

# How to write a discussion guide for in-depth interviews or focus groups

This guide is intended for those who are relatively new to qualitative marketing research.



#### Discussion Guide

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#### Discussion guide

##### Introduction

1. Introduce yourself and the purpose of the discussion.
2. Provide an overview of the topic of inflation and grocery shopping habits.
3. Explain how the discussion will be conducted and what respondents can expect.

##### Understanding Personal Grocery Shopping Habits (5 minutes)

Can you describe your regular grocery shopping habits?

What factors typically influence your decision-making while shopping for groceries?

##### Tell us about your objectives

What are your research objectives for this study?  
What are you trying to achieve by running the study?

Explore the impact of inflation on grocery shopping habits.

Discussion guide duration (mins) 30

Generate discussion guide

ASK

ANALYZE

INSIGHTS



**Focus groups** and **one-on-one** interviews are both qualitative research methods used in various fields, including market research, social sciences, and user experience studies. They each have unique strengths and are suited for different purposes.

- 02** Focus Groups
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## FOCUS GROUPS

**Definition:** A focus group is a moderated discussion that typically involves a small group of people (usually 6-10). These participants are selected because they share certain characteristics relevant to the topic of discussion.

### Strengths

#### Diverse Perspectives:

They provide a range of opinions and ideas, as participants can interact and respond to each other's viewpoints.

#### Group Dynamics:

Can reveal insights into how opinions are formed and influenced within a group setting.

#### Idea Generation:

Particularly useful for brainstorming and generating new ideas.

### Best Use Cases

#### Exploratory Research:

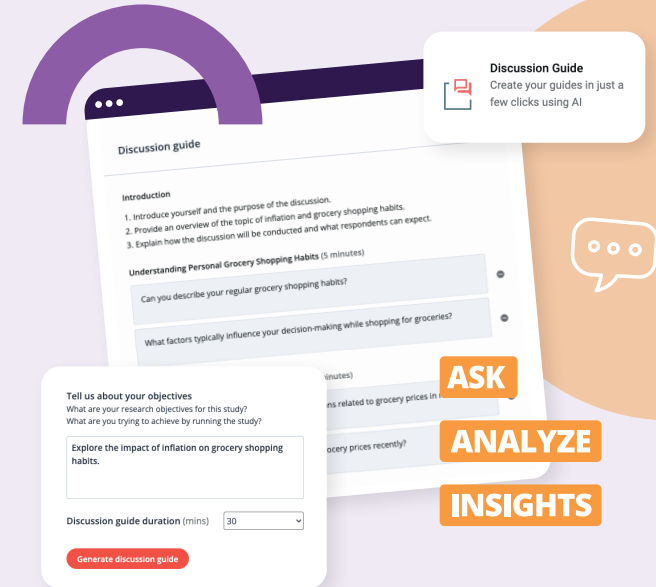
Ideal for exploring new concepts or generating hypotheses.

#### Product Testing:

Useful for getting feedback on products or concepts in a group setting, where participants can bounce ideas off each other.

#### Understanding Group Norms:

Helpful in understanding social dynamics or cultural norms.



## When to Use Focus Groups Over One-on-One Interviews

### Idea Generation and Initial Exploration:

When the goal is to generate a wide range of ideas or to explore a new concept.

### Understanding Group Dynamics:

When it's important to understand how opinions or decisions are influenced by social interaction.

### Broad Perspectives:

When the research benefits from a variety of viewpoints to paint a broader picture of the issue or topic.

## ONE-ON-ONE INTERVIEWS

**Definition:** This method involves a direct, personal interview between a single interviewer and a single respondent.

### Strengths

#### Depth of Insight:

Allows for in-depth exploration of an individual's opinions, experiences, and motivations.

#### Confidentiality and Comfort:

Participants may feel more comfortable sharing sensitive information in a private setting.

#### Customization:

The interviewer can tailor the questions to the specific respondent, allowing for more detailed and relevant responses.

### Best Use Cases

#### Detailed User Feedback:

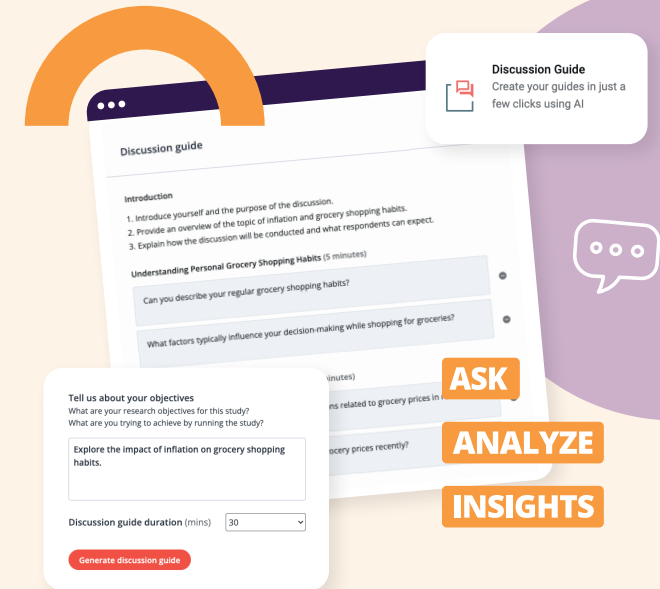
Ideal for understanding detailed user experiences or obtaining in-depth feedback on a specific topic.

