Survey Questions: Survey Examples and Sample Survey Questions

Popular Survey Questions with Survey Examples and Sample Survey

What is the single most important factor determining the success of a survey? You got it, it is the types of survey questions - the question types and respondent answer types that form the cornerstones of all surveys!

Whether it an email survey, SMS survey, web intercept survey or a mobile app survey, the single common denominator that determines how effectively you are able to collect accurate and complete survey responses is your survey questions and their types.

In this article, we will cover some good survey questions , question types and their corresponding answer types that will almost immediately give you a clear understanding of how to construct and choose good survey questions for exponentially increased insights from your responses.
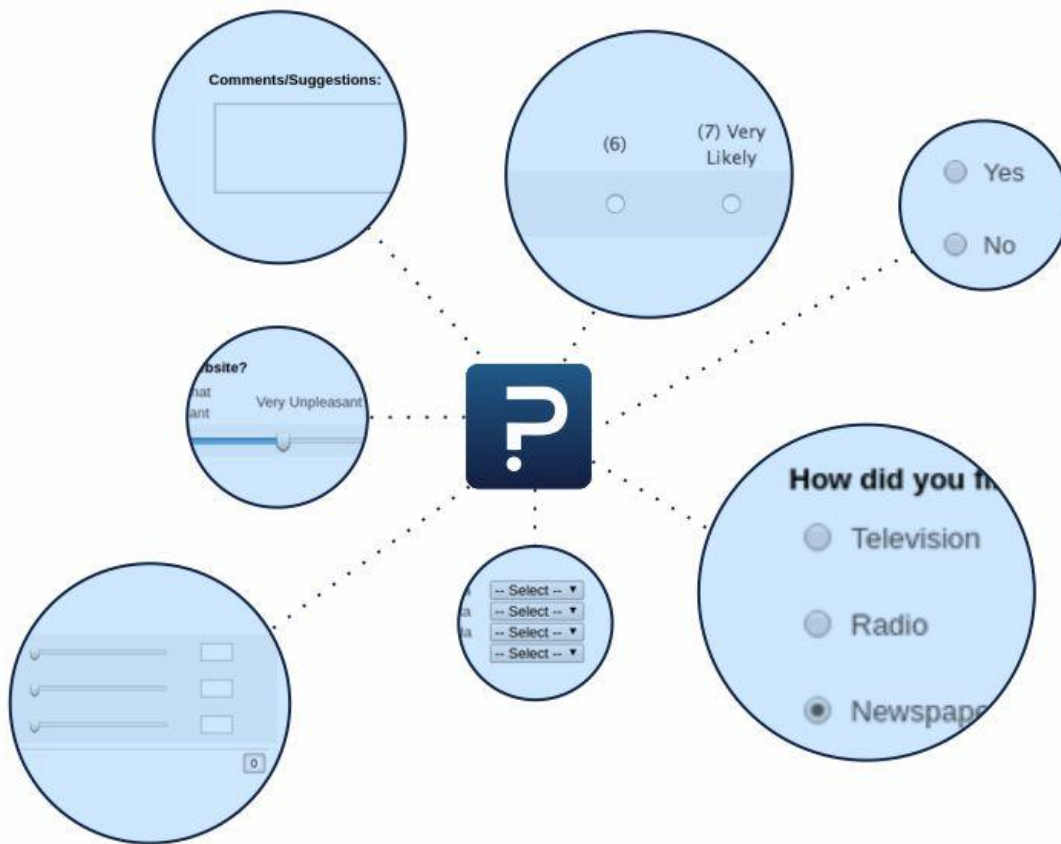
We suggest that you should also check out: Sample Surveys with Sample Survey Questions and Question Types, to get an even better subject matter expertise.

1. The Dichotomous Survey Question

The dichotomous survey question is generally a "yes/no" question.

Survey Example:

If you are seeking information only about product users, you may want to ask this type of question to "screen out" those who haven't purchased your products or services. Researchers use "*screening*" questions to ensure that only those people they are interested in participate in the survey.

