

# Sage Research Methods: Data and Research Literacy

## How to Gather Data and Evidence: The Second Stage of the Social Research Toolbox, QGAP

For the most optimal reading experience we recommend using our website.

[A free-to-view version of this content, which is easy to navigate and search, and includes interactive questions, is available by clicking on this link](#)

**Contributors:** Kathryn Wheeler

**Pub. Date:** 2025

**Product:** Sage Research Methods: Data and Research Literacy

**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036220716>

**Methods:** Research questions, Data collection, Research design

**Keywords:** evidence gathering, publications, knowledge gap, fair trade, attitudes

**Disciplines:** Sociology, Education, Psychology, Health, Anthropology, Social Policy and Public Policy, Social Work, Political Science and International Relations, Geography, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Nursing, Business and Management, Counseling and Psychotherapy, Communication and Media Studies, History, Economics, Marketing

**Access Date:** June 23, 2025

**Publisher:** SAGE Publications Ltd

**City:** London

**Online ISBN:** 9781036220716

© 2025 SAGE Publications Ltd All Rights Reserved.

# How to Gather Data and Evidence: The Second Stage of the Social Research Toolbox, QGAP



## Learning Outcomes

- recognize the role of the literature review in refining research questions and preparing to gather research data;
- understand different research design choices and make informed decisions about which approach is appropriate for their research question;
- identify and describe popular social research methods; and
- recognize key ethical principles and how they might apply to gathering research data.

## Introduction

This guide forms part of the social research toolbox, or QGAP, series, which offers a simple way of conceptualizing the research process. You can learn about QGAP by watching a short animation titled ‘What is the Social Research Toolbox?’ (which is included in this collection), and instructors can download some teaching PowerPoints that support the series here:



[Wheeler.Slides.QGAP2\\_GatherData.pptx](#)

Within the toolbox, there are four stages: (1) questions, (2) gathering data and evidence, (3) analyzing the data and evidence, and (4) presenting answers to your

research questions. The four stages occur in all social research projects (whether qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-method), and though they have been presented in a linear way for teaching purposes, the reality is that each stage is shaped by the others, and it is usual to move between stages at different points of the research journey, depending on the type of research you are doing.

In this guide, the focus is on the “gathering” stage of the social research toolbox—which is a rather large stage to attempt to fit into a short guide! You should approach this guide as a starting point for learning more. Continuing from “How to Develop Research Questions” ([Wheeler, 2025a](#)), the guide begins by considering the important role that consulting existing evidence and literature plays in both refining your research question and preparing you to gather your data. We then consider different research design choices—including the distinction between qualitative and quantitative designs—and the popular research methods you could employ to help you answer your research question. When designing a strategy for how to gather data or evidence, research ethics are paramount, and so the guide closes with an overview of four basic ethical principles that all research projects should apply.

## Moving From Q to G: Reviewing Existing Evidence and Literature

This section offers a bridge between the stage of developing your research question (Q) and the stage of gathering data and evidence (G). As was stressed in the previous guide, your research question is likely to change as your ideas around

your research topic develop. In formulating your research question, you need to read published evidence and literature to better understand how your research will contribute to the field. I remember during my work for my PhD, my research question changed substantially following a thorough literature review. I originally had a research question that focused on how fair trade was promoted through advertising, but I decided after reading the literature and talking with my supervisors that I was both more interested in fair trade consumers than promotional tactics and that there was limited existing research with fair trade consumers. You need to gather the existing evidence to better understand how your research question will offer a new perspective on the issues you want to address. But when gathering the evidence, you must critically evaluate its relevance and suitability to your research question in order to craft a literature review or use this evidence as a source of data.

---

## Critical Evaluation of Sources

Being able to recognize “good” evidence is essential when looking for sources related to your research question. There are a range of sources you could consult from academic literature—which has undergone a peer review process—to gray literature (policy or technical reports from government and other organizations), archival material, organizational websites, and other media sources. Some of these sources might become data that is analyzed in the next stage of your research—for example, in a postdoctoral project researching recycling systems in England, how private and public sector organizations promoted recycling on their websites and in technical reports helped inform my primary qualitative research

with consumers about their recycling practices ([Wheeler & Glucksmann, 2015](#)).

