Mode Selection FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about choosing Mode 1 vs Mode 2

Last Updated: January 29, 2026

General Questions

Q: What's the difference between Mode 1 and Mode 2?

A: Think of it as screening vs. deep-dive:

Mode 1 (Validation)	Mode 2 (Optimization)
Screen 15+ products	Optimize 1 product
GO/NO-GO decisions	Complete Product Brief
~2.5 min per product	~1-2 hours per product
Comparison table	Production-ready listing copy
No PPC/roadmap	Full PPC + 90-day plan

Use Mode 1 first to identify winners, **then Mode 2** to optimize them.

Q: Can I run Mode 1, then Mode 2 on the winners?

A: Yes! This is the recommended workflow for new product batches:

Step 1: Run Mode 1 on 18 products

```
"Analyze these 18 products for validation"
```

Output: Comparison table → 6 GO, 7 MAYBE, 5 NO-GO

Step 2: Select top winners from GO products

Step 3: Run Mode 2 on specific products

```
"Now create Product Brief for Product #58498"
"Optimize listing for Product #61829"
```

Output: Complete Product Briefs for selected products

Total time: ~45 min (Mode 1) + 2-4 hours (Mode 2 for 2 products)

Q: I have 5 products - which mode should I use?

A: The skill will ask you to clarify. Choose based on your goal:

Option A: Validation (Mode 1) - Goal: Screen 5 to pick the best 1-2 - Output: Comparison table ranking all 5 - Next step: Launch top-ranked products

Option B: Optimization (Mode 2) - Goal: Deep dive + listing copy for each of 5 - Output: 5 complete Product Briefs - Time: ~5-10 hours total (1-2 hours each)

Most common: Run Mode 1 first (screen 5 → pick top 2) → then Mode 2 on winners.

Mode 1 (Validation) Questions

Q: What's the minimum number of products for Mode 1?

A: Technically 1, but Mode 1 is designed for batches:

- **15+ products:** Automatic Mode 1 detection
- **5-14 products:** Skill asks for clarification
- **1-4 products:** Skill suggests Mode 2 (unless you explicitly request Mode 1)

Optimal: 15-50 products for meaningful comparison.

Q: Do I need DataDive exports for Mode 1?

A: Not required, but helpful:

✅ **With DataDive:** Richer competitive analysis, better scoring ✅ **Without DataDive:** Still works using: - SmartScout ASINs (from your spreadsheet) - Historical patterns from knowledge base - Category benchmarks

Recommendation: For your top 5 GO candidates, add DataDive for better validation.

Q: How long does Mode 1 take?

A: ~2.5 minutes per product:

- 15 products: ~37 minutes
- 20 products: ~50 minutes
- 30 products: ~75 minutes
- 50 products: ~125 minutes (~2 hours)

Note: First run may take longer as skill loads knowledge base.

Q: What if I want listing copy for all 18 products?

A: You have two options:

Option A: Combined Mode (batch listing generation)

```
"Analyze these 18 products AND create listings for all GO products"
```

- Runs Mode 1 (screen 18)
- Auto-triggers Mode 2 for GO-rated products only
- Time: Mode 1 time + (Mode 2 time × # of GO products)

Option B: Sequential (more control)

```
Step 1: "Analyze these 18 products" (Mode 1)
Step 2: Review results, select 3 winners
Step 3: "Create Product Brief for Product A, B, C" (Mode 2 × 3)
```

Recommendation: Option B (more control over which get full optimization).

Mode 2 (Optimization) Questions

Q: Can I run Mode 2 without competitive data?

A: You can, but quality drops significantly:

Minimum needed: - Product ASIN or details - Cost data (for pricing strategy) - At least basic keyword research

Optimal: - Full DataDive export (keywords + competitors CSVs) - Current listing data (if existing product) - Screenshots of current performance

Without competitor data: You'll get generic optimization, not strategic positioning.

Q: How much detail does Mode 2 provide?

