A guide to: Experimental design



Key concepts & study plan



Experimental design



Data collection & processing



Model specification & estimation



Interpretation & application

A guide to: Experimental design

Steps in designing choice experiments

- 1. Determine design type
- 2. Determine design size
- 3. Generate design
- 4. Block design
- 5. Create choice tasks in survey instrument





Each study is different, some steps may not apply or in a different order



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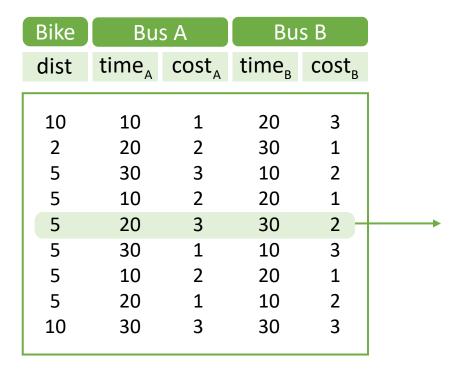


Interpretation & application

Experimental design

Matrix with attribute level combinations, where

- Each column represents an attribute of an alternative
- Each row represents a choice task





Realism

- A good design contains realistic attribute level combinations
- Non-sensible attribute level combinations should be avoided

Bike	Bus	s A	Bus	s B
dist	time _A	cost _A	time _B	$\operatorname{cost}_{\scriptscriptstyle B}$
10	10	1	20	3
2	20	2	30	1
5	30	3	10	2
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	3	30	2
5	30	1	10	3
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	1	10	2
10	30	3	30	3

Unrealistic attribute level combinations

Balance

- A good design contains a high degree of attribute level balance
- Highly unbalanced designs should be avoided

	Bike	Bu	s A	Bu	s B
	dist	time _A	cost _A	time _B	cost _B
Unbalanced attribute — levels	10 2 5 5 5 5 5 5 10	10 20 30 10 20 30 10 20 30	1 2 3 2 3 1 2 1 3	20 30 10 20 30 10 20 10 30	3 1 2 1 2 3 1 2 3

Variety

- A good design contains a variety of attribute level combinations
- Repeated or similar choice tasks should be avoided

Bike	Bus	s A	Bu	s B
dist	time _A	cost _A	time _B	cost _B
10	10	1	20	3
2	20	2	30	1
5	30	3	10	2
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	3	30	2
5	30	1	10	3
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	1	10	2
10	30	3	30	3

Trade-offs

- A good design allows trade-offs between attributes
- Choice tasks with dominant alternatives should be avoided

Bik	e	Bus	s A	Bus	s B
dis	t tir	me _A	cost _A	time _B	cost _B
10)	10	1	20	3
2		20	2	30	1
5		30	3	10	2
5		10	2	20	1
5		20	3	30	2
5		30	1	10	3
5		10	2	20	1
5		20	1	10	2
10		30	3	30	3

Trade-offs

- A good design allows trade-offs between attributes
- Choice tasks with dominant alternatives should be avoided

Bike	Bu	s A	Bu	s B
dist	time _A	cost _A	$time_{_{B}}$	cost _B
10	10	1	20	3
2	20	2	30	1
5	30	3	10	2
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	3	30	2
5	30	1	10	3
5	10	2	20	1
5	20	1	10	2
10	30	3	30	3

Dominant alternative

- Alternative that is best across all attributes
- Often present in unlabelled experiments
- Choice task with dominant alternative provides no information, and should be detected and avoided



Dominant alternative

• Results in silly choice tasks



almohada francesa French Flag Pillow 15,99 EUR



almohada holandesa Dutch Flag Pillow 9,99 EUR





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Data collection & processing