It can be tempting to put your research question into a search engine like Google and hope that what comes back will be relevant, but critical evaluation skills are needed to sift through search results, and it is likely you'll need to consult several databases and library systems before you will have consulted a comprehensive range of sources. I find the Open University's PROMPT framework ([OU, 2020](#)) very helpful when introducing students to the critical evaluation of sources (see [Table 1](#)). PROMPT offers a series of questions that students can use to help them evaluate each source they find. In an era of generative AI (GenAI) systems, with chatbots (like ChatGPT, CoPilot, and Bard) producing humanlike text, critical evaluation skills become even more important. GenAI cannot find all the relevant sources for you or write your literature review, but when used responsibly and critically, it may be one source (of many) that will help refine your research question and point you in the direction of credible primary sources.

**Table 1** The PROMPT framework for evaluating sources (adapted from [OU, 2020](#))

|              |                                                                                                                                                          |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Prompt       | Key Questions to Ask Yourself About the Source                                                                                                           |
| Presentation | How clearly is the information presented and communicated?                                                                                               |
| Relevance    | Is the source relevant to your research question?                                                                                                        |
| Objectivity  | Is the source motivated by a particular agenda, does it use emotive language, and are there hidden/vested interests?                                     |
| Method       | Is it clear how any data presented were collected? Were those methods appropriate? What was the sample, and how are diverse voices/opinions represented? |

|            |                                                                                                                                                                             |
|------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Provenance | Is it clear where information in the source has come from? Who is the author of the source, and should you trust them? Does the source reference other trustworthy sources? |
| Timeliness | When was the source written, and does this meet your requirements?                                                                                                          |

---

## Literature Reviews

Once you have consulted a wide range of sources, you will then need to write a review that situates your research question in the broader context of other existing scholarship. There is much written about how to approach literature reviews and a diversity of types of literature review ([Arksey & O'Malley, 2005](#); [Morgan Brett, 2025](#); [Page et al., 2021](#); [Ridley, 2012](#)). Essentially, a literature review is a persuasive piece of writing whose purpose is to demonstrate the need for your research project to be undertaken. [O'Leary \(2017\)](#) makes a distinction between “self-educative” and “formal” literature reviews. Self-educative reviews are used in the earlier stages of your research (closer to the Q stage) to help inform you of what is happening in a field, to highlight gaps in the literature to help you refine your research question, and to explore appropriate methodological and theoretical approaches that might help you answer your research question. Formal reviews, conversely, are written for a specific audience (perhaps an academic supervisor, funder, or journal editor) to communicate the key debates in the field and show how your research will contribute to this as well as to argue for the significance of your research question and its need to be addressed. The formal review is usually written just before you start gathering your data (start of the G stage), but it will often be returned to as you analyze your data (A) and present your answers to your ques-

tion (P).

Students often struggle with formal literature reviews because they involve reading a large amount of evidence, absorbing relevant information, and communicating this while maintaining their own voice. Good project management from the start is crucial. Referencing software like EndNote, Zotero (free), or Mendeley (free) can help store sources, organize notes, and keep track of your reading. When reading a source, make notes on its key argument, your critical comments, its relation to other sources, and its relevance to your research. Literature reviews are often organized thematically, grouping related studies; “it should tell a story, not be a list” ([Thomas, 2017](#), p. 62). For example, in my fair trade consumption project, my literature review had sections on the history of ethical consumption, sociology of consumption, and consumer citizenship, which were all distinct but related areas of literature. Always stay focused on your research question, ensuring that the review justifies the need for and approach of your study.



## Section Summary

- Moving from the Q stage to the G stage involves consulting a wide range of sources, and it is likely that your research question will evolve as you better understand the existing evidence in your field.
- Using a framework like PROMPT will help you critically evaluate sources for their credibility and relevance to your research.

- A well-structured literature review should demonstrate the significance of your research, showing how it addresses existing gaps in knowledge. Literature reviews can be either “self-educative” (early stages) to inform your question and research design or “formal” (later stages) to argue for the necessity of your study.

