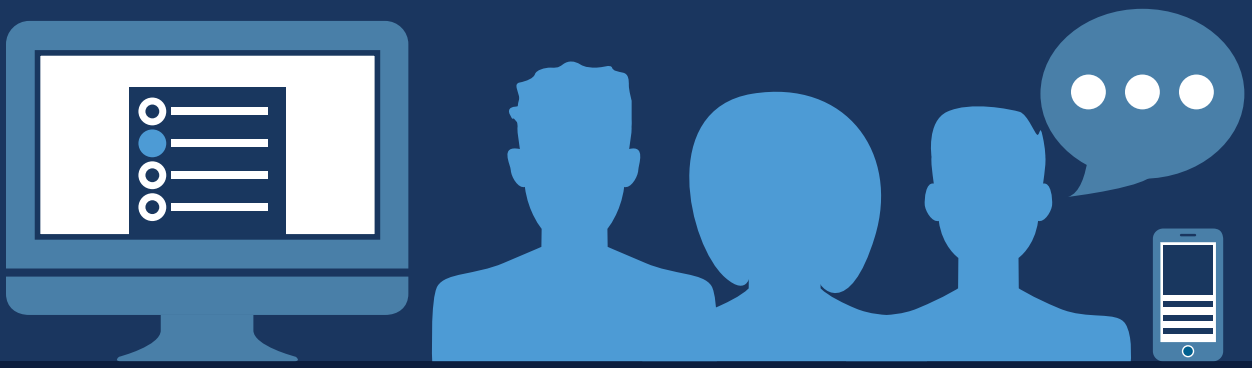
eBook

UserTesting™

A Complete Guide to User Testing Your Next Project



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Introduction

The time is right. Maybe you're about to launch a new product, or you're in the early stages of a website redesign. Either way, you know your project would benefit from having real people give you feedback on what works and what doesn't. It's time to user test! But wait. You need to ask the right questions, in the right way. You want results you can trust. Results that you can comfortably base your decisions on. You need a little guidance.

The truth is, measuring the results of a large study can be slightly overwhelming; this is especially true if you don't take care to set up a proper series of tasks and metric-driven questions.

Already feeling overwhelmed? Don't worry! We've got just the guidance you need.

At **UserTesting**, we've found that combining qualitative feedback with quantitative data is the best approach for gathering rich user insights. This combo helps you balance the 'what' with the 'why' and helps you humanize the data. After writing thousands of tests, watching thousands of videos and writing hundreds of reports, we understand how to draw out the most useful feedback from testers through carefully constructed tasks and questions. We've gathered our best practices in this eBook to help you write effective tasks and questions that will help you get the most out of your tests.

You might want to reference some of our glossary terms throughout this eBook. For this reason, the first instance of these words and phrases are highlighted in yellow.

It might also be helpful to watch **this brief demo** of the UserTesting dashboard, so that you have a basic understanding of the references we make throughout this eBook.

Define your objective

The first step towards gathering helpful feedback is setting a clear and focused objective. If you don't know exactly what sort of information you need to obtain by running your study it will be difficult to stay on track throughout the project. Ask yourself: What am I trying to learn? Say it out loud or to a colleague. How does it sound? Is it easy to understand? Be sure to keep your objective clear and concise.

Example of a complex objective:

Can visitors easily find our products and make an informed purchase decision?

This objective actually contains three very different components:
1) finding a product, 2) getting informed, and 3) making a purchase.

Example of a better, more concise objective:

Can visitors find the information they need?

Keeping your objective front-and-center will help you structure your tests to gain insight into the right set of activities. Having a clearly defined objective will help you ask the right questions.

Identify what you need to measure

The key to a successful study is to ask users to perform specific tasks followed up by questions that will give you the type of insight you need in a measurable way.

We recommend taking a few moments to define exactly what you want to learn and the best way to convey results to your team. When the results come back, how do you want that feedback to look? Should it be a rating scale so you can create a graph? Written responses so you can create epigraphs? Verbal responses so you can create a sound bite and share it with your colleagues or your boss?

Establishing the type of deliverables you need from the outset will help you determine the right way to collect the information you need. The chart on the next page highlights various question types and shows the kind of results that can be expected when those questions are put to use.

Type	Example	Results
Verbal Response	Describe and demonstrate what, if anything, was most frustrating about this site.	Spoken answers correlate with where a participant is at in the study. Make great clips for a highlight reel.
Multiple Choice	Do you trust this company? • Yes • No	Great for collecting responses that are **categorical**. These can be nominal (cats or dogs?) dichotomous (yes or no) and even ordinal (**Likert** scale agree/disagree).
Rating Scale	How likely are you to visit this site again? *1 2 3 4 5* *Not at all likely Very likely*	Good for collecting ordinal variables (low, medium, high) and are very recognizable especially within the United States.
Written Response	What do you think is missing from this page, if anything?	Good for running post-study analysis. How many people used the same answers? Quick quotes for building user stories.

A comparison chart of UserTesting question types. Depending upon which question type you choose, you can expect different results.

Here at UserTesting, our Research team uses tasks to watch people go through a specified action, and records their activity. This is great for examining how people interact with your website or app. Then, each task is followed by a related question to gather analytical data to support our study.