A: See the Saluspa Hot Tub Filter example - a typical Mode 2 output includes:

14 sections, ~50-100 KB: 1. Executive Summary 2. Product Economics & Validation 3. Competitive Landscape (per-unit pricing, why winners win) 4. Keyword Performance (rankings, gaps, opportunities) 5. Multi-Pack Strategy (if applicable) 6. Optimized Listing Copy (title, bullets, backend keywords) 7. Variation Architecture (2, 4, 8, 12-pack recommendations) 8. Profitability Projections (3 scenarios) 9. A+ Content Strategy (5 module layouts) 10. PPC Campaign Structure (keywords, bids, budgets) 11. 90-Day Roadmap (week-by-week action plan) 12. Risk Analysis (5 major risks + mitigation) 13. Success Metrics (KPIs to track) 14. Implementation Checklist

This is production-ready output, not a summary.

Q: Can I use Mode 2 for existing products?

A: Absolutely! Mode 2 works for:

✅ **New products** (pre-launch listing creation) ✅ **Existing underperforming products** (optimization + relaunch strategy) ✅ **Existing successful products** (competitive defense, variation expansion)

Example: Saluspa filter was an existing product → Mode 2 identified multi-pack opportunity → +211% profit projected.

Q: How do I know if Mode 2's recommendations are good?

A: Mode 2 provides:

Rationale for every recommendation: - Why this title structure? (SEO ranking juice explanation) - Why these bullets? (Keyword coverage + benefit mapping) - Why multi-pack? (Competitive gap analysis + FBA fee leverage) - Why this pricing? (Competitor comparison + margin calculations)

Validation checkpoints: - Compare to top 3 competitors (included in analysis) - Review projected vs. actual metrics (if existing product) - Test with soft launch (recommended in roadmap)

Trust but verify: Use Mode 2 as expert baseline, adjust for brand voice.

Combined Workflow Questions

Q: Can I run Mode 2 on products that were NO-GO in Mode 1?

A: Yes, but ask yourself why:

Valid reasons: - Mode 1 flagged edge case you want to explore - Market changed since Mode 1 analysis - Strategic product (even if not profitable)

Not recommended: - Hoping Mode 2 will make NO-GO viable (it won't change fundamentals) - Just curious (save the 1-2 hours)

Better approach: Run Mode 2 on MAYBE products to make final decision.

Q: What if Mode 1 says GO but I want more detail before launch?

A: Perfect use case for Mode 2!

Sequence:

```
Mode 1: "Product #58498 is GO (score: 8.7, margin: 62%, low competition)"
↓
You: "Sounds promising, but I want to see the full strategy"
↓
Mode 2: "Create Product Brief for Product #58498"
↓
Output: Complete competitive analysis + optimized listing + 90-day plan
↓
Decision: Launch with confidence
```

Mode 1 identifies winners, Mode 2 creates winning strategies.

Q: How often should I run each mode?

Mode 1 frequency: - **New supplier evaluation:** Every time you get a new product list - **Quarterly reviews:** Re-screen catalog for new opportunities - **On-demand:** When considering adding products

Mode 2 frequency: - **Pre-launch:** Every new product (GO-rated from Mode 1) - **Quarterly optimization:** Top 20% of catalog (refresh listings) - **Competitive response:** When competitor makes big move - **Performance issues:** When product underperforms expectations

Technical Questions

Q: How does the skill detect which mode to use?

A: Multi-signal detection (Phase 1.5 in skill.md):

Signal 1: Product Count - 1 product → Mode 2 - 15+ products → Mode 1 - 2-14 products → Ask for clarification

Signal 2: Keywords in Request - "optimize", "listing", "Product Brief" → Force Mode 2 - "validate", "screen", "which products" → Force Mode 1

Signal 3: Data Presence - Has DataDive exports in /02-Research/ → Suggests Mode 2 - Has product spreadsheet only → Suggests Mode 1

If ambiguous: Skill asks "Which workflow do you need?"

Q: Can I override the auto-detection?