## Gathering Data Through Research Design and Methods

A review of the literature can give you hints about research design and what methods to use to gather the data to answer your research question. The form of your research question will also include assumptions about what sort of approach will be appropriate. Indeed, you may remember that I encouraged you to interrogate your research question according to the 5 “W’s” (what, where, when, who, and why) as you were developing your research question in the previous guide ([Wheeler, 2025a](#)). Now you need to connect the insights you gained through that process to the question of “how” you can answer your research question. In this section, you will be introduced to common research design choices and research methods in social research.

---

### Research Design

Your research design is your overarching framework guiding “how” you will gather and analyze your data within your project. Research design choices are shaped by both theoretical and practical considerations. On the one hand, the design is about enabling you to gather robust data to answer your research question and contribute to the body of knowledge. But on the other, achieving this research design in practice relies on a range of contingent factors, such as whether you can access your participants/sample, the cost and time of the research, the ethics of your design, and the broader political and sociocultural context that may influence your approach. For instance, like many researchers, I had to shift to online data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic. Your design may evolve throughout the project as you assess its feasibility and make necessary adjustments.

[Gilbert \(2016\)](#), p. 37) identifies three main research design choices: quantitative versus qualitative, cross-sectional versus longitudinal, and case versus representative. Let’s consider each in turn. First, the qualitative/quantitative distinction is often the design choice that research methods courses focus most on when introducing social research. Quantitative research designs measure phenomena using numerical data, aiming to predict population-level effects (connecting this design choice to representative designs). When gathering data using quantitative research designs, researchers must transform abstract concepts (such as attitudes or poverty) into measurable indicators. Often survey questions are designed with these indicators in mind or routine data collected for other purposes is transformed for variable analysis. However, there are debates about the reliability of quantitative designs because indicators may not measure what they claim and cannot tell

us why these associations exist. Qualitative research designs, on the other hand, seek to gather rich data from conversations, observations, and various types of documents with a focus on describing the meanings and understandings that people ascribe to social phenomena. Most qualitative designs do not seek to quantify because subjective meanings of both participants and researchers are an integral part of the data-gathering process and are not easily turned into a numeric form. While qualitative studies often cannot generalize to broader populations, they do allow for theoretical insights. The choice between quantitative and qualitative is likely baked into your research question and will be closely tied to the nature of “what” you are studying and “why” (linking back to the 5 “W’s”). Of course, both quantitative and qualitative approaches may be needed to answer your research question, requiring a mixed-method design (see [Creswell, 2013](#), for a discussion of mixed-methods designs).

The cross-sectional versus longitudinal choice relates to whether data is gathered at one moment in time (cross-sectional) from different individuals/cases or at repeated points in time (longitudinal) usually with the same individuals or case contexts. Much social research is cross-sectional because of the challenges of recruiting participants to engage in research at different points in time (with high levels of drop-out or attrition, which can affect the validity of the study) or because we are interested in a specific historical event. However, longitudinal designs offer opportunities to study “process and mechanism” ([Gilbert, 2016](#), p. 38), getting us closer to causal explanations and why things might be related to one another. To decide, you should think back to the “when” question from your 5 “W’s” and con-

sider whether gathering data at one time period or many is required to answer your research question.

Finally, the case versus representative design choice refers to how participants or cases are selected and is closely tied to the qualitative/quantitative distinction. If our research question seeks to understand the experiences of a small group of people with specific characteristics—such as people living in a particular fair trade town—we need to select our sample or cases purposively. Usually, smaller numbers of people/cases are studied intensively in a case design and are strategically chosen by the researcher (e.g., non-probability sample). Multiple cases may be used for comparison, though single case designs are common in qualitative research (see [Patton, 2002](#), for an overview of different case study designs). In contrast, representative designs (usually employed in quantitative projects) gather data from many people, documents, or cases to generalize findings to a broader population (e.g., probability sampling). Techniques for ensuring representative samples are gathered are important for the next stage of the social research process (“A” or analysis) in quantitative projects. Statistical analysis is often based on the assumption of random sampling (that each person/case has an equal chance of being selected), and certain types of analysis are not possible if observations have not been gathered in this way. There are different ways of practically achieving a random sample, and [Gray \(2014\)](#) offers a good overview of these. The case versus representative design choice relates to the “who” and the “where” questions from the 5 “W’s.”

