### Tile

PMS 320  
C: 96 M: 0 Y: 31 K: 2  
R: 0 G: 156 B: 166  
#009ca6



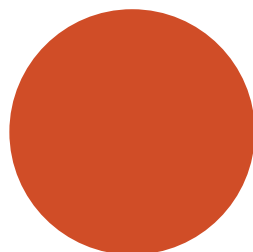
### Slate

PMS 5405  
C: 68 M: 35 Y: 17 K: 40  
R: 79 G: 117 B: 139  
#4f758b



### Grey

C: 0 M: 0 Y: 0 K: 9  
R: 232 G: 232 B: 232  
#e8e8e8



### Super orange

C: 0 M: 65 Y: 100 K: 18  
R: 209 G: 73 B: 0  
#d14900

We use a darker orange to provide contrast behind small amounts of white text.

## Secondary colour palette

Our secondary colours highlight and complement our primary colours. We use these for way-finding elements, like headings, for illustrations and infographics. These should be used purely as accent colours and never appear in greater proportions than our orange.

✓ Large ✓ Small	✓ Large ✓ Small	✓ Large ✓ Small
✓ Large ✗ Small	✓ Large ✓ Small	✓ Large ✓ Small

## Accessible colour standards

We follow [Web Content Accessibility Guidelines](#) (WCAG) 2.0 for colour contrast.

All new designs must pass WCAG 2.0 AAA standards with a colour contrast ratio of at least 7:1 for normal text and 4.5:1 for large text.

WCAG defines large text as text that is 18pt and larger, or 14pt and larger if it is bold.

Find out how to comply with WCAG colour contrast standards on [WebAim's website](#).

# Fonts

Our primary typeface is D Sari.

The minimum font size is 12pt for print and 14pt for screen.

## D Sari Book

We use book for body copy. We left align the text to make it accessible. We never right align or justify all lines. We don't use long lines of text or wide columns of text.

## D Sari Semi bold

We use semi bold for headings and important parts of text. We avoid having large amounts of text in bold. We never write full words in CAPITALS as it makes it harder to recognise the shapes of words.

## D Sari Medium

We use medium for sub headings and pulling out important words or phrases. We never use Italics. We only underline hyperlink text.

## D Sari Bold

We use bold for big titles and headings. When we write headings we don't capitalise words that wouldn't normally begin with a capital letter

We have limited font licenses for D Sari. Contact the [Marketing and Brand Team](#) if you need to use it in your project.

Day to day we use Verdana.

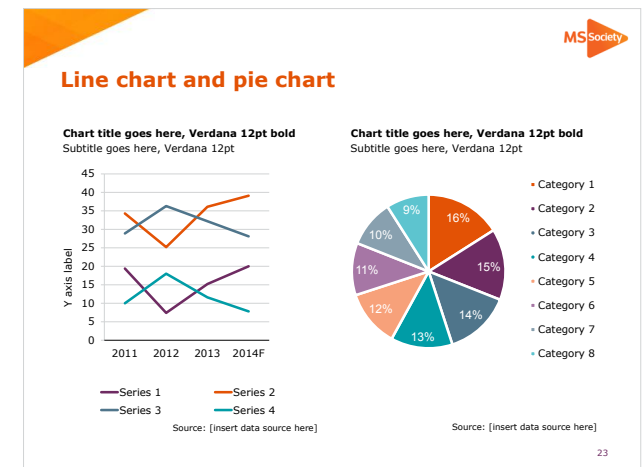
- ▶ Let's stop MS together
- ▶ Together we can stop MS

## Calling for action

'Let's stop MS together' and 'Together we can stop MS' are rallying cries that bring positivity and hope to our cause. They're not taglines (short lines of text you often see underneath logos). So they shouldn't be used as if they're an element of our logo.

# Templates

You can find PowerPoint and Word templates for presentations, letters and reports on our intranet, Axon.



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## Opening up

No two people's experience of MS are the same. So we make sure we tell as many stories as we can in our work.

We follow the Plain English guidelines to open up our resources to everyone: people browsing our pages or publications on a small screen, people with visual impairments, or with English as a second language.



## How to write like a fearless ally

### Fearless

We're not afraid to talk about the realities of life with MS - the highs and lows.

