

Accessible Survey Design Checklist

Use the checklist below to make your surveys accessible to people of all abilities. The strategies are based on best practices in the research literature. The appropriate strategies may vary depending on your target population and survey administration method.

Please see the “Best Practices in Survey Design Checklist” for other strategies, many of which also help people with disabilities. Please see the “Demographic Data Collection Checklist” for strategies to collect demographic information.

Item	Strategy	Checklist
1	Offer Alternative Formats: In the survey introduction, tell people how to request alternative formats of the survey.	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Accessible Survey Software and Format: Use survey software that is compliant with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG). Use survey formats that are accessible to e-readers. For example, only the “Classic” format in SurveyMonkey is accessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Accessible Question Types: Use questions that are accessible to e-readers in your survey software. For example, matrix and ranking questions may be inaccessible.	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Color Contrast: Use colors that people with vision impairment can distinguish. Use websites like Accessible Web and Tanaguru to test if colors meet WCAG standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Clear Text: Use a clear font, white space to reduce clutter, and font size 18+ to help people with vision loss, Down Syndrome, dyslexia, and other disabilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Plain Language: Use simple and consistent language, define terms, and avoid abstract concepts. Aim for a grade 3 to 5 reading level. Check the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level score in Microsoft Word’s reading statistics or the datayze website .	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Focus on Present: Limit questions that ask people with cognitive disabilities to recall information from a while ago or identify the frequency of something.	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Use 3 to 5 short response options: Use up to three response options for people with more severe cognitive impairment. Use up to five response options for people with milder cognitive impairment. Keep the response labels short.	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Images with Alt Text: Consider using both text and images in response options for people with cognitive disabilities. Enter image alt text for people with vision loss.	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Allow for No Response: Tell people to give their best guess. Include “I don’t know” response options to reduce anxiety.	<input type="checkbox"/>