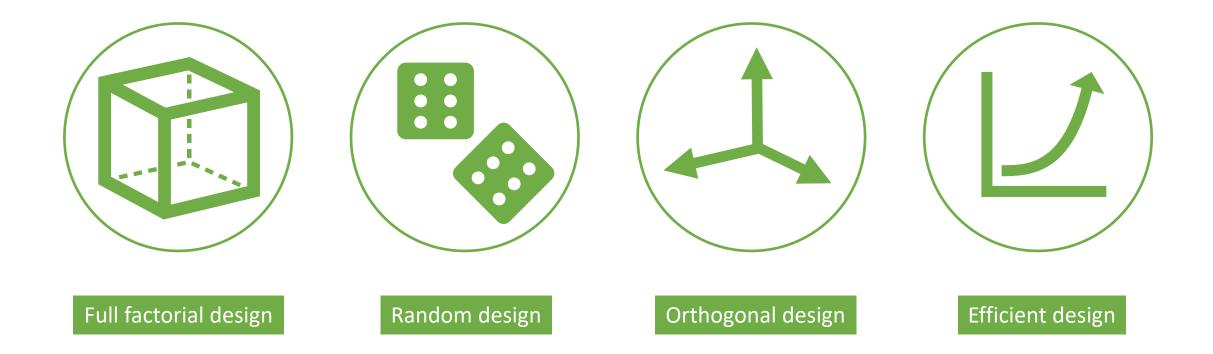


Model specification & estimation

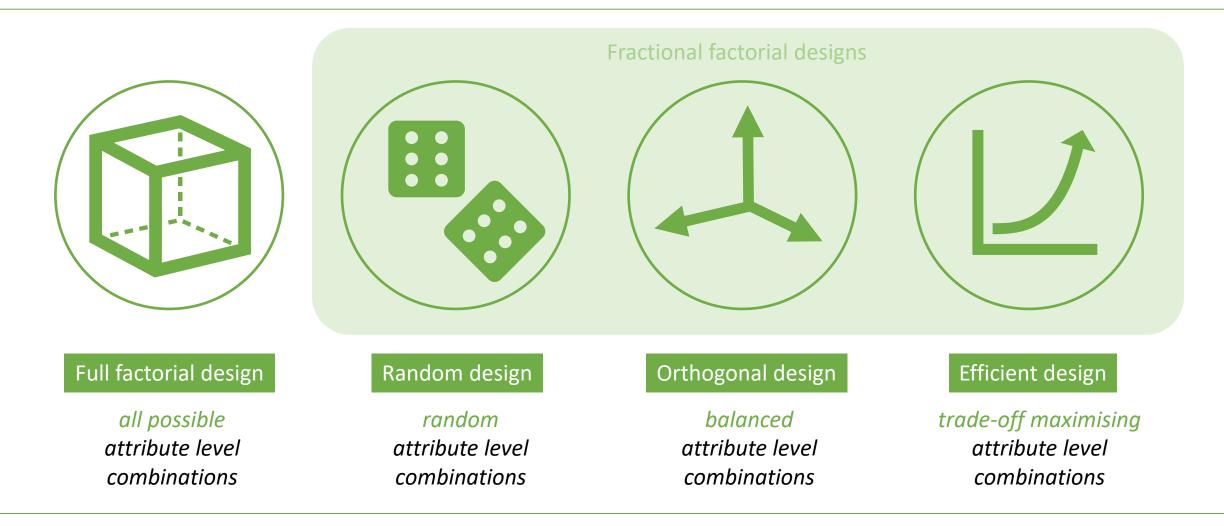


Interpretation & application

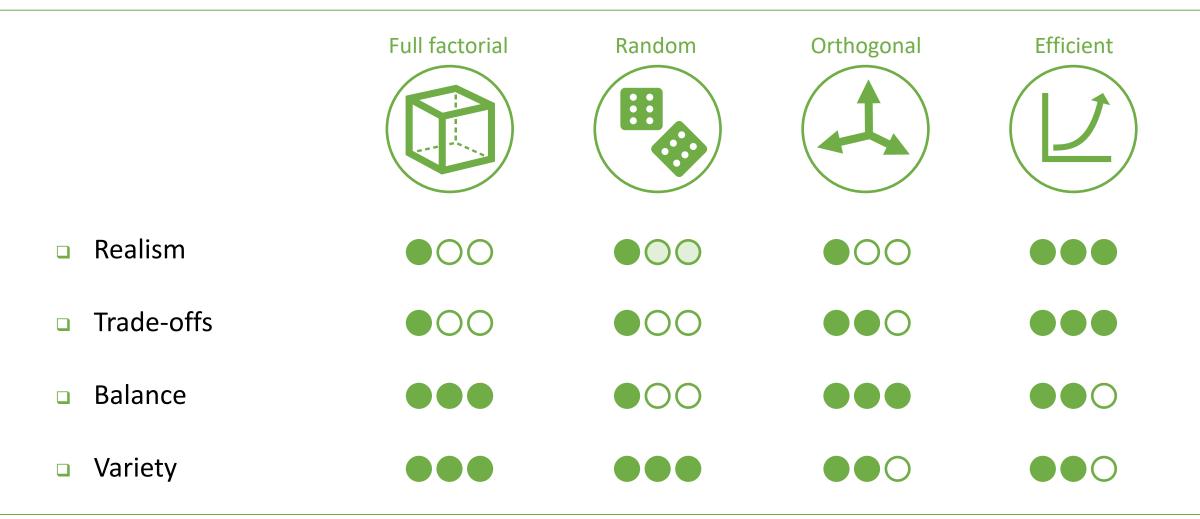
Design types



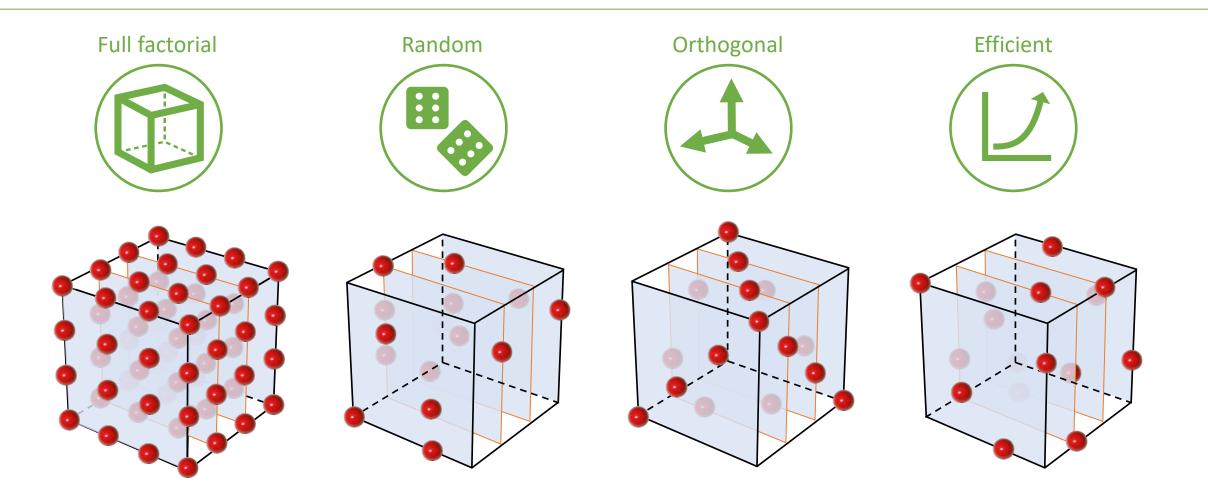
Design types