#### Sensitive Topics:

Better suited for discussions where confidentiality or sensitive issues are involved.

#### Specific Expertise:

Useful when the research requires detailed insights from individuals with specific expertise or experiences.



## When to Use One-on-One Interviews Over Focus Groups

#### In-Depth Understanding:

When detailed and deep understanding of individual perspectives is needed.

#### Sensitive or Confidential Topics:

When the discussion involves topics that participants might be reluctant to discuss in a group setting.

#### Custom Tailored Questions:

When the research requires a deep dive into specific individual experiences or expertise.

In summary, the choice between focus groups and one-on-one interviews should be based on the research objectives, the nature of the topic, the depth of information required, and the importance of understanding group dynamics versus individual perspectives.

Now you know when to use one-to-one interviews over focus groups and vice-versa. Go you!

Keep reading to learn how to craft the perfect discussion guide or create your own with **Voxpopme's Free AI-powered Discussion Guide Generator** here.

**Discussion Guide**  
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**Discussion guide**

**Introduction**

1. Introduce yourself and the purpose of the discussion.
2. Provide an overview of the topic of inflation and grocery shopping habits.
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**Understanding Personal Grocery Shopping Habits (5 minutes)**

Can you describe your regular grocery shopping habits?

What factors typically influence your decision-making while shopping for groceries?

**Perception Of Current Economic Conditions (7 minutes)**

How have you perceived the economic conditions related to grocery prices in recent times?

Have you noticed any significant changes in grocery prices recently?

**Impact Of Inflation On Personal Grocery Shopping Habits (10 minutes)**

How has inflation affected your grocery shopping habits?

Have you changed the types of products you buy due to inflation?

Can you share some strategies you have adopted to mitigate the impact of inflation on your grocery shopping?

**Behavioural Changes In Response To Inflation (7 minutes)**

Beyond your grocery shopping, how else has inflation impacted your daily life?

Are there any habits or behaviours you may consider changing if inflation were to increase significantly?

**Conclusion**

1. Summarize the key points of the discussion.
2. Thank respondents for their participation and time.
3. Ask if respondents have any final thoughts or questions regarding the topic.

**Download**

**Tell us about your objectives**  
What are your research objectives for this study?  
What are you trying to achieve by running the study?


Explore the impact of inflation on grocery shopping habits.

Discussion guide duration (mins) 30

**Generate discussion guide**

# How to Create a Discussion Guide

Creating a discussion guide for one-on-one interviews is a crucial step in qualitative research. It serves as a roadmap for the interview, ensuring that all relevant topics are covered while still allowing for the flexibility needed in qualitative research. Here's a step-by-step guide to creating an effective discussion guide:

- 
- ✓ Define the Research Objectives
  - ✓ Know Your Audience
  - ✓ Structure the Guide
  - ✓ Design Effective Questions
  - ✓ Include Key Topics
  - ✓ Pilot Test the Guide
  - ✓ Prepare for Contingencies
  - ✓ Review and Finalize
  - ✓ Train Interviewers (if applicable)
  - ✓ Be Flexible and Attentive

# 10 Steps

## 01

### Define the Research Objectives

Clarify Goals: Understand what you need to learn from the interviews. This could include understanding behaviors, opinions, experiences, or motivations.

Specific Objectives: Break down your overall goal into specific questions or topics you need to explore.

## 02

### Know Your Audience

Participant Profiles: Understand who you will be interviewing. Consider their background, experiences, and level of knowledge about the topic.

Tailor Questions: Ensure your questions are relevant and appropriate for your audience.

## 03

### Structure the Guide

Introduction: Start with a brief introduction, explaining the purpose of the interview and how the data will be used.

Warm-Up Questions: Begin with easy, non-threatening questions to build rapport.

Main Questions: These are the core questions that will help you meet your research objectives. They should be open-ended to encourage detailed responses.

Probing Questions: Include potential follow-up questions to delve deeper into certain topics.

Closing Questions: End with questions that allow participants to share anything not covered or to summarize their thoughts.

## 04

### Design Effective Questions

Open-Ended: Encourage participants to share stories and experiences in their own words.

Clear and Concise: Avoid complex language or jargon.

Non-Leading: Ensure questions don't bias the participant's responses.

Sensitive Topics: Approach sensitive areas with care and respect.

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**05**

### **Include Key Topics**

Cover All Areas: Ensure all aspects of your research objectives are addressed.

Flexible Order: While the guide should have a logical flow, be prepared to adjust based on the conversation.

**06**

### **Pilot Test the Guide**

Conduct Trial Interviews: Test your guide with a few participants or colleagues.

Refine Questions: Adjust questions based on feedback and clarity.

**07**

### **Prepare for Contingencies**

Plan for Diverse Responses: Be prepared to explore unexpected topics that arise.

