

Probability Samples		Non-Probability Samples	
Simple random	Use when each member of the study population or sampling frame should have equal probability of being included in the sample. Use a random number generator or some other procedure to select participants completely at random.	Referral "Snowball"	Used when potential participants are hard to identify or find. Identify key informants, who then identify a first tier of participants, who identify a second tier of participants. Sample size is usually either determined a priori or saturation sampling is used -- e.g., very few new participants can be identified through more contacts.
Systematic	Often used for spatial sampling -- like houses in a voting precinct -- when you do not have a list for a sampling frame. Pick the first participant completely randomly. Then pick the remainder at equal intervals. The interval is determined by dividing the total sample size needed by the population or sampling frame size.	Quota	(1) Researcher wants to make sure that sub-groups are represented proportionately in a probability sample. Similar to, but not as good as, a stratified random sample. (2) You want to over-represent some relatively rare group. (3) Researcher determines sample size for statistical test purposes, usually means that you need more participants than the calculated probability sample size. (3) Substitutes for a probability sample (poor use).
Stratified	Use when you want to make sure to include all of the sub-groups within the general study population. Assign each member of the sampling frame or study population to a stratum. Then select a simple random sample from each stratum. May use either disproportionate or proportional allotment of the total sample size to the different strata.	Volunteer	Usually used because the research poses some risk to the participant or because the nature of the information that you want is sensitive. Note that "convenience" and "accidental" volunteer samples are not recommended.
Cluster	Use when the study population or sampling frame has a clustered distribution, like houses with lead paint that are probably distributed in clusters of older construction areas in any city. Assign every member of the sampling frame or study population to a cluster. Select clusters randomly for sampling and then include every member of the selected clusters in the sample.	Judgmental or Purposeful	Many types, including criteria, maximum variation, homogeneous, matched and critical. In all cases, the researcher selects the participants because they have specific characteristics of interest to the researcher. This involves gaining information about the potential participants before sample selection.
Multistage cluster	Proceed as for the cluster sample, but select participants from each cluster randomly or systematically.	Convenience or Haphazard	The researcher selects participants because they are the easiest to get, a least effort sampling approach. Does not result in a valid sample for most research purposes because the sample permits neither statistical nor theoretical generalization