



# Poll Everywhere

Presenter tips & best practices

How to get the most out of live polling

# Tips to improve participation



## Give instructions up front

Before your first poll, tell the audience that you will be asking them to participate using their mobile devices or laptops. Giving clear instructions up front sets the group's expectations and encourages participation.



## Do a practice poll

Start your session or event with a practice poll. We recommend beginning with a fun icebreaker question. This could be related to pop culture, current events, or simply, "Where are you from?" Doing so gives your audience time to get out their devices and learn how to participate in a low-pressure setting. This will improve participation on other poll questions later.



## Slow down

Presenters tend to rush polls because there is a natural tendency to be uncomfortable with the silence while waiting for people to learn how to participate. Embrace the silence! Typically, you should allow 90 seconds for your first poll, and 30-40 seconds per poll thereafter. As your audience becomes accustomed to submitting responses, you'll be able to pick up the pace.



## Mix it up

Make sure polls are spaced out in the presentation, and that the audience will be interested in learning their own consensus. For example, one fun or silly poll works well, but a few in a row may cause attention to wander.



## Offer incentives

If people have incentives to participate, "poll fatigue" is not usually an issue. Examples include offering prizes for participation, making it a game or competition, and of course giving credit for quizzes or tests.

# Explaining Poll Everywhere verbally

## Walk through the details of how to participate

### 1. Ask everyone to take their phones out.

“Now I’m going to ask for your opinion. We’re going to use your phones to do some audience voting just like on American Idol. Please take out your cell phones, but remember to leave them on silent.”

### 2. Tell them how to participate.

“You will be able to participate by sending a text message or visiting a web address on your phone or laptop.” (If you will be polling the same audience repeatedly – for example, as part of a class – they can download the app from the Apple or Android app store to participate.)

When allowing participation through texting:

“To participate you must first join my session. You do this by sending a message to the five digit number 22333. In the body of the message, you’ll type the keyword \_\_\_\_\_. You will get a confirmation message that you are now part of my session. From there, just reply to that message with your response (A,B,C)...”

When allowing participation on the web:

“To participate, open any browser and visit [www.pollev.com/\\_\\_\\_\\_\\_](http://www.pollev.com/). Wait for the poll to appear and then submit your response.”

Read aloud the instructions that appear at the top of your poll for how to participate.

## Address their concerns

1. **Fees.** “Standard text messaging rates apply, so it may be free for you, or up to twenty cents on some carriers if you do not have a text messaging plan.”
2. **Privacy.** “The service we are using is serious about privacy. I cannot see your phone numbers, and you will never receive follow-up text messages outside this presentation.”
3. **Typing.** “Capitalization doesn’t matter, but spelling and spaces do.”
4. **Downloading another app.** “You can participate without downloading yet another app to your phone. (But if you want to, Poll Everywhere does have an app available in the Android and Apple app stores.)”

# Visual aid for SMS text participation

## Participating through SMS text messaging



Remember to update these visuals with the specific instructions for your own poll.

# Visual aid for web participation

Participating from any web enabled browser



Remember to update these visuals with the specific instructions for your own poll.