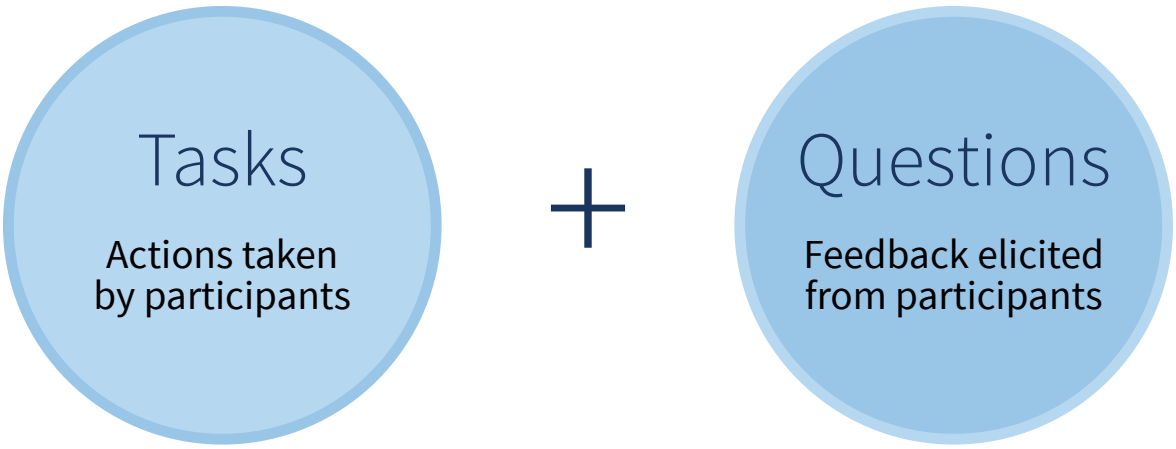
A task should be an action or activity that you want a user to accomplish at that time. Use a question when you want to elicit some form of feedback from the user in his or her own words.

Example of a task:

Go through the checkout process as far as you can without actually making a purchase.

Example of a question:

Was anything difficult or frustrating about this process?



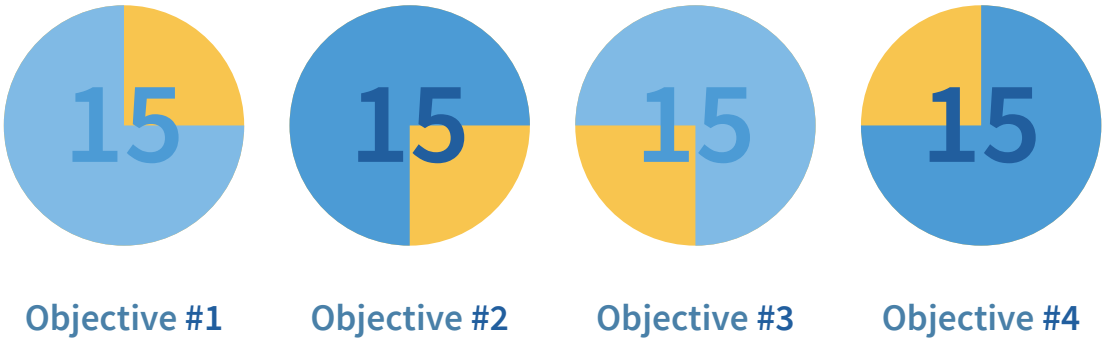
Create your tasks

The key to collecting useful feedback is getting your test participant to take action by performing specific tasks. Tasks are the steps that take the user from the beginning of your study to the very end. Along the way, you'll ask them to perform an activity—or activities—on your site or app. As they work, they'll be sharing their thoughts out loud.

You'll hear plenty of "hmmm's" and "huh's" while people are testing. We love this part! They're big clues as to how people interact with your site and show which areas cause people to pause, reflect, or question different aspects of your site. Just think—the more you find out during your study, the more you can improve your site's usability and the user experience.

When you're creating tasks for your test, focus on the insight you want to gather about one specific objective. If you have a lot of areas you want to test, we recommend breaking these up into different studies.

Most of our clients benefit from studies limited to 15 minutes or less; short sessions don't tire participants. If you segment your studies into manageable parts now, you'll be setting yourself up for success by allowing yourself to focus on one problem at a time.



Consider using both broad and specific tasks in your tests

Broad tasks

Broad, open-ended tasks help you learn how your users think.

> **Here's an example of a broad set of tasks:** Find a hotel that you'd actually like to stay in for your vacation to Chicago next month. Share your thoughts out loud as you go.

Broad tasks can be useful when considering branding, content, and layouts, or any of the "intangibles" of the user experience. They give you the chance to assess usability, content, aesthetics, and users' sentimental responses. Broad tasks are also good for observing natural user behavior. If you give participants the space to explore, they will. Open-ended tasks can generate just as many questions as answers. And that's a good thing!

Pro Tip: When you're not sure where to focus your test, try this: Run a very open-ended test using broad questions and you're sure to find areas of interest to study in a more targeted follow-up test.

