

Minimizing Bias in User Testing

Avoiding bias will help you produce sound research and get reliable results.

Leading questions or instructions

Bias can sneak into remote, unmoderated studies through your test questions. How you word your questions and instructions can influence your users' responses.

- **Yes/no questions**

It's easy for users to guess the answers to yes/no questions. Avoid forcing your users simply to answer "yes" or "no," and keep your questions open-ended.

Wrong: Did you like shopping on the website?

Right: Describe your experience shopping on the website.

- **Hand-holding**

Giving users too much guidance can tip your hand. Instruct them, but don't give too many clues on how to perform the task.

Wrong: Click on the "Buy Me" button to get to your shopping cart.

Right: Add the item to your shopping cart.

- **Scaled responses**

If you're asking users to provide their response or preference on a scale, make sure that both ends of the scale are included.

Wrong: Was it hard to find the company's contact information?

Right: How easy or difficult was it to find the company's contact information?

- **Preferences**

When asking users for their preferences, be sure that your question is phrased in a neutral way.

Wrong: How much better was the new homepage versus the old?

Right: Compare the new homepage and the old. Which do you prefer?

- **Applicability**

Sometimes a task or question just won't apply to a user. Be sure to give users the option to disregard a question if it doesn't apply to them.

Wrong: What would you improve about this page?

Right: What, if anything, would you improve about this page?

How to Avoid Bias with UserTesting

In the UserTesting platform, you can easily craft custom questions, or choose from a list of standardized questions that ensure neutrality. Whenever you provide instructions, ask a question, or give a task, keep the tips from the first page in mind.

The introduction

The introduction is your first interaction with users, and it'll set the stage for the rest of the test. Keep your instructions neutral and avoid any leading language or cues. If you're unsure how to instruct users, check out the examples we suggest.

- ✓ Remember not to handhold your users. Avoid providing too much information that will clue your users in to your ultimate goal for the test. Keep it basic and general.

Tell users what their frame of mind should be

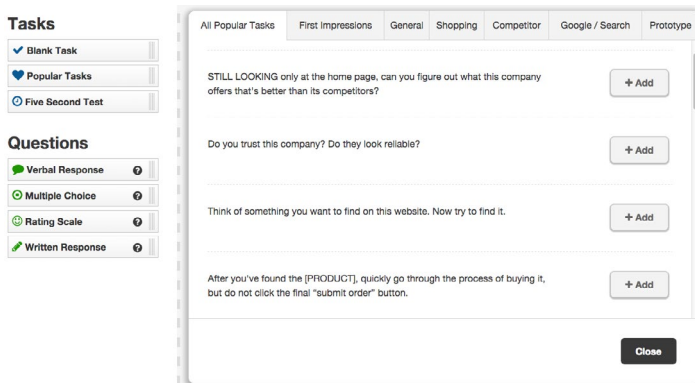
Examples:

- Imagine that you want to buy a gift for a friend.
- You need to buy a Wi-Fi printer for your company.

[More Examples](#)

The tasks

Look at tasks like you would instructions. They need to be clear and general, but not clue users in on your goals.



- ✓ Instruct the users to achieve a certain objective, and avoid telling them how to get there.
- ✓ If you're feeling stuck on how to phrase your questions, use our **Popular Tasks** to get some inspiration.

The questions

Questions are your opportunity to get your users talking. By encouraging them to share their verbal responses, you get to follow along with them on their journey. These should be different from tasks, which ask the user to do something. Questions should ask users to share their thoughts on what they're doing, and how they feel about the interaction overall.

Ready to get started? Run a study with UserTesting!

Let's Go!