

HOW TO CONDUCT A SURVEY: A Step-by-Step Guide

Surveys are a great tool for gathering information and opinions from people. This guide outlines the key steps to conduct a survey effectively.

Note: The examples provided below are generic and broad, be sure to make your survey specific to your initiative or specific to the information you are trying to collect.

STEP 1: DEFINE THE PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES

Example

To understand students' perspectives on the school's sun safe practices and identify areas for improvement.

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE TARGET AUDIENCE

Example

Secondary school students in grades 9-12.

STEP 3: DESIGN CLEAR AND CONCISE QUESTIONS

When crafting survey questions, keep them clear, concise, and easy to understand. Use simple language, avoid jargon, and make sure each question addresses only one idea or topic. Provide response options that cover the range of possible answers and consider using a mix of closed-ended (multiple choice) and open-ended (essay-type) questions.

Example

1. How often do you engage in outdoor activities during peak UV hours (10 AM to 4 PM)?
 - a) Rarely or never
 - b) Occasionally (1-2 times per week)
 - c) Regularly (3-5 times per week)
 - d) Daily

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STEP 4: DESIGN CLEAR AND CONCISE QUESTIONS (CONT.)

Example

2. How frequently do you apply sunscreen when spending time outdoors?
 - a) Always
 - b) Most of the time
 - c) Sometimes
 - d) Rarely or never

3. What factors influence your decision to wear protective clothing (e.g., hats, long sleeves, sunglasses) when outdoors? (Select all that apply)
 - a) Skin sensitivity or previous sunburn experience
 - b) Fashion or style preferences
 - c) Awareness of the risks of sun exposure
 - d) Peer or societal influence
 - e) None of the above

STEP 5: DECIDE WHETHER YOUR SURVEY WILL BE CONDUCTED ON PAPER, ONLINE, OR THROUGH OTHER MEANS

Tip - Google Forms and Microsoft Forms are a great way to develop and disseminate a survey

Paper, online, email, SMS?

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STEP 6: TEST THE SURVEY

Before distributing the survey to your target audience, conduct a test yourself or with a small group of friends. Make necessary revisions based on the test.

Example

1. Problems

The survey was too long, and people got bored.
People didn't understand question five.

2. How to improve

Make survey shorter by cutting out some non-essential questions.
Rewrite question 5 for clarity.

STEP 7: ADMINISTER THE SURVEY

Distribute the survey to your target audience. Clearly explain the purpose of the survey (from **Step 1**) and provide instructions on how to complete it. Set a deadline for responses and consider offering incentives, if appropriate, to encourage participation.

Example

1. Please complete the survey by end of school on Thursday.
2. Make sure you understand each question before answering.
3. Answer the questions to the best of your ability. There are no wrong answers!
4. Consider all multiple-choice options before choosing one.

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STEP 8: ANALYSE, INTERPRET, AND REPORT THE DATA

Once you have collected enough survey responses, analyse the data. Summarise the findings in relation to the original purpose, including any relevant charts, graphs, or quotes. Communicate the results, highlighting key insights and recommendations based on what the data tells you about your initiative.

Example

Amount of survey responses: 20

Main findings

Question 1.

- A majority (75%) of students regularly engage in outdoor activities during peak sun hours.

Question 2.

- When spending time outdoors, 10% of students always apply sunscreen, 30% apply sunscreen most of the time, 50% sometimes apply sunscreen, and the remainder rarely or never apply sunscreen.

Recommendations

- Schedule outdoor activities outside of peak UV hours.
- Encourage sunscreen application before going outside.