Specific tasks

Specific tasks help pinpoint where users get confused or frustrated trying to do something specific on your site. They're very useful when running tests on very simple prototypes with limited functionality.

Here's a specific task example:

You're shopping for a gift.

1. Search for the item, specifying that you want to pick it up in a store near you.
2. Review the results page.
3. Sort by best reviews.

The approach shown above is great for getting users to focus on a particular feature, tool, or portion of the site they might not otherwise interact with.

Plan tasks using a logical flow

The structure of your test is important. We recommend starting with broad tasks (exploring the homepage, using search, adding an item to a basket) and moving in a connected flow towards specific tasks. The more natural the flow, the more realistic the test and the better your results will be.

Bad example (too many disconnected activities):

Create an account > find an item > check out > search the site > evaluate the global navigation options.

Good example (a natural user flow):

Evaluate the global navigation options > search the site > find an item > create an account > check out.

Ask yourself whether you want to learn about the users' journeys through the site or something about the destination? Or both?

If it's about the journey, give the participant some freedom to use the site as they see fit. If it's about the destination, help them get to the right location! If it's both the journey and the destination, give the participant the liberty to find the right place on the site on their own. Then in subsequent tasks, tell them where they should be. You can even include the correct URL.

Also, if you think a specific task will require the user to do something complex or something that has a high risk of failure, consider putting that task near the end of the test to avoid the perception that the product is broken and all tasks will be impossible.

Make tasks short and concise

Do you ever find yourself skimming the page when you read an article or a novel? Well, participants will skim your test tasks, too. One way to ensure they read your whole task is to make the task short and your language concise!

> "Say what you have to say, and then stop."
>
> Rudolf Flesch, *The Art of Readable Writing*

Here's an example of a task that crams too much into a small space:

"Add the item to your cart. Now shop for another item and add it to your shopping cart. Then change the quantity of the first item from 1 to 2. Now go through the whole checkout process using the following information..."

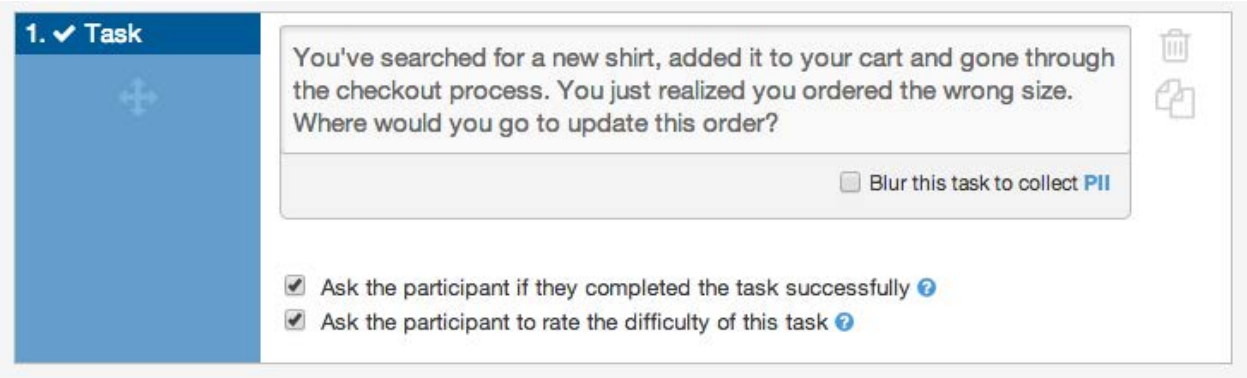
The single task above should be split into at least five separate tasks:

1. Add the item to your cart.
2. Now shop for another item.
3. If you haven't already, add the second item to your cart.
4. On the shopping cart, please update the quantity of the first item you added from 1 to 2.
5. Now please proceed through the entire checkout process.

Pro Tip: If you decide to include multiple questions in a single task, don't list the questions in a narrative block. Instead, put them in a list. It's a visual cue to the testers that there are three questions to answer on this task. When creating the list in the UserTesting application, use a new line of text for each question and use a dash (–) instead of a bullet.

Give your testers a hand

You'll get more out of your tests if you give your testers helpful tips, or "breadcrumbs" along the way. During longer tests, users can get lost and forget what they're supposed to be looking at when presented with a question.



Include a reminder within a task that lets people know where they are at. Providing a frame of reference for participants will ensure they are still where they should be throughout the test.

Write great questions

OK. You know what your objective is, you've put some thought into the type of data you want to capture, and you've created some tasks for your testers. Now it's time to start drafting your questions!

It's important to structure questions accurately and strategically in order to maximize your user tests, and gain the insights that will really help you move your project forward. In this section you'll find a series of tips to help you gather a range of data (both factual and subjective) by asking your questions just the right way.

Pro Tip: When writing a question, every word matters. Every. Single. Word. Carefully consider every word to make sure you're asking the question that you want to be asking.

Tips for gathering factual responses

- Don't use industry jargon. Terms like "sub-navigation" and "affordances" don't jive with the average user so don't include them in your questions. Define key terms or concepts in the questions themselves (unless the goal of your study is to see if they understand these terms/concepts).