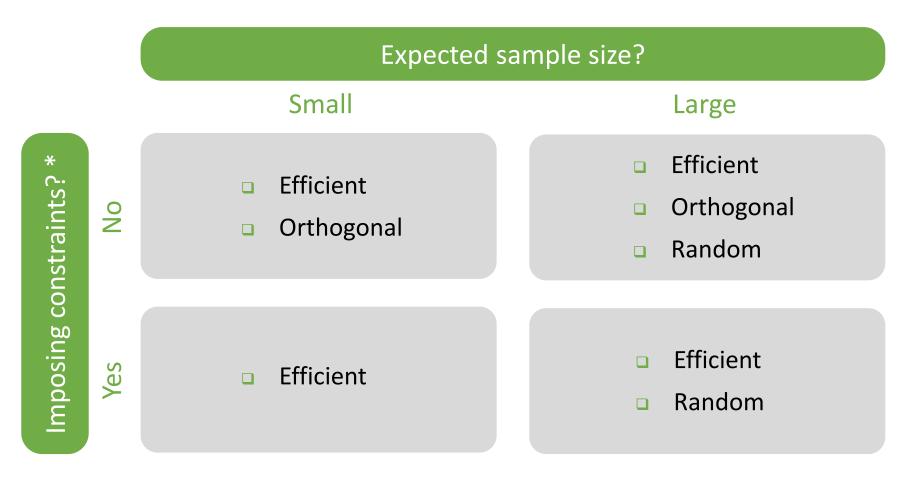
Each design type has different strengths and weaknesses



Each design type results in different attribute level combinations



Selecting best design type



* Prohibitions of certain attribute level combinations to ensure realism, non-dominance, etc.