You may also want to use dichotomous questions to separate respondents or branch into groups of those who "have purchased" and those who "have not yet purchased" your products or services. Once separated, different questions can be asked of each of these groups.

You may want to ask the "have purchased" group how satisfied they are with your products and services, and you may want to ask the "have not purchased" group what the primary reasons are for not purchasing. In essence, your survey questions branch to become two different sets of questions.

2. The Multiple Choice Survey Questions

The multiple-choice survey questions consists of three or more exhaustive, mutually exclusive categories. Multiple choice questions can ask for single or multiple answers. In the following sample survey example, the respondent will select exactly one answer from the 7 possible options, exactly 3 of the 7, or as many of the 7 options (1, 2, 3, or up to 7 answers can be selected).

Survey Example:

How did you first hear about our website?

○ Television

○ Radio

◉ Newspaper

○ Magazine

○ Word-of-mouth

○ Internet

○ Other : Please specify

For this type of question, it is important to consider including an "other" category as there may be other avenues by which the person first heard about your site that you might have overlooked.

3. Rank Order Scaling Question

Rank order scaling question allow a certain set of brands or products to be ranked based upon a specific attribute or characteristic. Perhaps we know that Toyota, Honda, Mazda, and Ford are most likely to be purchased. You may request that the options be ranked based upon a particular attribute. Ties may or may not be allowed. If you allow ties, several options will have the same scores.

Rank order scaling Survey Example:

Based upon what you have seen, heard and experienced, please rank the following brands according to their reliability. Place a "1" next to the brand that is most reliable, a "2" next to the brand that is next most reliable, and so on. Remember, no two cars can have the same ranking.

Honda	-- Select -- ▼
Toyota	-- Select -- ▼
Mazda	-- Select -- ▼
Ford	-- Select -- ▼

4. The Rating Scale Question

A rating scale question requires a person to rate a product or brand along a well-defined, evenly spaced continuum. Rating scales are often used to measure the direction and intensity of attitudes.

Rating Scale Survey Question Example:

Which of the following categories best describes your last experience purchasing a product or service on our website?

	Very Pleasant	Somewhat Pleasant	Neither Pleasant nor Unpleasant	Somewhat Upleasant	Very Unpleasant
My experience was	Very Unpleasant				

5. The Semantic Differential Scale Question

The Semantic Differential Scale question asks a person to rate a product, brand, or company based upon a seven-point rating scale that has two bi-polar adjectives at each end. The following is an example of a semantic differential scale question.

Semantic Differential Scale Survey Example:

Given your most recent experience, please rate the following question on a scale of 1 to 7.

	(1) Very Unlikely	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7) Very Likely
How likely are you to use our service again?	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

Notice that unlike the rating scale, the semantic differential scale does not have a neutral or middle selection. A person must choose, to a certain extent, one or the other adjective.

6. The Staple Scale Question

The staple scale question asks a person to rate a brand, product, or service according to a certain characteristic on a scale from +5 to -5, indicating how well the characteristic describes the product or service. Example:

7. Constant Sum Survey Questions

A constant sum survey questions permits collection of "ratio" data, meaning that the data is able to express the relative value or importance of the options (option A is twice as important as option B)

Constant Sum Survey Example:

This type of question is used when you are relatively sure of the reasons for purchase, or you want input on a limited number of reasons you feel are important. Questions must sum to 100 points and point totals are checked by javascript.

8. The Open-Ended Survey Question

The Open Ended survey question seeks to explore the qualitative, in-depth aspects of a particular topic or issue. It gives a person the chance to respond in detail. Although open-ended questions are important, they are time-consuming and should not be over-used.

Example:
(If the respondent indicates they did not find what they were looking for...)

Comments/Suggestions:

If you want to add an "Other" answer to a multiple choice question, you would use branching instructions to come to an open ended question to find out What Other....

9. Demographic Survey Questions

Demographic survey questions are an integral part of any survey. They are used to identify characteristics such as age, gender, income, race, geographic place of residence, number of children, and so forth. For example demographic questions will help you to classify the difference between product users and non-users. Perhaps most of your customers come from the Northeast, are between the ages of 50 and 65, and have incomes between $50,000 and $75,000.