- If you are asking about some sort of frequency, such as how often a user visits a particular site, make sure you define the timeline clearly. Always put the timeline at the beginning of the sentence.

> **Bad:** How often do you visit Amazon.com?
>
> **Better:** How often did you visit Amazon.com in the past six months?
>
> **Best:** In the past six months, how often did you visit Amazon.com?

- Don't try to pack all the juicy and complex concepts into one question. Break it up!

- If your respondent can give you the answer, "It depends," then it's probably a bad question.

- It's best to ask about firsthand experiences; ask about what people have actually done, not what they will do or would do. It's not always possible, but try your best to avoid hypotheticals and hearsay.

Example of asking about what someone will do or would do:

How often do you think you'll visit this site in the next six months?

Example of asking about what someone has done:

In the past three months, how often have you visited this site?

Example of hearsay:

How often do your parents log into Facebook?

Better example:

Skip this question and ask the parents directly!

Tips for gathering subjective data

The name of the game is to make sure that users are all answering the same question. Yes, the text in each question may be presented in exactly the same way from user to user, but were they all seeing or experiencing the exact same thing prior to being asked the question? The stimulus needs to be standardized.

But wait! ***How do you do that in an unmoderated, remote user test?***

Make like Hansel and Gretel and give them little breadcrumbs along the way! Remind them where they should be on the site. To ensure they're where you want them to be, provide a URL for them to click so they are looking at the right part of the site or app.

You are here.

Here are some additional thoughts on gathering subjective data:

You're not judging the moral quality or character of your respondents when analyzing their results, so make sure your questions don't make them feel that way. To avoid this, place the burden of blame on the website, product, or app so it's not the tester's fault, it's the site's fault.

Bad example:

"I was very lost and confused." (**agree/disagree**)

Good example:

"The site caused me to feel lost and confused." (**agree/disagree**)

Be fair, realistic, and consistent with the two ends of a rating spectrum.

Bad example:

"After going through the checkout process, to what extent do you trust or distrust this company?"

I distrust it just a tad ↔ I trust it with my life

Good example:

"After going through the checkout process, to what extent do you trust or distrust this company?"

I strongly distrust this company ↔ I strongly trust this company

Pro Tip: Be aware that emotional states are very personal and mean different things to different people. “Very confident” to a typically sheepish person may mean something very different from what “very confident” means to an experienced C-level executive.

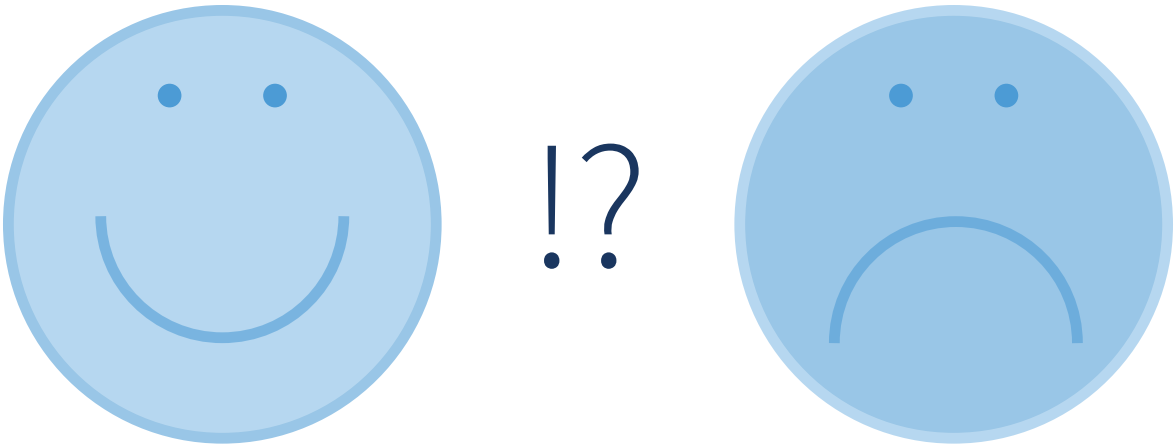
Subjective states are relative. “Happy” in one context can mean something very different from “happy” in another context.

For instance:

Option 1: Happy / Not Happy
(Happy = opposite of not happy)

Option 2: Happy / Neutral / Unhappy
(Happy = the best!)

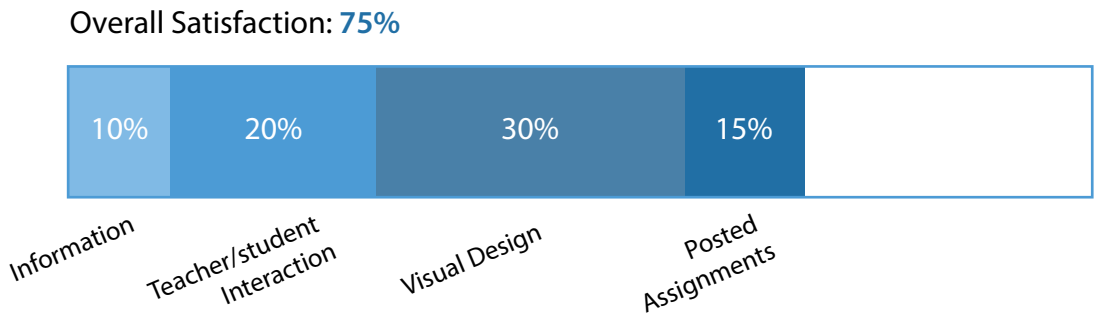
Option 3: Very Happy / Happy / Unhappy / Very Unhappy
(Happy = just above neutral)



When asking questions about vague or complex concepts, users often don't know how to answer them. Break up concepts when you're asking the questions and put them back together when you're analyzing the results.

