How to calculate NPS: cheat sheet

The question, the three groups, the formula, three worked examples and what to do with the answers.

1. Ask one question on a 0 to 10 scale

- Ask: "How likely is it that you would recommend [us] to a friend or colleague?"
- Use an 11-point scale from 0 (not at all likely) to 10 (extremely likely). Keep the same wording and scale every time, so you can compare one survey with the next.
- Ask it first, then one open follow-up. A long survey gets fewer answers.

2. Sort every answer into a group

Group	Score	What it usually means
Promoters	9 or 10	Likely to recommend you
Passives	7 or 8	Happy enough, but not telling friends
Detractors	0 to 6	Unhappy enough to warn people off

3. Subtract

- NPS = % promoters minus % detractors. Passives count in the total, not in the subtraction.
- The result runs from -100 (all detractors) to 100 (all promoters). Write it as a number: 25, not 25%.
- Need the counts only? NPS = (promoters - detractors) / all answers x 100.

Three worked examples

Example	Promoters / passives / detractors	% promoters	% detractors	NPS
Example 1: 20 answers	9 / 7 / 4	45.0%	20.0%	25.0
Example 2: 37 answers	15 / 12 / 10	40.5%	27.0%	13.5
Example 3: 120 answers	30 / 36 / 54	25.0%	45.0%	-20.0

In Excel or Google Sheets

- `Scores in B2:B201. Promoters: =COUNTIF(B2:B201,">=9")`
- `Detractors: =COUNTIF(B2:B201,"<=6") All answers: =COUNT(B2:B201)`
- `NPS: =(COUNTIF(B2:B201,">=9")-COUNTIF(B2:B201,"<=6"))/COUNT(B2:B201)*100`
- These assume clean 0 to 10 numbers. The free calculator also skips blanks and flags stray values.

Read it well

- Read the follow-up answers. The score says how many are unhappy; the comments say why.
- Ask detractors what went wrong and promoters what they love. Tailor the follow-up to the group.
- Small samples swing: with 20 answers, one person moving from 6 to 9 changes the NPS by 10.
- Compare your score with your own last score, asked the same way, before you compare with anyone else.
- Two very different groups can share a score: 30 promoters and 0 detractors in 100 answers is 30, and so is 60 promoters and 30 detractors.

Question and groups as defined by Fred Reichheld, "The One Number You Need to Grow", Harvard Business Review, December 2003. Free NPS calculator (Excel) at hornetforms.com/blog/how-to-calculate-nps

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