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# Using PowerPoint to Develop Mouse Control

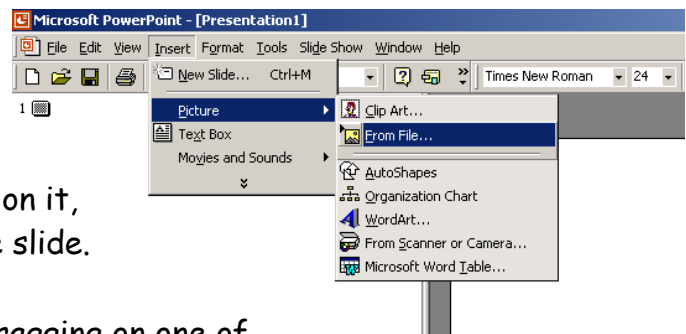
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## Quick Guide

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JC

PowerPoint can be used very effectively to develop touch screen accuracy and /or mouse control, either by touching /clicking on the target item or by moving the mouse over the item.

Open up a blank PowerPoint slide and go to **Insert / Picture / From File**



Now search through your files on computer and choose the picture you want, by clicking on it, and then on **Insert** to add the picture to the slide.

The picture can be resized by clicking and dragging on one of the white dot 'handles' round the edge of the picture (double-headed arrow appears). To move and reposition the picture, click anywhere inside the picture and drag it with the mouse.

Now **right** click on the picture and then click on **Action Settings**.

In Action Settings, there are two different functions. **Mouse Click** means you have to touch/click on the picture for something to happen. **Mouse over** means that when you drag the finger or move the mouse over the picture that will act as if it were a mouse click, and will operate a link to a sound or to another slide.

Set up a few slides with pictures on and then take some time to experiment with the difference between Mouse Over and Mouse Click.

In Mouse Click set **Action on click** to **Hyperlink to Next Slide**

And then click in the box **Play sound** and set it to **Applause** (or any of the sounds that are offered).

There is a highlight box that can be ticked as well. This mean the picture will light up for a second to show that it has been 'activated'

Then click **OK** and then **View Show** (or **F5**) to try it.

### **Simple 'Catch'**

Using the simple method of touching a target or moving the mouse on to a target picture to 'catch' it - with a resulting sound as a reward - can be a motivating way for a child to practise targeting skills.

(The targets are not actually moving, but they seem to be, as the slides change and the static picture is in a different place each time.)

### **Hidden targets**

Targets can be 'invisible/hidden' and the child can find them by 'exploring' with touch or mouse movements.

### **Mazes or booby-trapped scenes**

Building some kind of pictorial 'maze' on screen is a way of developing more controlled mouse movements. The aim is to find an unobstructed pathway to the target and to move along a narrow path or through obstacles on a 'busy' screen without touching anything but the target.

If the child hits any of the obstacles, he/she gets a 'frightening' sound. When he/she reaches the target the reward is a favourite sound or song etc.

*Warning - sometimes the sound of explosions etc. for a mistake can be more rewarding than the right movements....*

### **Limitations & Other Resources**

PowerPoint is just one tool that can be used for variety, to practice and develop mouse skills. It is not the only software tool or necessarily the best, for this function - but it is often available at no extra expense, and it does allow you to personalise and vary exercises.

The drawback to this technique in PowerPoint is the fact that the feedback the child gets may not be not 100% immediately reliable, as it can sometimes take the cursor a little while to appear /reappear on screen after a sound plays or animates or when a new slide appears. Also sometimes touch screen users can 'confuse' the system altogether and may have to lift their finger off and then replace it, to operate the effect. It's a judgement call therefore whether it will do the job you want, for your specific pupil / task.

Other software designed specifically for developing mouse control includes:

- **Mouse IT Skills** from Inclusive Technology Ltd.
- **Moles** from Resource Education (introduces some early number work)

There is also a load of free games on the Internet that involve 'catching' (or, commonly, 'whacking') things, see for example <http://www.pbclibrary.org/mousing/gopher.htm> (But most of these are faster and harder than the examples suggested above).