- Imagine you want to measure parents' satisfaction with their children's school website. Satisfaction is a vague and complex concept. Is it the quality of the information? Is it the quality of interaction between the teachers and students online? Is it the visual design? Is it the quality or difficulty of the assignments posted there? Why not ask about all of those independently?

- When you're analyzing the results, you can create a composite "satisfaction" rating based on the results from the smaller pieces.



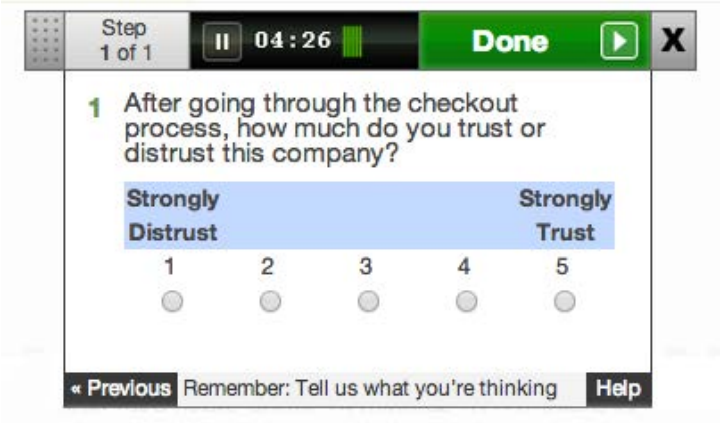
UserTesting question types

We've built our system to help anyone running a study easily gather the information they need, based on the most commonly used question types.

Here are some suggestions for how to best leverage these types of questions:

Rating scales

- Use relative extremes: Make the negative answer have the lowest numerical value and the positive answer have the highest numerical value. In other words, make difficult = 1 and easy = 5, not the other way around.



Rating scale questions are a great way to benchmark common tasks and compare the results with a similar test run on your competitor's site.

- Stay consistent throughout the test. Use the same end labels and the same wording when you're repeating a question.

- Consider asking “why?” after a multiple-choice or ratings scale. Then, when you get your results back, you can go back and hear the tester discuss their answer or response. Asking “why?” also prompts people to think critically about their answer.

Multiple-choice

- Ask one question at a time! **Don’t do this:** Did you find the tablet you were looking for? Was it where you expected to find it? Yes or no?

Multiple-choice questions are an easy way to quickly gain an understanding of your participant’s situation.

- Multiple-choice responses should be **mutually exclusive**.

Example: Where did you first click to begin shopping for your tablet?

Bad Answer Set:

1. Search Bar
2. Top Navigation
3. Homepage
4. Sidebar
5. Best Sellers in the Sidebar

(All items listed above are page-level navigation elements, except Homepage)

Good Answer Set:

1. Search Bar
2. Best Sellers in the Sidebar
3. Navigation
4. Your Recent History in the Sidebar

- Multiple-choice responses should be **exhaustive**. That means every possible response should be included in your response categories. If you suspect that there are just too many options, do your best to guess which options will be mentioned most, and then include an “other” response.

- There is a time and a place to ask broad opinion questions, such as “Which version did you prefer?” Lots of variables go into an emotional response such as preference. Variables include the site’s aesthetic appeal, ease of use, quality of content, learnability, etc. It’s OK to start the conversation with “Which version did you prefer?,” but then you might consider breaking down your question to address each of the finer variables.

Pro Tip: If you’re asking about task success, remember to define what success is. If the previous task asks a user to find a tablet on Amazon and add it to their cart, and you ask “Were you successful?” the user will not know whether you are asking about finding a tablet or adding it to their cart!

Written responses

The final question type featured within the UserTesting system is the Written Response. To make the most of this type, we recommend that you ask questions that can be answered in one to two sentences, not paragraphs.

Used sparingly, written responses allow you to collect rich qualitative insight.

Here are some additional tips for gathering written responses:

- Beware of overusing the written response question type. As much as we'd love our participants to type out all their thoughts and feelings, they fatigue quickly and the quality of their responses will often degrade.

- Written responses are great for qualitative exploration that you can quickly glance at and understand:

> Example: **What three words describe this site?** Fast, easy, simple.

Hint: Create a word cloud from all your users responses to quickly see which words they're using to describe your site.

Pro Tip: Ask for short lists. Want users to share which websites they've made online purchases at within the last three months? Ask them to type their response.

Test out your test

Your questions probably won't be perfect. That's OK! When you first run your test, pay attention to the results and think about why a question didn't work like you hoped it would. Sometimes participants will clue you in on where they were confused or stuck.

A red flag should go up if there is little to no variation in the responses to multiple-choice and rating scale questions. You may not be measuring what you thought you were.