A: Yes, be explicit in your request:

Force Mode 1 (even for 1 product):

```
"Run product validation on this single product"
```

Force Mode 2 (even for 15 products):

```
"Create Product Briefs for all 15 products"
(Warning: This will take 15-30 hours)
```

Recommended: Trust auto-detection, it's accurate.

Q: What if I run the wrong mode accidentally?

A: No problem:

Ran Mode 1 but wanted Mode 2: - Simply request Mode 2 for specific product - No need to re-run Mode 1 - Example: "Now create Product Brief for Product #58498"

Ran Mode 2 but wanted Mode 1: - Less common (Mode 2 is superset of Mode 1) - Mode 2 output includes GO/NO-GO decision - Just ignore the detailed optimization if not needed

Mode 2 includes Mode 1 analysis (competitive scoring, GO/NO-GO) **plus** optimization.

Best Practices

Q: What's the recommended workflow for a new supplier?

A: The "validation → optimization" pipeline:

Week 1: Screening (Mode 1)

```
Input: 30 products from new supplier
Action: "Analyze these 30 products for validation"
Output: Comparison table → 8 GO, 12 MAYBE, 10 NO-GO
```

Week 2: Deep Dive (Mode 2)

```
Input: Top 3 GO products
Action: "Create Product Brief for Product A, B, C"
Output: 3 complete Product Briefs
```

Week 3-4: Implementation - Set up listings for top 3 - Launch with optimized copy - Implement PPC campaigns

Month 2: Monitor & Iterate - Track success metrics - Adjust based on performance - Consider MAYBE products if winners validate

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Q: How do I get the most value from Mode 2?

A: Preparation is key:

Before running Mode 2: 1. ✅ Validate with Mode 1 (don't waste 2 hours on NO-GO product) 2. ✅ Gather complete competitor data (DataDive exports) 3. ✅ Know your cost structure (COGS, FBA fees) 4. ✅ Review top 3 competitors manually (understand market) 5. ✅ Clarify goals (profit vs. market share, quick launch vs. premium positioning)

During Mode 2 review: 1. ✅ Read full Product Brief (don't skip sections) 2. ✅ Understand rationale (why each recommendation) 3. ✅ Validate pricing assumptions (market may have changed) 4. ✅ Adapt copy to brand voice (maintain keyword coverage)

After Mode 2: 1. ✅ Implement recommendations (don't just collect analysis) 2. ✅ Track metrics weekly (validate projections) 3. ✅ Provide feedback in meeting notes (improve future analyses)

Troubleshooting

Q: The skill detected the wrong mode - how do I fix it?

A: Be more explicit in your next request:

Example 1: Wanted Mode 1, got Mode 2

```
Original: "Analyze this product" (ambiguous)
Corrected: "Run product validation to decide GO/NO-GO"
```

Example 2: Wanted Mode 2, got Mode 1

```
Original: "Analyze this product" (ambiguous)
Corrected: "Create complete Product Brief with listing optimization"
```

Pro tip: Use the exact trigger phrases from README.md for guaranteed detection.

Q: Mode 1 output doesn't include listing copy - is this a bug?

A: No, this is expected! Mode 1 = validation only.

To get listing copy: Run Mode 2 on specific products after Mode 1 screening.

Comparison: | What You Want | Correct Mode | |—————|————–| | GO/NO-GO decision | Mode 1 | | Listing copy (title, bullets) | Mode 2 | | PPC campaigns | Mode 2 | | Both | Run Mode 1 first, then Mode 2 on winners |

Related Resources

- **README.md** - Quick start guide with decision tree
- **validation-mode-guide.md** - Complete Mode 1 walkthrough
- **optimization-mode-guide.md** - Complete Mode 2 with Saluspa example
- **skill.md** - Full technical documentation
- **Saluspa Hot Tub Filter** - Real Mode 2 output example

Last Updated: January 29, 2026 **Version:** 3.0

Have a question not answered here? Update this FAQ after your analysis to help future users!