Time Management: Be mindful of the time and keep the interview focused.

**08**

### **Review and Finalize**

Seek Feedback: If possible, get input from other researchers or stakeholders.

Finalize the Guide: Ensure it is comprehensive and aligns with your objectives.





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### Train Interviewers (if applicable)

Consistency: Ensure all interviewers understand how to use the guide.

Handling Variances: Train on handling divergent responses and maintaining the flow of the interview.

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### Be Flexible and Attentive

Adaptability: Use the guide as a framework, not a script.

Active Listening: Be prepared to explore interesting avenues that emerge during the interview.

Remember, the discussion guide is a tool to aid the research process, not to restrict it. Its main purpose is to ensure consistency across interviews while allowing for the natural flow of conversation and the exploration of new insights that may arise.

Now you know how to create a great discussion guide, you're ready to try **Voxpopme's free AI-powered Discussion Guide Generator** here.

Simply enter your research objectives to create a guide that's jam-packed with contextual questions for your next interview.

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# Discussion Guide **Template**

## 01

Study Title:

[Insert Study Title]

Sponsored by:

[Insert Name]

Date:

[Insert Date]

Interviewer:

[Insert Interviewer's Name]

Interview Duration:

[Insert Time]

## 02 Introduction

Welcome the participant and introduce yourself.

Explain the purpose of the interview and how the data will be used.

Assure confidentiality and ask for consent to record the interview, if applicable.

Clarify the duration of the interview and ask if they have any initial questions.

## 03 Warm-Up Questions

Could you please tell me a little about yourself?  
(e.g., background, occupation)

How has your day been so far?

## 04 Main Questions

Note: These questions should align with the key objectives of your research.

[Insert open-ended question related to the research topic]

Probing question:

[Insert follow-up question to delve deeper]

[Insert another open-ended question]

Probing question:

[Insert follow-up question]

[Continue with additional main question]

## 05 Warm-Up Questions

Could you please tell me a little about yourself?  
(e.g., background, occupation)

How has your day been so far?

## 06 Specific Topic Areas

Note: Include any specific topics that need to be covered, based on the research objectives.

[Topic Area 1: Insert relevant questions]

[Topic Area 2: Insert relevant questions]

[Topic Area 3: Insert relevant questions]

## 07 Closing Questions

Is there anything else you'd like to share or any topic we haven't covered that you feel is important?

Do you have any questions for me or about the study?

## 08 Conclusion

Thank the participant for their time and valuable insights.

Inform them about the next steps (if any) and how they can obtain the results of the study.

Provide contact information in case they have any follow-up questions or thoughts.

Still need help crafting your Discussion Guide?

Try using **Voxpopme's free AI Discussion Guide generator** to draft your questions for you here and fast-track your interview prep.



# Example of a **Final Discussion Guide**

## 01

Study Title:

Alcohol Purchasing and Drinking Behavior in NYC

Sponsored by:

[Client]

Date:

[Insert Date]

Interviewer:

[Insert Interviewer's Name]

Interview Duration:

30 Minutes

## 02 Introduction 3 Minutes

Greet the participant and introduce yourself.

Briefly explain the purpose of the study and how the data will be used.

Assure confidentiality and ask for consent to record.

Confirm the duration of the interview.

## 03 Warm-Up Questions 2 Minutes

Could you tell me a bit about yourself and your connection to NYC?

How often do you purchase or consume alcoholic beverages?

## 04 Drinking Occasions and Preferences - 5 minutes

Can you describe occasions or settings in which you typically consume alcohol?

Probing: Are there specific types of drinks you prefer for certain occasions?

Have you recently switched your preference to seltzers or non-alcoholic beers? If yes, what prompted this change?

Have you shifted from beer to other spirits like tequila or Japanese whiskey? What influenced this decision?

## 05 Price Sensitivity and Inflation Impact - 5 minutes

How has inflation affected your alcohol purchasing decisions?

Probing: Are you more price-sensitive now compared to before?

Do price changes influence you to try different brands or types of alcohol?

## 06 Perception of Brand Premiumness - 4 minutes

What makes a brand of alcohol seem premium to you?

Are there any brands that you perceive as particularly premium? Why?

## 07 Sustainability and Organic Ingredients - 4 minutes

How important is sustainability in your choice of alcoholic beverages?

Do organic ingredients and hops influence your purchase decisions? Can you elaborate?

## 08 New Products and Brand Loyalty - 5 minutes

How do you decide to try new alcoholic products? What factors influence this decision?

Are you loyal to specific brands? What keeps you coming back to them?

## 09 Closing 2 Minutes

Is there anything else related to your alcohol purchasing or consumption habits that we haven't covered?

Do you have any final thoughts or questions about the study?

## 10 Conclusion

Thank the participant for their time and insights.

Explain the next steps and how they can access the study results if interested.

Provide contact information for any follow-up queries





**You made it.** You've mastered all the basics of interview research and how to nail your discussion guide. And now you know what a rock-solid discussion guide looks like, you can try **Voxpopme's free AI-powered Discussion Guide Generator here.**