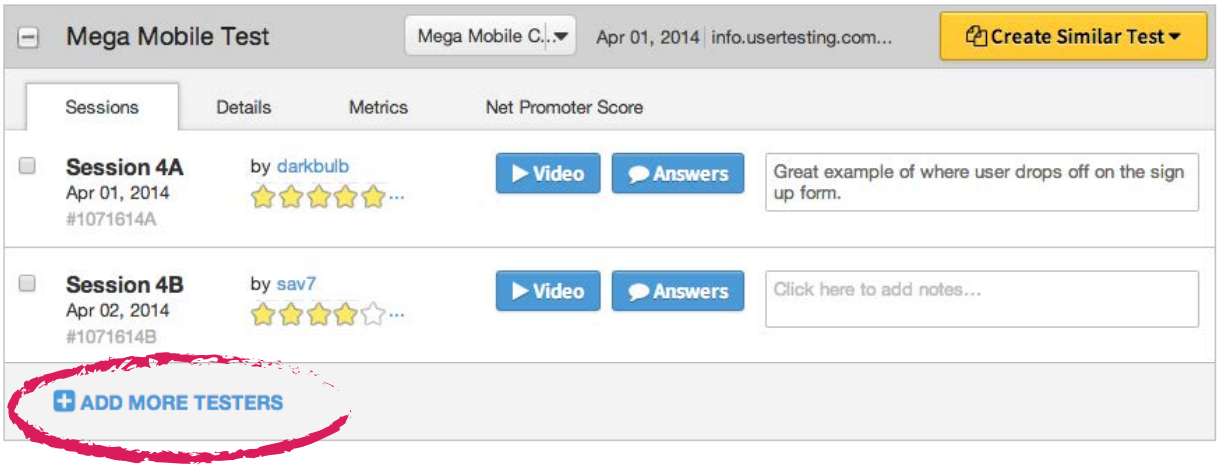
Run a pilot test

By trying out your test on one or two people before you launch a multi-person study, you'll be able to eliminate most flaws within your test. The primary goal is to make sure that people who read your tasks and questions understand them in the way they were meant to be understood.

Here's a good structure for running a pilot test:

- Ask someone who is not too familiar with your project to run through the test.
- Listen to them as they process each task and question and take note of any trouble they may encounter while trying to complete their first pass.
- Once you've made adjustments, and you feel pretty good about your test, we recommend having one more person run through the test to ensure you've cleared up any confusing or leading questions.

If you set your study up in UserTesting, we've made it very easy to run one test, review it, and then add more participants to the same test.



It's easy to add additional participants to an existing study from your UserTesting dashboard.

At the end of every study, it's a good practice to review your notes. Identify weak portions of your test, and rewrite these tasks or questions for next time. This will save you time in the long run; especially if you are testing out prototypes first, and then running more people through a similar test once you've pushed out the new changes to your website or app.

Another reason to spend the time getting your questions just right is if you plan to run a benchmarking study. When you run an ongoing review of your website or app over time, you won't be able to change up your questions along the way, or you'll risk skewing the results and ruin any chances of an apples-to-apples comparison.

Beware of errors

There are many errors that can skew your data. The more aware you are of them from the beginning, the more likely you are to avoid them. Below we've outlined the most common error types, and suggested some ways to reduce the chances of running into these problems in your studies.

Sampling error

Simply put, the wrong people are participating in your study. An extreme example is that you want to learn about how young men who live in urban areas interact with your restaurant review app but, instead, older women who live in rural areas are participating.

Solution: Ask screener questions when identifying participants for the test to help qualify that they are within your target audience.

Researcher error

Participants understood the meaning of a question differently than what you meant to convey. In other words, the question is poorly worded. Follow all of the tips in this guide and you shouldn't have this problem!

Participants will search for the exact terminology that you include in your tasks. Say you want users to locate your "Find a Store" button. Well, if you ask them to look for the "Find a Store" button, they'll look for that exact text and ignore the deeper issue. If you're wondering whether users can determine where to look when they want to find a physical location nearest to them, ask them exactly that: "Where would you go to identify a location near you?"

Solution 1:

Try out your test with several people and monitor their reaction to your questions. You'll learn pretty quickly if the question isn't correctly communicating what you want it to.

Solution 2:

Be aware of your target audience, and ask questions in a manner that naturally resonates with them. Use plain English. Slang, regionalisms, etc. can confuse testers, who tend to take questions very literally.

Respondent error

The participants are lying to you or misleading you intentionally. While this is a common challenge in any usability testing scenario, it's important to consider why participants might respond negatively.

- They don't trust you.
- They are trying to conceal real information.
- They stopped caring about the test and have resorted to bogus responses to get through the test quickly.
- They are treating this like it's a literal test, and are trying to give 'the correct answer' in order to pass.

Solution 1:

Reassure participants that their responses won't be shared publicly.

Solution 2:

At the very beginning of your test, be sure to explain that if they have to fill out any personal information the actual responses will be blurred out to protect their identity.

Solution 3:

Keep your test short so you don't lose the interest of your participants.