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Interpretation & application

Design size

• Number of choice tasks (rows) in an experimental design

Bike	Bus	s A	Bu	s B	
dist	time _A	cost _A	time _B	cost _B	
2	10	4	20	2	'
2	10	1	20	3	
2	20	2	30	1	
2	30	3	10	2	
5	10	2	20	1	
5	20	3	30	2	
5	30	1	10	3	
10	10	3	20	2	
10	20	1	30	3	
10	30	2	10	1	

≻ design size = 9

Appropriate design size varies by design type

• Typical design size



Full factorial design is typically too large

• The full factorial design for this experiment contains 41,472 choice tasks!

Bike		Bus			Train			Tram		
dist	time	cost	wait	time	cost	wait	time	cost	wait	
2	20	1	10	10	3	5	15	2	8	
5	30	2	20	20	4	10	25	3	15	
10	40	3		30	5		35	4		
		4			6			5)
3	× 3	× 4	× 2 :	× 3	× 4	× 2 :	× 3 :	× 4	× 2	_



Minimum design size

- Theoretical minimum
 - Statistical requirement for any design

Recommended

- Multiplier M > 1
- My rule of thumb:
 - Random design: M = 10
 - Efficient design: M = 3

design size $> \frac{\text{number of parameters}}{\text{number of alternatives} - 1}$

design size $> M \cdot \frac{\text{number of parameters}}{\text{number of alternatives} - 1}$

Minimum design size – Example efficient design

- Theoretical minimum
 - Statistical requirement for any design
- Recommended
 - Multiplier M = 3

design size
$$> \frac{10}{3-1}$$

design size
$$> 3 \cdot \frac{10}{3-1}$$

$$\begin{split} & \text{Utility}(\text{Car}) = \beta_1 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{car}} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{FuelCost} + \beta_3 \cdot \text{TollCost} \\ & \text{Utility}(\text{Bus}) = \beta_4 + \beta_5 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{bus}} + \beta_6 \cdot \text{WalkTime} + \beta_7 \cdot \text{NrTransfers} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{Fare} \\ & \text{Utility}(\text{Bike}) = \beta_8 + \beta_9 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{bike}} + \beta_{10} \cdot \text{Rain} \end{split}$$

Minimum design size – Example efficient design

 Theoretical minimum Statistical requirement for any design 	design size > 5	
 Recommended Multiplier M = 3 	design size > 15	

$$\begin{split} & \text{Utility}(\text{Car}) = \beta_1 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{car}} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{FuelCost} + \beta_3 \cdot \text{TollCost} \\ & \text{Utility}(\text{Bus}) = \beta_4 + \beta_5 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{bus}} + \beta_6 \cdot \text{WalkTime} + \beta_7 \cdot \text{NrTransfers} + \beta_2 \cdot \text{Fare} \\ & \text{Utility}(\text{Bike}) = \beta_8 + \beta_9 \cdot \text{TravelTime}_{\text{bike}} + \beta_{10} \cdot \text{Rain} \end{split}$$



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Design generation tools

	Full factorial	Random	Orthogonal	Efficient
Spreadsheet				
Design library				
Design software				

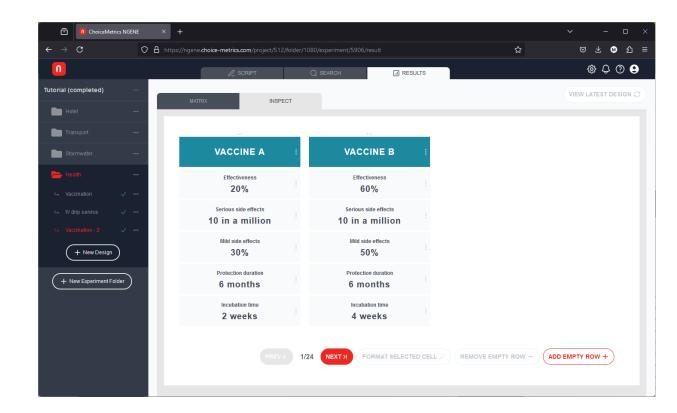
Software for generating designs for choice experiments