We speak with confidence because we are experts in our field. And we back up what we say with evidence.

### Ally

We always remember our reader.

We know MS affects a lot of people, and we are here for everyone. But we also know that each person's experience is different. So when we write, we remember we are speaking directly to real people. And we share our community's stories in their own words whenever we can.

# We use Plain English and we write to an audience

1. **We speak to people's emotional needs** as well as giving them information. We are clear who we're writing for, what sort of mindset they're in, and what we want them to think or feel as a result of hearing from us. We always stop and think about our audience and where they're at.
2. **We speak like a real person.** This means we can do things our teachers told us were wrong – like starting a sentence with 'But' if it feels natural. And we go out of our way to be warm and welcoming to anyone who knocks on our virtual door. We put real people and their stories into our writing wherever we can.
3. **We choose our words carefully.** The words we write are increasingly read digitally on mobiles and tablets. Often they're not read, but scanned. We have less space to say things, and people have less time to take them in. This means being clear on the most important point we need to make, and being brave on leaving stuff out. Clear and simple is the key – if an 11 year old can't understand what we're writing, we've gone wrong somewhere.

4. **We need our words to be found.** Which means – very simply – that the words we use in our writing need to reflect the search terms people put into Google. Think about how you’d Google something yourself – and use precisely those natural, common sense words when you write.
5. **We help people face the future without fear.** We allow our passion and hope to be heard in our voice. Avoid tentative language where possible – “could”, “might” and “maybe” make a piece of writing feel hesitant and weak. Instead say “can” and “will”. Most importantly, we end our point on an uplifting note: a positive message that gives people a sense of purpose, strength and – above all – hope.

# Representing our community visually

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# Photography

## Brand style

Aim for an overall style that is light and bright, with a positive feel. Use as much natural light as possible.

Where possible and appropriate, include an orange prop or branded element in the photo. This helps build brand recognition and consistency.



## Photography style tips

Our photography is used across multiple platforms, in digital and print.

### Online

Website and social media images should be landscape with a good proportion of background space. This allows for photos to be cropped to a variety of sizes.

### Print

It's good to have a mixture of portrait and landscape. Images need to be 300dpi resolution and very high quality for print.



## Serious subjects

If we are talking about a serious subject we aim to reflect the mood with a more composed expression. Light and bright environments still play a really important role in the composition and keep the images consistent with our brand style.

## Props

It's important to show walking aids and other equipment that helps people with MS in their day-to-day lives. But this shouldn't be the focus of any image or add negativity to the photo.



## Diversity

MS affects a huge range of people and it's important people can see themselves reflected in our photography. We make sure we include people of different genders, sexualities, ages and heritages in our shoots.

## Environment

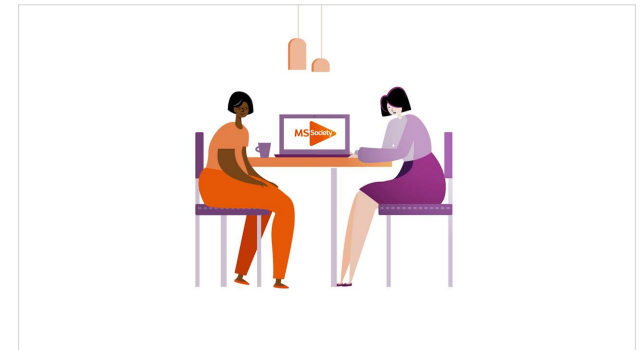
We want to portray real people in their real day-to-day lives. We show people with MS and their families and friends at home or out and about enjoying their hobbies.

Research images can be tricky, as they can often look clinical. Aim to show the positivity and warmth of the people in the photos.

# Video

We use video to deliver all kinds of stories and messages to our audiences on our website, on social media, in emails and at events.

We aim for a light and bright style, with a positive feel. But there is scope for subtlety of tone depending on the objectives and the story being told.





Each channel and genre has its own best practice. But we have two fundamental video rules:

- We subtitle all video content that we publish and where appropriate provide a transcript to make it accessible for people who can't access the sound or have a hearing impairment.
- We audio describe our videos so that they're accessible for people who are unable to view the picture or have a visual impairment.

This helps make sure all our videos meet WCAG AA accessibility criteria.