Additional thoughts on respondent errors:

Respondent errors are most likely happening because you, the researcher, haven't properly anticipated the errors early on and addressed them before pushing out your study.

Faulty participant recall

- The question asks them to recall something too far in the past.
- The question asks them to recall something in too much detail.

Solution: Do a simple gut check. Can you remember the specifics of something similar? If not, revise your question.

> "You forget what you want to remember and you remember what you want to forget."
>
> Cormac McCarthy, *The Road*

Social desirability

Users will give a response that they think is most popularly accepted in society. If you ask people about how tech savvy they are, they may overestimate their abilities because they think that this is qualitatively "better" than not being tech savvy.

Solution 1: When you are looking for test participants, be sure to explain that you (or your company) really value the skill sets or demographic characteristics you're requesting. Emphasize that you hope to learn how your website or app will be useful or beneficial to testers in some way.

Solution 2: Assure your participants that they will remain anonymous.

Acquiescence

The participant will tell you what they think you want to hear out of fear of offending you, the researcher. For example, they may hate the app, but they don't want to make you feel bad about your work. This is more common in moderated tests.

Solution 1: Use our trained UX Researchers at UserTesting, or another impartial individual, to moderate your tests for you. Impartiality can reduce barriers to sharing the truth.

Solution 2: If it's not possible for you to involve an impartial third party, then explicitly explain to the participant that you value truth and honesty and that nothing they can say can hurt your feelings.

Leading questions

With leading questions, you may anticipate issues users will encounter and you subtly, yet directly, influence the participants' responses by including small hints in the phrasing of the questions themselves. More often than not, you'll subconsciously influence the outcome of the responses in the direction that you personally prefer. This is dishonest, and must be avoided.

Bad: "How much better is the new version than the original homepage?"

A more neutral approach produces unbiased results.

Better: "Compare the new version of the homepage to the original. Which do you prefer?"

Analyze your results

Whew! You're practically a research pro at this point. Time to examine the results of your study. While this is definitely the exciting part, sometimes it can also be daunting. In this section we cover some tried-and-true techniques used by our Research team.

Here is an overview of the process our researchers employ here at UserTesting:

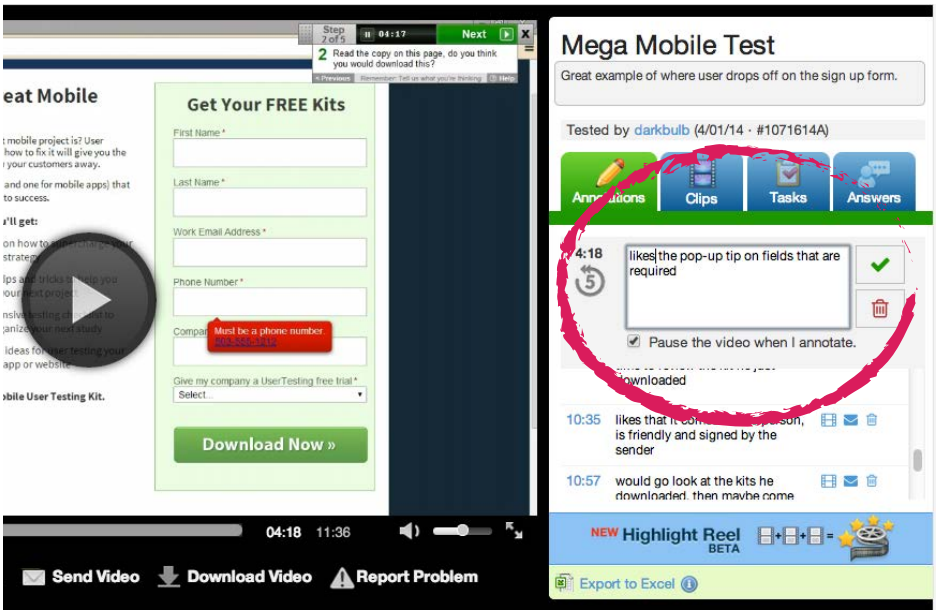
1. Review your research questions and hypotheses.
2. Spend some time absorbing the dataset. Each study produces video recordings as well as a summary of the various question types so you can view them from your dashboard, or download them. Let your mind wander and see if anything pops out to you as surprising, unexpected, or suspicious.
3. Make sure the data is telling the story that you think it is. Dig into your videos on your UserTesting dashboard. Watch the users respond to your questions and look to see if the test's metrics responses match the sentiment they're expressing in the video.
4. Write down the story that your users are telling you.
5. Look at your questions and hypotheses again. Are you still on track?
6. Rinse and repeat.

Pro Tip: Write your research questions and hypotheses on a Post-it note and put it on your monitor. All of your time and effort should go into exploring your questions and hypotheses. **The feeling of being overwhelmed comes when you stop focusing on your goals.**

What to look for

When we're reviewing full recordings of user tests we often annotate along the way. These annotations are captured alongside the video so you can easily jump back to your notes (and corresponding video clip) later on.

Take note of user frustrations as well as items that users find particularly helpful or exciting. These become discussion points for design teams and can often help to uncover enhancements to future feature releases. It's also important to indicate things that people love, so that you don't inadvertently undo the positive when trying to improve the user experience of your website or app.