---

## Research Methods

Research design choices are often made with the techniques for gathering data in mind, so the preceding discussion has already touched minimally on research methods. A short guide is not the space to provide a detailed account of the many ways of gathering data in the social sciences, many of which have whole textbooks written about them. So instead, what I thought would be useful is a summary table of the most popular research methods, with an overview of some of their strengths and weaknesses, as well as a few suggested references for where you can find out more about these methods (see [Table 2](#)). It is possible to combine more than one research method in your study—for instance, by combining two qualitative approaches (like observations and interviews) or a mixed-methods approach that uses both quantitative and qualitative methods within one project (see [Creswell, 2013](#)).

It's important to remember that all research methods have strengths and limitations and these need to be weighed against practical considerations about what is feasible. In my own research projects, I have been faced with many choices about how best to gather data. Other choices could have been possible and may have led to alternative findings. Knowing why you made the choices you did and what shaped your decisions is important in the records you keep—this is sometimes referred to as a “decision trail.” I recommend starting a research journal before you start gathering your data as this will be a useful record of decisions as you move into the later stages of analyzing the data/evidence (A) and presenting your findings (P).

**Table 2 Summary of popular social research methods**

| Social Re-<br>search<br>Method | Brief Description                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Key Strengths                                                                                                                                                                                             | Key Weaknesses                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Suggestions<br>of Where to<br>Go to Learn<br>More                        |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Survey                         | Structured questionnaire consisting of mostly closed-end questions, usually administered to a large sample.                                                                                                                       | Can obtain information from many people; easy for participants to complete; structured analysis; time and cost effective                                                                                  | Non-response rates are high; difficult to achieve representative sample; limited depth because of closed-question format (open-ended questions challenging to analyze); hard to know if people understand the questions; response bias                                                                                     | De Vaus, 2014; Eichhorn, 2021; Fink, 2003                                |
| Experiments                    | Controlled studies that test cause and effect by manipulating one variable to observe its impact on another, conducted in labs, in real-world settings, or during new policy implementation.                                      | Can infer cause-effect relationships; replicable method; control over variables, meaning complex interactions between variables can be explored                                                           | Behaviors studied in a lab may not translate to real-world settings; some topics are unethical to study using experiments; can be difficult to isolate variables in complex social systems                                                                                                                                 | Ariel et al., 2021; Coleman, 2019; Ritter et al., 2013                   |
| Content analysis               | Systematic analysis and interpretation of a carefully selected sample of different forms of communication, such as documents, social media posts, videos, and images. It can also be used for analysis of qualitative interviews. | Flexible method for range of source types; suitable for both quantitative and qualitative research designs; useful for studying past events; nonintrusive method                                          | Time-consuming to code large volumes of data interpretively; limited by what documents and sources are available/accessible; interpreting content out of context can affect its validity; quantification of qualitative content can be mishandled; ethics of using public/private online data must be carefully considered | Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Krippendorff, 2004; Mayring, 2000; Schreier, 2012 |
| Observation                    | Researchers enter social settings (including digital contexts) and observe as either a participant or nonparticipant to better understand social phenomenon in context.                                                           | Can observe what people do rather than what they say they do; can gain in-depth understanding of how everyday/"natural" contexts impact behavior; flexible method; can be structured or more interpretive | Being observed can change someone's behavior; access to settings can be difficult; researcher identity will influence data collected; time-consuming; unanticipated ethical issues can arise during an observation; findings may not be trans-                                                                             | Gobo & Molle, 2017; Hammersley & Atkinson, 1995; Lofland et al., 2006    |

ferrable to other settings



## Section Summary

Interviews

Focus group

Approaches to gathering data through research design and research methods will be shaped by your research question, highlighting the close relationship between the different stages of the social research toolbox.

Research designs are influenced by both theoretical goals (e.g., achieving robust data that contributes to a body of knowledge) and practical constraints (e.g., time, cost, sociopolitical context, and access to participants).

All research methods have strengths and weaknesses, and choices between them should be carefully weighed with your decision trail recorded in a research journal.

