**Step 4: Evaluate and justify your methodological choices**

Your methodology should make the case for why you chose these particular methods, especially if you did not take the most standard approach to your topic. Discuss why other methods were not suitable for your objectives, and show how this approach contributes new knowledge or understanding.

You can acknowledge limitations or weaknesses in the approach you chose, but justify why these were outweighed by the strengths.

Lab-based experiments can’t always accurately simulate real-life situations and behaviors, but they are effective for testing causal relationships between [variables](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/types-of-variables/).

Unstructured interviews usually produce results that cannot be generalized beyond the [sample group](https://www.scribbr.com/methodology/sampling-methods/), but they provide a more in-depth understanding of participants’ perceptions, motivations and emotions.

**Tips for writing a strong methodology**

Remember that your aim is not just to describe your methods, but to show how and why you applied them and to demonstrate that your research was rigorously conducted.

**Focus on your objectives and research questions**

The methodology section should clearly show why your methods suit your [objectives](https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/set-objective-dissertation/) and convince the reader that you chose the best possible approach to answering your [problem statement](https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/problem-statement/) and [research questions](https://www.scribbr.com/research-process/research-question-examples/). Throughout the section, relate your choices back to the central purpose of your dissertation.

**Cite relevant sources**

Your methodology can be strengthened by reference to existing research in the field, either to:

* Confirm that you followed established practices for this type of research
* Discuss how you evaluated different methodologies and decided on your approach
* Show that you took a novel methodological approach to address a gap in the literature

Our free citation generators can help you to [create MLA citations](https://www.scribbr.com/mla-citation-generator/) and [APA citations](https://www.scribbr.com/apa-citation-generator/).

**Write for your audience**

Consider how much information you need to give, and don’t go into unnecessary detail. If you are using methods that are standard for your discipline, you probably don’t need to give lots of background or justification. But if you take an approach that is less common in your field, you might need to explain and justify your methodological choices.

In either case, your methodology should be a clear, well-structured text that makes an argument for your approach, not just a list of technical details and procedures.

**Discuss obstacles**

If you encountered difficulties in collecting or analyzing data, explain how you dealt with them. Show how you minimized the impact of any unexpected obstacles. Pre-empt any major critiques of your approach and demonstrate that you made the research as rigorous as possible.