A look at the onscreen annotation feature within the UserTesting video player.

Explore correlations

When reviewing sliding scale and multiple-choice responses, look for correlations between the length of time spent on a task (this is captured within our service) and negative responses from participants. This is a starting point for identifying areas of the user experience that may be particularly troublesome.

You should use this with guarded expectations. Sometimes the length of time it takes for someone to accomplish a task is due to their enjoyment of the task. Or, it is simply the result of a lengthy verbal response to something that has caught their eye.

A note on seeing variation in your data

If you have little to no variation in the responses to a question, the instinct is to get excited because you've identified a strong pattern. STOP. Little to no variation should be a red flag.

No variation = wasted question.

If it was so obvious, then you didn't need a question in your test to measure it.

You wrote the question poorly.

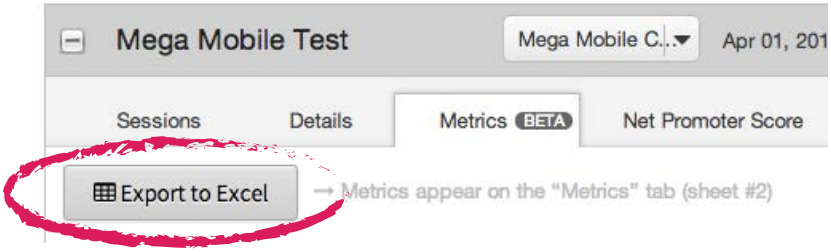
You gave users no other choice but to select one of the responses you provided.

You can't do anything with a lack of variation.

If you want to slice and dice your data to see how different groups of people responded differently, you can't do this if you don't have variation. Want to know how females responded differently from males? Too bad, you'll learn nothing because they all responded the same way.

Harness the power of the spreadsheet

By downloading all metric-driven data as a spreadsheet it's much easier to measure totals for all responses.



Easily download all of your study data from the dashboard.

Two of our favorite formulas within Excel for digging into the numbers:

=COUNTIF([selected cells], "criteria")

This will count all cells within a selected range that include specific words (criteria) you search for. Great when counting up the total number of "yes" or "no" responses to a question.

=AVERAGE()

This will give you the average response for the selected range of cells. If you asked people to rate something on a scale of 1 to 5, then you might want to know what the average response for that particular question was.

6 tips every researcher should memorize

1. **Every word matters.**

Every word matters when asking a question of another human being. It takes time, but you'll rest easy knowing that you can trust your own data. USE PLAIN ENGLISH!

2. **Ask one question at a time.**

Example: How long have you been shopping on this site, and what was the original reason you decided to use their services? This would be best asked as a written response (how long) and verbal response on their original reason.

3. **Don't use leading questions.**

Bad example: How much do you love this site?

Good example: On a scale of 1-5 (1 = Strongly Dislike, 5 = Strongly Like), how much do you like or dislike this site?

4. **Define key concepts prior to asking a question.**

This is particularly important for task success. If you are going to ask respondents to self-report on whether they successfully completed the required task, it's imperative that you define exactly what success looks like.

5. **Every participant needs to interpret your question the same way.**

   Any room for creative or personal interpretation leads to bogus and inconsistent data.

6. **Test your questions with one participant before launching a large-scale study.**

   You'll often notice mistakes in your question construction that you can correct before moving forward with the larger sample.

And that's user testing in a nutshell! We encourage you to make user testing a standard part of your marketing initiatives or your product or website development process. The results and insight you'll gain will be invaluable.

With a clear objective, the right tasks, and carefully planned and worded questions, you'll have an effective test. A little analysis of the results and you'll have useful insight into ways to improve your project. We're sure that with some time and practice, user testing is absolutely something you can manage on your own, especially if you use our handy on-demand solution.

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About UserTesting

UserTesting provides the fastest and most affordable website and mobile app testing in the market. Watch videos of your target market using your site and gain the insights you need to increase your organization's customer retention, conversion, and profitability. Improve customer experience and boost your company's success.

We're inspired by Floyd J. Fowler's book *Improving Survey Questions: Design and Evaluation (Applied Social Research Methods)*

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Glossary

Here's a glossary of terms that can make reading this eBook a little easier.

Study: A collection of tests, the results of which comprise your final dataset.

Test: An individual user test completed by one participant.

User: A participant in your user test.

Task: A goal or objective that you set for the user on your site.

Question: A way to gather factual or subjective information around a stimulus, typically a task.

Quantitative Results: Responses that can be captured in, or converted to, numeric form.

Qualitative Results: Responses or results that cannot be quantified.

Categorical Variables: Also known as discrete variables, they are generally qualitative in nature. They are broken down into nominal (cats, dogs, or mice?), dichotomous (yes or no), and ordinal variables (a lot, somewhat, not much, none).

Interval Variables: A type of continuous (quantitative) variable. Responses fall within a range (1-5 hours/week, 6-10 hours/week, etc.) rather than on a fluid scale.

Likert Scale: A way to gather responses with a rating scale that includes incremental degrees. This type of scale includes **disagree** on one end and **agree** on the other. Typically used to measure personal attitudes.