In-depth conversations with in-

Responsive method that produces rich data about participants' experiences, memories and feelings; flexible and versatile; researchers can check their understanding of what participant says; good for sensitive topics and hard-to-reach populations

Quality of data depends on skill of interviewer; researcher identity will influence data collected; takes time to gather and analyze data; smaller sample sizes, which may impact generalizability

Good for obtaining wide range of views; offers insights into how people talk about issues in a natural context; a well-managed discussion can generate rich data because of group dynamics; researchers can unpack or generate survey questions

Group discussions (usually including eight people) guided by a moderator, aimed at gathering diverse perspectives and exploring attitudes to a specific topic.

Group dynamics can be challenging to moderate; dominant talkers can skew the discussion; participants may not feel comfortable expressing their views; logistically challenging; may not be suitable for very sensitive or controversial topics

Brinkmann & Kvale, 2015; Hollway & Jefferson, 2019; The King et al., 2019; Morgan Brett & Wheeler, 2022; Barbour, 2007; Kitzinger, 1994; Morgan, 2019

## Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles are relevant at all stages of the social research toolbox, and you may remember from the previous guide that one of the key criteria for developing a “good” research question was that it was “ethical” ([Wheeler, 2025a](#)). I include a more detailed discussion of ethics at stage “G” because by this point, you *must* have a strategy for ensuring ethical principles are upheld before any data is gathered. While most research conducted in an academic setting will need to be reviewed by an ethics committee, all research in all settings should adhere to four basic ethical principles ([Morgan Brett & Wheeler, 2022](#), p. 81), which are summarized here:

- preventing harm and avoiding risk and exploitation
- being respectful and protecting the autonomy of your participants
- managing the confidentiality of the data and maintaining the anonymity of respondents
- offering clarity about the independence of the research and any intended possible uses of the research

Ethical research principles were established after World War II and the 1946 Nuremberg Code, which introduced the requirement for informed consent to participate in research. The atrocities that prompted the Nuremberg trials made clear that avoidance of harm or *beneficence* should be the primary consideration when undertaking any research project. Harm can come in different forms from physical harm to threats to safety, loss of self-esteem or status, embarrassment, stress, harm to development, and invasion of privacy. It is important to carefully evaluate whether any potential harms to a participant outweigh any potential benefits of doing your research.

Communicating potential harms and benefits of research participation is key for ensuring informed consent. Informed consent means that research participants are made aware, *before* their participation, of the study's purpose, their role, any risks and benefits, and how their data will be used. This then allows them to make an informed and voluntary decision about whether to take part and ensures principles of autonomy and respect are established. Participants should have the right to withdraw at any time without feeling coerced. Consent procedures will vary according to the type of research method and level of participation required. The

signing of consent forms after reading an information sheet about the project is usually asked for by ethics committees, but this will not be suitable for all research. Verbal consent may be more appropriate for research with vulnerable populations or in some cultural contexts. Survey researchers might opt for a simplified consent process, with information offered before the survey and an assumption that completing the survey indicates consent. Observations in public settings or of online interactions might make gaining individual consent of all those observed difficult, so care must be taken to not invade privacy and to maintain confidentiality.

Managing data confidentiality should be a priority. If you are dealing with secondary data, for example, and you find revealing information, your duty of care to protect confidentiality persists. I recently analyzed some survey data in which the school names of survey participants were present, so I removed this information from the file (turned it into an anonymized format) before I started analysis. It is important to have a plan around data management and ensure that you keep confidential data safe. This is both about checking your participants' wishes around anonymity (after informing them of the risks of identity disclosure) and establishing a protocol for sensitive data storage and destruction. I have found in interview research that organizational representatives or those with a public profile often consent to being identified, but most other interviewees remain anonymous. The General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) in Europe requires data storage within the region, so check provider policies and use encrypted, password-protected services. I'll talk more about anonymizing data in the next guide in the series ([Wheeler, 2025b](#)), but remember that rules around data destruction only apply to personal data (or identifying information), so anonymized data does not need to

be destroyed.

