

toluna*start

Cheat Sheet Questionnaire Design.



At a glance:

To create a survey that can gain and retain respondents' attention, we recommend:

- Around 15 minutes in length or less
- A logical questionnaire 'flow' starting with broad questions and moving to specifics
- Keeping it simple, short, neutral, and engaging
- Including quality checks like red herring / trap questions and logic checks

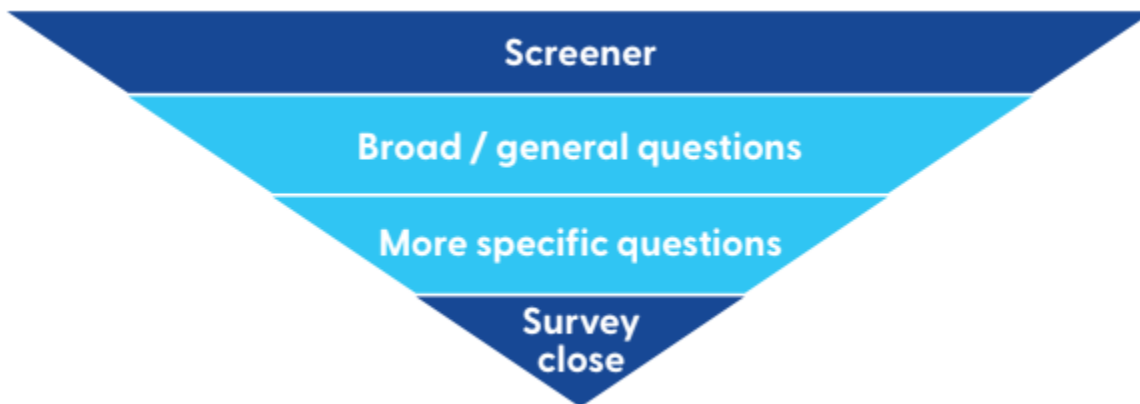
Surveys are constantly competing for respondents' attention. Distraction can come from many sources, so an engaging, intuitive questionnaire is key to keeping respondents motivated and focused. Below are our top tips to writing a good questionnaire.

In general

- Our recommended maximum length of interview for online surveys is 15 minutes.



- To make it easy for respondents to follow the survey, ensure it has a logical 'flow' by asking from broader questions to more specific questions. Think of it like a funnel:



Consider the following elements for each section of the survey:

Screener

- Only ask questions that are relevant for determining your target group
- Don't give away the survey topic, as some respondents may be especially interested in a certain subject and may try to qualify for the survey if they find out its topic. Example: Instead of asking 'Did you buy chocolate in the last week?', ask 'Did you buy any of the following products in the last week?'

Survey close

- Ask any general demographics or profiling questions you haven't asked yet.



Questions & Answers

Keep it simple:

- Avoid slang, jargon, or technical terms

Example: 'How often do you buy FMCG products?' – normal shoppers don't know what 'FMCG' products are.

- Avoid ambiguous questions or expressions.

Example: 'How often do you buy premium soft drinks?' – 'premium' may be different for every respondent.

- Avoid double-barreled questions

Example: 'Do you like the summer season and warm temperatures?' – the respondent may like one but not the other, but has to choose the same option for both.

Keep it short:

- Cut out lengthy descriptions about things respondents can see or complete intuitively.

Example: Instead of 'Please select the region you currently reside in from the list below', use 'Where do you live?'



Keep it neutral:

- Avoid leading or biasing questions

Example: 'Wouldn't you agree that this is a great idea?' – instead, use: 'What do you think about this idea?'

- Avoid assumptive questions

Example: 'When you get stressed at work, do you go home?' – instead, use: 'Do you ever get stressed at work?' & '[if yes] What do you do when you get stressed at work?'

Keep it engaging:

- Use a mix of different question types to keep the survey engaging
- Single & multi select questions

1. Ensure options are not too similar

2. Limit answer options to a maximum of 10 where possible

3. Sort options where there is a logical order, otherwise randomise

4. Include 'don't know' or 'prefer not to say' options

- Open ended questions

Use open-ended questions where they add value, e.g. for unprompted questions or questions that have too many possible answer options to list in a single or multi select question.

Example: 'What brands of home insurance can you think of?'



Example: 'Why did you give this score?'

Limit open ends to a maximum of three per respondent where possible.

- Grids

Keep the number of grids used to a minimum and use more engaging question types instead, e.g. carousel questions.

Quality Checks

Respondents are only human and sometimes they may get distracted due to external factors or they may lose engagement with the survey. Their bus stop may be coming up, their child cries, or a friend calls them. Temporary distraction is ok and normal, however we want to identify those respondents who may have gotten a little too distracted and should be removed from the data for quality purposes.

Most of the quality checks we recommend do not need to be built into the questionnaire upfront, however there are some that need to be considered when designing your questionnaire:

Red herring / Trap questions: These questions test whether a respondent is paying attention and reading questions in detail. We recommend 1-2 red



herrings for surveys with 10-30 questions and three for surveys with 30+ questions.

You can include red herring questions in two forms:

Individual question – set up a separate question with only one correct answer.	Part of a grid – include an instruction as part of a grid question.
<p>Example: Hey, are you still paying attention? Please choose the third option from the list below.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Green• Red• Blue• Yellow	<p>Example: Please choose 'completely agree' for this statement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Completely disagree• Disagree• Neither agree nor disagree• Agree• Completely agree

Illogical answers: These questions test whether a respondent is logical in their answering behaviour.

Overstatement checks – include a few rare items in existing question lists. If a respondent selects all the items, they may be over-stating.
<p>Example: Did you buy any of the following in the last 7 days?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bread• Flowers• Chocolates• Cleaning products• Car insurance• Mobile phone• DVD• None of these