## Technical specifications

We have motion graphics templates you can use with the latest version of Adobe Premiere Pro. The [Digital and Content Team](#) can also advise for other programs.

### Subtitles

Adobe's closed caption editor for regular 16:9 video sizes:

Caption Stream: Open Captions

Frame: same as sequence

Font: Verdana Regular

Size: 40 (may be smaller if sequence is in 720)

Alignment: centre aligned.

Background colour: #000000

Background transparency: usually 90%

Text colour: #FFFFFF

Position: central at bottom of frame

We aim to have one line of subtitle text wherever possible. There may be situations where you need to use two lines, for example with vertical video. In this instance, the line lengths must be as close to equal as possible.

## Audio description

We make sure people can understand all our videos if they only hear the sound.

In cases where a lot of information is visual and not conveyed by voice or sound effects, we create an audio described version.

We identify if we need an audio described version at storyboarding. Producing audio description must be planned into budgets and timelines. Please contact the [Digital and Content Team](#) for assistance and advice.

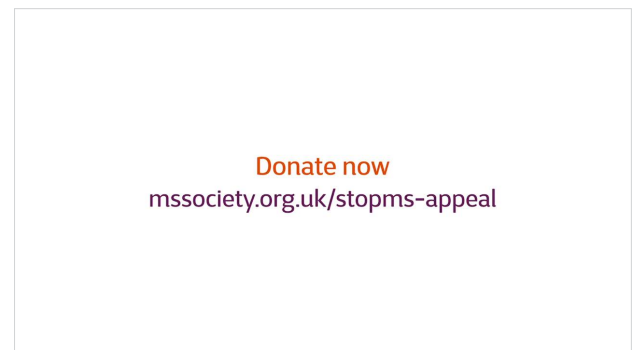


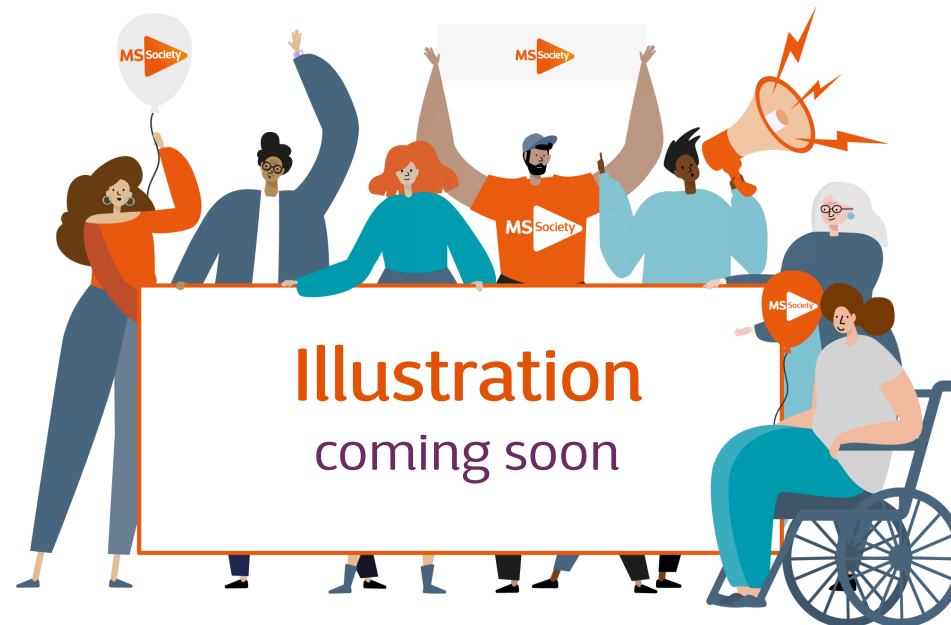
## On-screen graphics

We try to avoid graphics in the body of films (for example boxes with people's names in or transitions) unless the piece is or uses animation.

## End screens

- The logo should take up no more than 20% of the end screen.
- For text, call to actions and links use D Sari font – orange first, then purple to make urls stand out.
- Centre align text and the logo(s).





If you'd like to have a chat about  
brand or need some help, drop an  
email to [brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk](mailto:brandcentre@mssociety.org.uk)

▶ Let's stop MS together