- Ngene
- □ SAS
- JMP
- Stata
- □ SPSS orthogonal designs only
- Sawtooth
- □ Idefix in R efficient designs only, free

Ngene

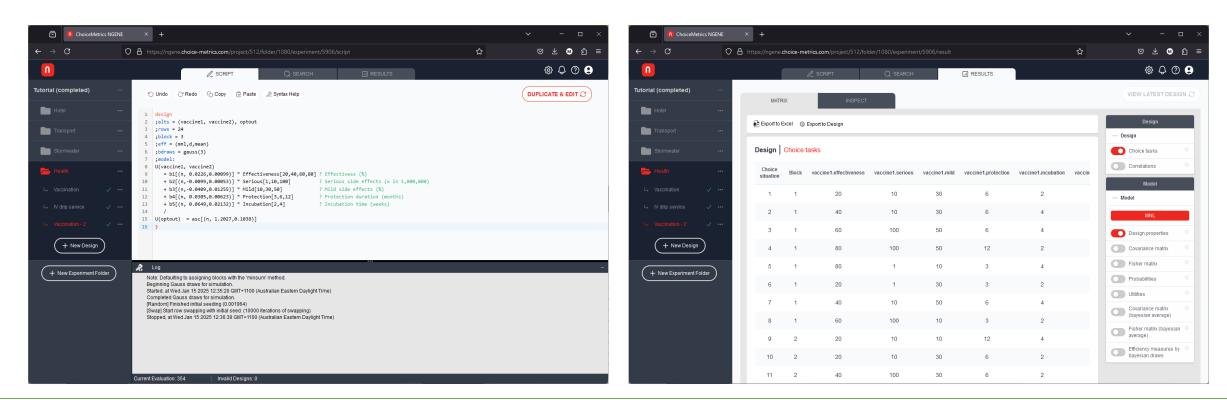
- Used in this course
- Full factorial designs
- Random designs
- Orthogonal designs
- Efficient designs

www.choice-metrics.com



Ngene

- Specify choice model and design properties in script
- Run script to generate design



Ngene

• Active freely accessible forums for questions about

- Ngene
- Experimental design in general

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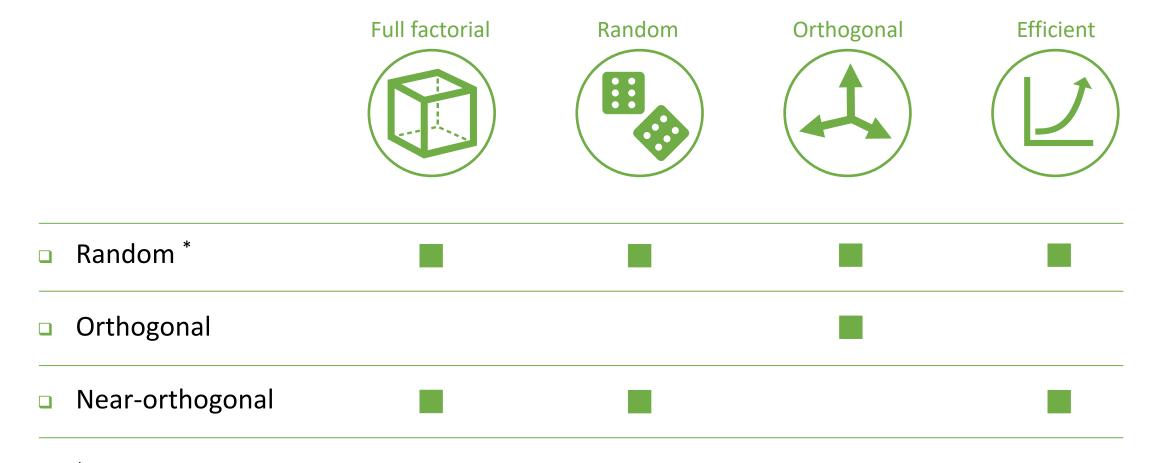
Interpretation & application

