

# TYPES OF SURVEY QUESTIONS

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Surveys can be used to gather several types of information. These include demographic (descriptive information about the participant), behavioral and attitudinal information.

## Overall Tips for Writing Questions:

1. Write short and simple questions.
2. Don't ask leading questions. For example, "How great was the football game?" implies that person thought the game was great. Maybe it wasn't.
3. Ask close-ended questions. Whenever possible, provide answer choices. Such questions are much easier to answer and to analyze after the survey.
4. Give as few answer choices as is reasonable. Too many choices annoy the person being surveyed and are difficult to analyze.
5. Put the questions in logical order. For example, ask, "Do you have pets?" before asking, "What kind of pets do you have?"
6. Make it neat and orderly. Number your questions. Type them. People like neatness.
7. Pretest your survey. Give the survey to five people before doing the actual study. Ask them to tell you if a question is unclear or bothersome. Read their responses. Are your questions getting the information that you want?

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## Sample Questions:

### 1. Demographic information

This information describes a person. This includes age, gender, occupation, year in school and any other descriptive information. Here are some examples.

If you are surveying high school students:

Circle your age:    14    15    16    17    18    19

If you are surveying people on the street:

Age: \_\_\_\_\_

or                      Circle your age group:

|       |       |
|-------|-------|
| 0-10  | 10-20 |
| 20-30 | 30-40 |
| 40-50 | 50-60 |
| 60-70 | 70-80 |
| 80+   |       |

Are you \_\_\_\_\_ male or \_\_\_\_\_ female?

### 2. Behavioral Information

This information describes how a person behaves. Pick response categories sensibly.

How many hours do you spend watching television (TV, movies) each week?

\_\_\_\_\_ I don't watch television                      \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 hours per week                      \_\_\_\_\_ 2-4 hours per week  
\_\_\_\_\_ 4-6 hours per week                      \_\_\_\_\_ more than 6 hours per week

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## Sample Questions:

### 3. Attitudinal Information

This information describes how a person thinks or feels about something.

In general, do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

George Bush is a good president. \_\_\_ Agree \_\_\_ Disagree

On a scale of 1 to 5, how happy are you most of the time? Circle your choice.

|                 |            |              |              |                   |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|
| very happy<br>1 | happy<br>2 | neutral<br>3 | unhappy<br>4 | very unhappy<br>5 |
|-----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|-------------------|

Ex: Place an "x" on the line that best describes your feelings about school lunch.

|                         | excellent | good | okay | poor | terrible |
|-------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|----------|
| Length of Lunch Period  | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |
| Timing of Lunch Period  | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |
| Cafeteria Seating       | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |
| Variety of Food Choices | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |
| Cost of Food            | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |
| Food Taste              | ___       | ___  | ___  | ___  | ___      |