Prepare your information sheet about your project before you gather any data. Even if you are not seeking written consent, it's a good idea to have an overview for participants that details the following:

- what the project is about
- who has funded the research
- what participation involves
- the risks and benefits of participation
- how participants' data will be gathered and used
- procedures for destroying personal data
- whom to contact for further information

Think about all potential uses of the data—for example, I make clear that anonymized data will be used for research *and teaching* purposes, so I am able to use data in workshops and teaching materials as well as other academic outputs. You might also want to consider whether you want to archive the data for other researchers to access in the future.

A key takeaway is that the ethical terms under which you gather your data will shape what you can do with it later (in your project and beyond). Though ethical processes can feel bureaucratic, [Morgan Brett and Wheeler \(2022\)](#) stress the importance of working toward principles of beneficence and non-maleficence. Ask yourself if your actions pass the “test of universality” (Would you approve if others did the same to you?) and the “test of publicity” (Would you be comfortable if your actions were reported in the news?). Paying attention to these principles is impor-

tant to protect your participants, yourself as a researcher, and the field for future researchers.



## Section Summary

- Ethical principles are central to all stages of the social research toolbox but are particularly important before data is gathered.
- The four key ethical principles that apply to all research projects are preventing harm, respecting participant autonomy, ensuring confidentiality, and being transparent about the research's purpose and outcomes.
- Ethical decisions made at the data-gathering stage affect the possible uses of the data by you and others.

## Conclusion

In this guide, we have considered the second stage of the social research toolbox and some of the key things that need to be considered when “gathering data and evidence” (G) that will answer your research question (Q→P). The guide began by acknowledging the important role that existing evidence, literature, and other sources should play in refining your research question, offering theoretical and methodological insights, and acting as a source of data. Knowing how to recognize credible sources and evaluate their usefulness for your research purposes was stressed, with the PROMPT framework ([OU, 2020](#)) offering a helpful tool. Research design choices are closely connected to your research question, and deci-

sions must be made about whether the “right” data to answer this question should be qualitative or quantitative (or mixed), gathered at one moment in time or over a period of time, and from a small number of cases or a representative sample. Your decisions here will form the framework for your study and will also likely drive the choice of research method. However, these choices do not exist in a vacuum, and feasibility (time, cost, ethics, researcher skills) as well as sociopolitical context might be just as important for how you gather your data. Because choices can shift along the research journey for a variety of reasons, it is recommended that you keep a research journal to record your “decision trail.” This journal will be especially important when it comes to “analyzing the data and evidence” (A)—the next stage of the research toolbox—and presenting your findings. Keep in mind that all the stages of the research toolbox (QGAP) are connected, which was demonstrated through the discussion of ethical principles that shape what sorts of research questions can be asked and impact how data is gathered, which in turn influences how data can be used for analysis and presentation. The next guide turns to the analysis stage of your research toolbox.



## Multiple Choice Quiz Questions

1. What is the role of a literature review in the research process?

- ☐ a. To report on the first 10 sources that Google or ChatGPT offers you when you type in your research question

**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.



**b.** To collect data from participants

**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.



**c.** To refine your research question and identify gaps in knowledge

**Correct Answer**

**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

2. When making research design choices, which factor is most likely to influence your decision?

☐ a. The number of participants



**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

☐ b. The nature of your research question and the type of data needed to answer it



**Correct Answer**

**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

☐ c. The amount of funding you have



**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is B.

3. Which research method is best suited for understanding how people experience and understand a specific social phenomenon in depth?

☐ a. Experiments



**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

☐ **b. Content analysis**

**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is C.

☐ **c. Interviews**

**Correct Answer**

**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

4. What is the most important ethical consideration when gathering data from human participants?

☐ a. Preventing harm and avoiding risk and exploitation



**Correct Answer**

**Feedback:** Well done, correct answer

☐ b. Ensuring that the research is published



**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is A.

☐ c. Collecting data as quickly as possible

**Incorrect Answer**

**Feedback:** This is not the correct answer. The correct answer is A.

**SUBMIT****CLEAR****START OVER**

## Further Reading

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2013). *Successful qualitative research: A practical guide for beginners*. Sage Publications. (good introduction to qualitative approaches)

Creswell, J. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

Kumar, R. (2014). *Research methodology: A step-by-step guide for beginners* (4th ed.). SAGE. (good introduction to quantitative approaches)

Morgan Brett, B., & Wheeler, K. (2022). *How to do qualitative interviewing*. Sage.

