

What is it?

This technique involves asking participants to give you a guided tour of a physical space. The idea is that the person is free to take you wherever they want and point out anything they consider relevant. If they don't go somewhere or don't point something out, it's likely to be because that place or feature isn't important or familiar to them. Hopefully, volunteers will feel at ease in familiar surroundings and will feel confident about talking to you.



It could also be a virtual tour of a digital space delivered by the participant, e.g. the VLE or library catalogue so that you can see how they go about finding information or using course materials.

Things you need

- Willing participant/s
- A physical space or digital environment to tour
- A notepad & pen (or a voice recorder so you won't need to take notes)
- An IT application to capture/record a digital tour
- Eye tracking glasses to check where they are looking on the screen



How to do them

1. Start by asking each participant to give you a guided tour of somewhere, e.g. 'Please give me a tour of the library.' Keep your request deliberately vague to avoid leading them in a particular direction unless there is something you particularly want to find out. It's fine to have a tour guided by two participants together because useful insights might be gained from their interaction with each other as well as with you. Any more than two probably wouldn't work well though because they might not have enough opportunities to speak.
2. During the tour, try not to interrupt the participant/s or ask questions so they can speak freely and digress in any direction that occurs to them.
3. At the end of the tour, ask any questions that have occurred to you, e.g. why a particular area wasn't included.
4. Compare notes or recordings and draw out any common themes. These are what could be used to make changes. For example, if there's a 'quiet study' area that no one uses for that purpose because it has noisy printers, it's probably time to remove the 'quiet study' signage or move the printers elsewhere.

