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Survey Response Scales

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The response formats used in surveys vary depending on the type of question being asked. Responses can be as simple as a choice between “Yes” or “No” or as complex as choosing an answer among seven response options.

The response options for each question in your survey may include a dichotomous, a three-point, a five-point, a seven-point or a semantic differential scale. Each of these response scales has its own advantages and disadvantages, but the rule of thumb is that the best response scale to use is the one which can be easily understood by respondents and interpreted by the researcher.

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Quiz Time!

Quiz:
Psychology 101 Part 2

Quiz:
Psychology 101 Part 2

Quiz:
Flags in Europe

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Dichotomous Scales

A dichotomous scale is a two-point scale which presents options that are absolutely opposite each other. This type of response scale does not give the respondent an opportunity to be neutral on his answer in a question.

Examples:

- Yes- No
- True - False
- Fair - Unfair

Effective	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Ineffective
Useful	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Useless
Reliable	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Unreliable

2. Unmarked Semantic Differential Scale

The central line serves as the neutral point:

Inexpensive _____|_____ Expensive

Effective _____|_____ Ineffective

Useful _____|_____ Useless

Reliable _____|_____ Unreliable

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