Demographic data helps you paint a more accurate picture of the group of persons you are trying to understand. And by better understanding the type of people who use or are likely to use your product, you can allocate promotional resources to reach these people, in a more cost effective manner.

Example:

Which of the following categories describes your age?

○ Younger than 18

○ 18 – 24

○ 25 – 34

○ 35 – 44

○ 45 – 54

○ 55 – 64

○ 65 or older

○ Prefer not to answer

Psycho-graphic or life style questions are also included in the template files. These questions provide an in-depth psychological profile and look at activities, interests and opinions of respondents.

10. Matrix Table Question

Matrix tables questions are arranged in tabular format with questions listed on the left of the table while the answer options are at the top of the table. They are actually 2 dimensional variants of the multiple choice questions. Multipoint scales, Multiselect, Spreadsheets and Side-by-Side matrix are the 4 choices given to the user under the matrix table questions. Multipoint scales allow respondents to select only one option per parameter while multiselect allows them to select multiple options per parameter. Spreadsheet converts text into organized tables that are easy for the respondents to fill out.

Example:

How do we rate on the following attributes?

	Well Below Average	Below Average	Average	Above Average	Well Above Average
Customer service experience	○	○	○	○	○
On–time delivery of service	○	○	○	○	○
Professionalism	○	○	○	○	○
Purchase experience	○	○	○	○	○
Quality of service	○	○	○	○	○
Understanding of customers' needs	○	○	○	○	○

11. Side-By-Side Matrix Question

In case you have to organize a survey where you want to know about multiple aspects like importance and satisfaction level of the various services offered to users, you can use side-by-side matrix. It gives you the option to define multiple rating options simultaneously due to which it gets easy for you to make changes in whatever needs improvement and also to maintain what's good in your services.

Example:

	Importance					Satisfaction				
	Not Important				Very Important	Not Satisfied				Very Satisfied
	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
Customer Service	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
Packaging	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○
On–time Arrival	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

12. Static Content Question

These questions are just for display purpose to add value to the survey. Presentation text questions are usually used as a separator between two different sections of the survey. You can also add headings and subheadings to the various sections of the survey to make it aesthetically pleasing.

Example:

13. Miscellaneous Question

Using this category of survey questions, respondents can be given an option to display date and time, captcha, map and calendar to collect information as per the purpose of survey.

Example:

What is your date of birth?

Month	Day	Year
-- ▼	-- ▼	-- ▼

14. Visual Analog Scale Question

The Visual Analog Scale allows you to show your survey questions in a more appealing manner to respondents. For example, you can ask your respondents to give ratings to the services you've provided them. Text sliders and numeric sliders are convenient for the respondents to provide feedback. Other options include share to social media platforms, thumbs up and down and smiley-rating. Smiley rating can be pleasant to the eyes and can help you to leave positive impact on the customers.

Example:

How satisfied are you with our services

| Extremely Unsatisfied | Unsatisfied | Neutral | Satisfied | Extremely Satisfied |

15. Image Chooser Type Question

The use of images always boosts user experience. Even when we come across articles or blogs with attractive images, we're tempted to read the entire article. Put to use this theory when you need your clients to fill out a survey. Select One or Select Many Image Questions gives the respondents an opportunity to select one or more images from a provided list. Another option, Rate Images is a matrix question the allows users to rate the images on a common scale.

Example:

16. Data Reference Question

To gather or approve data against standard databases like zip codes, Reference / Validated Data Questions are used. The other option is of the Dynamic Lookup Tables which are used to depict data according to the ranking. Segmentation of options in second menu can be done on the basis of the respondent's choice in the first menu.

Example:

17. Upload Data Question

An option to upload data along with the survey can be given to the respondents. Documents, images, videos or digital signatures can be uploaded by them.

