



Steps for Running Informal Usability Tests

Running Informal Usability Tests

- 1) Creating the Usability Test
- 2) Moderating the Test
- 3) De-briefing & Analysis



Creating the Usability Test

“Running user tests without sophisticated labs, simply by working with real users, giving them some typical test tasks, and asking them to think out loud while they perform the tasks.”

Jakob Nielsen

<https://www.nngroup.com/articles/guerrilla-hci/>

Start with questions like:

What do you make of this?

What would you do here?

How would you do x?

Coming up with tasks:

What are the most important things a user needs to do here?

What areas of the site do you suspect are difficult to use?

Tip!

Keep the answers to these questions short!
One sentence short.

Let's
try it out

Create task scenarios

A scenario gets the user into the right frame of mind.

Task

Find library hours.

Scenario (You'll give this to participants.)

You need to pick up a book from Cabot Library tomorrow night. Find out what time they are open until.

Let's
try it out

What you'll need:

Script / Notes sheet

Laptop (Optional: screen recorder)

Notes sheet

Confidence

Beware of:

Implicit bias

Leading participants

Noise levels



Moderating the Usability Test

Your role as the moderator:

The gracious host.

The leader.

The neutral observer.

Tips for moderating

Let them do the talking.

Keep them calm.

Use your poker face.

Respond to a question with a question.

After the test

Ask any follow-up questions

Offer to show users how to complete a task they couldn't

Allow time for open-ended feedback.

Once they leave

Note 3 usability problems

Let's
try it out



De-briefing & Data Analysis

Debrief Overview

Use a notes grid.

Find common issues (more than 1 person experienced).

Look for occurrences of DNF or system errors.

Debrief Tips

Focus on what actually happened instead of how to fix (this comes later).

Trust what users did, not what they said.

Tackle the most severe problems first.