Block

- Subset of choice tasks given to a single decision-maker
- Block size depends on number of choice tasks that decision-makers can handle

Bike	Bus	s A	Bu	s B
dist	time _A	cost _A	time _B	cost _B
2	10	1	20	3
2	20	2	30	1
2	30	3	10	2
5	10	2	20	1
5 5	20 30	3 1	30 10	2 3
10	10	3	20	2
10	20	1	30	3
10	30	2	10	1

Blocking strategy



Orthogonal blocking

• Attribute level balance within each block

	Hotel A			Hotel B	
stars	distance	price	stars	distance	price
1	1	80	3	2	120
3	3	160	5	1	80
5	2	120	1	3	160
1	3	120	3	1	160
3	2	80	5	3	120
5	1	160	1	2	80
1	2	160	3	3	80
5	3	80	1	1	120
3	1	120	5	2	160



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The easy way

Import design matrix into dedicated software for choice experiments

www.surveyengine.com

	Drone	Locker	Postie
			ā
Speed	2 business days	3 business days	5 business days
Delivery method	Leave in a safe place	Secure in locker	Leave at front door
Time window	9am - 5pm (30 minutes)	24/7 (kept for two days)	6pm - 9pm (no choice)
Cost	\$2	\$6	\$8
Which would you choose?	0	0	0

www.qualtrics.com*

Please look over the benefit packages below and select the one you like most.

	Package 1	Package 2
Compensation Increases	2.5% per year	Based on promotion
Healthcare	50% of premium	100% of premium
401k Matching	50% matching	100% matching
PTO	10 days	20 days
Work from home	No	1 day a week
Free Lunch	Everyday	Never
	0	0

* Requires purchasing additional conjoint analysis module

The hard way

- Create each choice task manually
- May require javacript coding
- May require screenshots of choice tasks

Motorway	Urban road
Speed limit of 90 km/h , no traffic lights.	Speed limit of 50 km/h , four traffic lights.
The travel time is 6 minutes every day.	The travel time varies. You will experience one of the following travel times (in minutes) with equal probability:
6 6 6 6 6	4 6 12 12 12
Toll cost: \$ 1.00	Toll cost: \$ 0.00
0	0

Randomise

- Order of labelled alternatives across respondents
- Order of attributes across respondents (optional)
- Order of choice tasks across respondents (optional)

See tutorials on SurveyEngine website

Choice Experiments			
Facebook ad Experiment – with data	A full working experiment on modelling choices of Facebook ads including data and models	preview 12	<u>download</u>
Netflix Movie Choice – with data	A fully worked through experiment on movie choice with data.	preview 12	download
Randomising Alternatives	This tutorial will explain using randomised decks to evenly allocate scenarios to respondents	preview 🗗	download
Randomising Attributes	Randomising the the order of attributes in a choice experiment.	preview 🛙	download
Highlighting Changed Attributes	Highlighting table rows that are the same (or different) in a choice experiment.	preview 🗗	<u>download</u>
Blocking	Using blocking within an experimental design in a Choice Experiment.	preview 2	download
Providing Feedback on Choices	Various ways of providing dynamic feedback about in practise exercises allowing respondents the opportunity try again.	<u>preview</u> ⊉	download
Implementing Opt Out Choices	This tutorial will show how to customize an opt-out alternative.	preview 2	<u>download</u>
Using Derived Values in Experiments	Using derived values to include respondent data in experiments.	preview 🗗	<u>download</u>
Rotating Attribute Labels	Rotated labels 180 degrees to give your experiment scenarios more space.	preview 2	<u>download</u>
Pivot and Status Quo Experiments	Using respondent reference data in Experiments with pivot and status quo choices.	preview 12	download
Using Images in Experiments	All about using images in your DCE.	preview 🗈	download

Other choice task considerations

- Highlighting attribute level overlap
- Include respondent data in choice tasks
- Status quo and opt-out alternatives
- Using images in experiments
- Etc.

See tutorials on SurveyEngine website

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Choice Experiments			
Facebook ad Experiment – with data	A full working experiment on modelling choices of Facebook ads including data and models	preview 12	download
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