Example:

18. Net Promoter Score Question

A Net Promoter Score question is a scoring model for measuring brand shareability and customer satisfaction. It asks respondents to rate whether they'll recommend your company to their network on a scale of 0 to 10, which is divided into sections of Promoters (9-10), Passives(7-8) and Detractors (0-6).

The collected responses of each section are calculated and the net value of the promoters is shown. The NPS as it's called, helps company owners to know where are they going wrong for detractors to give low ratings or why are promoters giving high ratings so that you can keep working hard on those points.

Example:

Considering your _complete_ experience with our company, how likely would you be to recommend our products to a friend or colleague?

«Very Unlikely										Very Likely»
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

19. Choice Model Question

This type of survey questions include Conjoint Analysis and Maximum Difference Scaling.

Conjoint Analysis is one of the most accepted quantitative methods in market research. It's used when you need to know client preferences like knowing preferred product features, to analyse effect of price changes in the product sales or to know how well the market will accept a new product.

Maximum Difference Scaling is an effective way to establish the relative ranking for up to 30 elements. They might be:

- Features or benefits of a service
- Areas for potential investment of resources
- Interests and activities
- Potential marketing messages for a new product
- Products or Services used

Example:

Which one do you prefer?

		Vizio	LG
Brand	❯	Vizio	LG
Price	❯	USD 1500	USD 800
Size	❯	36"	32"
		○	●

Finally, what are good survey questions ?

It's a question everyone must wonder - what are considered to be good survey questions? Is it the type of questions or the language of the survey questions that make the biggest difference in increasing survey response rates and getting you the best insights?

1. **Keep your Questions Fair :** The most prime point to keep in mind while designing your survey questions is to not be too boastful about your own services and products. Use as few exaggerated adjectives as you can with your services that can make the customers think that you think too highly of your own company, which isn't the impression you want your customers to have.
   Dodge questions like: "What do you feel about the extremely warm welcome our staff gave at your arrival?" Respondents will prefer being asked questions like, "How did you like your welcome at our hotel?"

2. **Simple Survey Questions = Better Responses :** Come up with survey questions that are easy to understand and answer. Expecting respondents to repeatedly answer essay-like questions will do no good for the survey. Instead, ask question that are not complicated to understand and can be answered without investing too much time.

3. **Avoid Unwanted Questions :** You may feel the need to get as much information as you can from a single survey but this temptation can create damage. In case you keep asking every single detail, you'll end up asking survey questions that may seem off track. The user can get suspicious about your intentions apart from getting confused and irritated.

4. **Skip Assumptive Question :** Neither do people keep situations in mind that haven't happened in their lives nor do they appreciate made-up situational survey questions. Avoid cooking

up "what if" conditions which will not necessarily get authentic answers from respondents as they may or may not have faced the situation. It will be much effective if you post more realistic situations for them.

5. **Ask Customer Survey Questions with "How" :** A single select question like "Did you like our gym" will get you either "yes" or "no". Instead of the yes or no kind, if you ask "How did you find the services at our gym?" and come up with responses like, "extremely professional," "moderately professional," and "not at all professional." This question will fetch you detailed data giving you a peek into what exactly did the respondents like about your services. Taking corrective measures becomes easier for the management.

6. **Don't Ask More than One Question at Once :** The last thing you want your survey to do is confuse respondents. Asking two or more correlated things in one question will baffle your customers. Also, multiple interlinked things in one question may indicate that they're unimportant. In case you have a complicated topic in hand, you can divide it into multiple survey questions so that you can get effective answers and great insights.

Additional sensitivities to keep in mind for creating good survey questions:

1. If you have to ask sensitive questions about religion or political parties, place them next to the questions contextually related to them. This will make it easier for the respondents to at least try answering.

2. The introductory questions that you ask should be simple, pleasant and interesting.

3. Including a question mark towards the end of every question can prove to be an effective way to get respondents to finish the survey.

4. For the respondents to get the right impressions from your survey, make sure all the questions are grammatically correct and error free.

5. The questions should have understandable terms and concepts broadly known to all.

Please remember - It is the simplicity and direct approach of your survey that will be considered the most influential aspects in getting you the best survey responses through good survey questions.