Likert scale cheat sheet

Label sets, five or seven points, how to score the answers and the mistakes that skew results.

Label sets, five points (1 is the low end)

Set	1	2	3	4	5
Agreement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
Frequency	Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Always
Satisfaction	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Quality	Very poor	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Likelihood	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Likely	Very likely
Importance	Not at all important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	Extremely important

Label sets, seven points

Set	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Agreement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Frequency	Never	Very rarely	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very often	Always
Satisfaction	Very dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Quality	Very poor	Poor	Below average	Average	Above average	Good	Excellent
Likelihood	Very unlikely	Unlikely	Somewhat unlikely	Neither likely nor unlikely	Somewhat likely	Likely	Very likely
Importance	Not at all important	Low importance	Slightly important	Moderately important	Important	Very important	Extremely important

Five points or seven

- Five points: quick to answer on a phone, easy to label every point, and a common choice for course and event feedback.
- Seven points: finer steps when you need to spot small changes between two runs of a survey. Label every point.
- Pick one length and keep it for every statement in the survey, so you can compare the results.
- Keep the middle point ("Neither agree nor disagree") unless you have a clear reason to force a side.

Score it

- Number the points 1 (low end) to 5 or 7 (high end). n = total answers for the statement.
- Mean = (1 x count of 1 + 2 x count of 2 + ...) / n. Compare means only between statements with the same points.
- Top-two box = (count of the two highest points) / n. Bottom-two box = (count of 1 + count of 2) / n.
- Net = top-two box minus bottom-two box. Std dev shows how spread out the answers are.
- Reverse-worded statement: score it as (points + 1) minus the answer, so a high number is always good.
- Report counts and shares beside the mean: the gaps between labels are not measured distances.

Mistakes that skew results

- Two ideas in one statement ("The course was useful and well paced"). Split it.
- Labels that skip a step or overlap (Often, Sometimes, Occasionally). Use one set from the table above.
- Flipping the order halfway through the survey. Low end on the left, every time.
- Only agree/disagree questions. Some people lean to "agree". Mix in direct questions with their own labels.
- Reading one 4.1 as a great result. Look at the counts and the bottom-two box too.
- Mixing 5 and 7 points in one average. Compare shares, or keep the scales the same.

Free scoring calculator (Excel) and label sets (CSV) at hornetforms.com/blog/likert-scale-survey