Hi, _____. My name is Erika Harvey, and I'm going to be walking you through this session.

You probably already know, but let me explain why we've asked you to come here today: We're testing a web site that we're working on to see what it's like for actual people to use it.

I want to make it clear right away that we're testing the site, not you. You can't do anything wrong here. In fact, this is probably the one place today where you don't have to worry about making mistakes.

We want to hear exactly what you think, so please don't worry that you're going to hurt our feelings. We want to improve it, so we need to know honestly what you think.

As we go along, I'm going to ask you to think out loud, to tell me what's going through your mind. This will help us.

If you have questions, just ask. I may not be able to answer them right away, since we're interested in how people do when they don't have someone sitting next to them, but I will try to answer any questions you still have when we're done.

We have a lot to do, and I'm going to try to keep us moving, but we'll try to make sure that it's fun, too.

You may have noticed the camera. With your permission, we're going to videotape the computer screen and what you have to say. The video will be used only to help us figure out how to improve the site, and it won't be seen by anyone except the people working on the project. It also helps me, because I don't have to take as many notes. There are also some people watching the video in another room.

If you would, I'm going to ask you to sign something for us. It simply says that we have your permission to tape you, but that it will only be seen by the people working on the project. It also says that you won't talk to anybody about what we're showing you today, since it hasn't been made public yet.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Background information questions
Before we look at the site, I'd like to ask you just a few quick questions. First, what's your occupation?

Good. Now, roughly how many hours a week would you say you spend using the Internet, including email?

How do you spend that time? In a typical day, for instance, tell me what you do, at work and at home.

Do you have any favorite Web sites?

Now, finally, have you bought anything on the Internet? How do you feel about buying things on the Internet?

And what have you bought?

OK, great. We're done with the questions, and we can start looking at things.

Usability test
First, I'm just going to ask you to look at this page and tell me what you think it is, what strikes you about it, and what you think you would click on first.

For now, don't actually click on anything, just tell me what you would click on.

And again, as much as possible, it will help us if you can try to think out loud so we know what you're thinking about.

From this point it's up to you. Ask them to consider the elements of the site and ask for their verbal feedback every step of the way.