O'Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.

Thomas, G. (2017). *How to do your research project: A guide for students*. SAGE Publications.

## Web Resources

Browse a selection of [Sage Research Cases](#) (search for those employing similar research designs and methods to your project) to hear from researchers in the field who have gathered data for their different projects, and discuss the practical opportunities and challenges.

## References

Ariel, B., Bland, M., & Sutherland, A. (2021). Experimental designs. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529682779>

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 8(1), 19–32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1364557032000119616>

Barbour, R. (2007). Doing focus groups. SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781849208956>

Brinkmann, S., & Kvale, S. (2015). *InterViews: Learning the craft of qualitative research interviewing* (3rd ed.). Sage.

Coleman, R. (2019). Designing experiments for the social sciences: How to plan, create, and execute research using experiments. SAGE Publications.

<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071878958>

Creswell, J. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

De Vaus, D. (2014). *Surveys in social research* (6th ed.). Routledge.

Eichhorn, J. (2021). *Survey research and sampling*. SAGE Publications Ltd.  
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529682793>

Fink, A. (2003). *How to ask survey questions*. SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781412984393>

Gilbert, N. (2016). Research, theory and method. In N.Gilbert & P.Stoneman (Eds.), *Researching social life* (4th ed., pp. 25–42). SAGE Publications.

Gobo, G., & Molle, A. (2017). *Doing ethnography*. SAGE Publications Ltd.  
<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781529682847>

Gray, D. (2014). *Doing research in the real world* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications Ltd.

Hammersley, M., & Atkinson, P. (1995). *Ethnography: Principles in practice* (2nd ed.). Routledge.

Hollway, W., & Jefferson, T. (2013). *Doing qualitative research differently: A psychosocial approach* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Hsieh, H. F., & Shannon, S. E. (2005). Three approaches to qualitative content analysis. *Qualitative Health Research*, 15(9), 1277–1288. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1049732305276687>

King, N., Horrocks, C., & Brooks, J. (2019). *Interviews in qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Sage Publications.

Kitzinger, J. (1994). The methodology of focus groups: The importance of interaction between research participants. *Sociology of Health and Illness*, 16(1), 103–121. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.fertnstert.2014.07.549>

Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content analysis*. Sage Publications.

Lofland, J., Snow, D., Anderson, L., & Lofland, L. (2006). *Analysing social settings: A guide to qualitative observation and analysis*. Wadsworth.

Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis. *Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(2), Article-20.

Morgan, D. L. (2019). *Basic and advanced focus groups*. SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781071814307>

Morgan Brett, B. (2025). *How to use a literature review to inform research design: A case study of “thriving in residential care.”* SAGE Guides.

Morgan Brett, B., & Wheeler, K. (2022). *How to do qualitative interviewing*. Sage.

O’Leary, Z. (2017). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. Sage.

OU. (2020). *Evaluation using PROMPT*. The Open University. <https://www.open.ac.uk/libraryservices/beingdigital/accessible/accessible-pdf-69-evaluation-using-prompt.pdf>

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-

Wilson, E., McDonald, S., ... Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ*, n71. <https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71>

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage Publications.

Ridley, D. (2012). *The literature review: A step-by-step guide for students* (2nd ed.). SAGE.

Ritter, F., Kim, J., Morgan, J., & Carlson, R. (2013). *Running behavioral studies with human participants: A practical guide*. SAGE Publications. <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781452270067>

Schreier, M. (2012). *Qualitative content analysis in practice*. Sage.

Thomas, G. (2017). *How to do your research project: A guide for students*. SAGE Publications.

Wheeler, K. (2025a). *How to develop research questions: The first stage of the social research toolbox, QGAP* [how-to guide]. Sage Research Methods: Data and Research Literacy.

Wheeler, K. (2025b). *How to analyze data and evidence: The third stage of the social research toolbox, QGAP* [how-to guide]. Sage Research Methods: Data and Research Literacy.

Wheeler, K., & Glucksmann, M. (2015). *Household recycling and consumption work: Social and moral economies*. Palgrave Macmillan.

<https://doi.org/10.4135/9781036220716>