

Dropdown Menu Question Type

Dropdown Menus are single-select questions with answer options displayed in a dropdown list. We also have the ability to create a multi-select Dropdown Menu.

When To Use It

Use Dropdown Menus to ask your respondents to choose a single option from a long list. For example, use a Dropdown Menu when asking a respondent what state they live in.

We recommend limiting how many answer options you put in dropdown menus because large sets of options (think 100+) fatigue survey respondents and over 1,500 can cause loading issues with the Build tab.

If you do need to add a large number of answer options, the [Cascading Dropdown Menu question](#) may be a good alternative.

Multi-Select Setting

On the **Validation** tab of the dropdown menu question check the **Multi-Select** option to allow survey respondents to select more than one option from the dropdown menu.

The image shows a configuration panel for a 'Dropdown Menu' question. At the top, there are tabs for 'Question', 'Logic', 'Validation', 'Layout', and 'Piping / Repeat'. The 'Validation' tab is selected. Under the 'Require' section, there are four radio button options: 'Not required' (selected), 'Required', 'Warn respondents if question is left unanswered (Soft-Require)', and 'Conditionally require this question on previous answers'. Under the 'Advanced' section, there is a 'Multi-Select' option with a checked checkbox and the text 'Allows survey takers to select more than one option from this dropdown menu'. This 'Multi-Select' option is highlighted with a red rectangular box.

Users can then select multiple options by pressing and holding Command/Control and clicking each option they wish to select.

The image shows a survey question: '1. What is your state of residence?'. Below the question is a dropdown menu that is open, displaying a list of options. The options are: '-- Please Select --', Alabama, Alaska, American Samoa (highlighted by a mouse cursor), Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, and Federated States of Micronesia. At the bottom of the dropdown menu, there is a dark grey bar with white text that reads: 'Check it out in an [example survey!](#) Add a [survey](#) with this question to your account!'.

What states have you lived in? (Select all that apply)

To select multiple options press and hold Command/Control and click the options you wish to select.

Alabama
Alaska
Arizona
Arkansas
California
Colorado
Connecticut
Delaware
District of Columbia
Florida

Best Practice Tip

We here at Alchemer are not fans of the multi-select dropdown menu. It can be both confusing and frustrating for survey respondents, causing them to leave the question unanswered or, worse, leave your survey altogether. Respondents who do answer your question might give you bad data because they cannot see all the answer options or because their finger slipped off the Command/Control key.

Multi-Select Dropdown Best Practices

- Only use this question type when necessary e.g., when your answer option list is very long and you wish to provide multiple options.
- Add instructions for your survey respondents telling them how to use this question.

Multi-Select Dropdown Alternatives

- [Checkboxes](#) - Checkboxes allow for multiple options and display all the options as once so none are missed and are easy to use. You can also split your answer option list in to columns in the checkboxes question to better display long lists of answer options.
- [Cascading Dropdown Menu](#) - Use a cascading dropdown menu question to segment your lists to drill down to a very long list of answer options.

Change Please Select Placeholder

You will notice that by default, Alchemer's dropdown menu question has -- **Please Select** -- as the default placeholder text. If you want to customize or update this text, visit our [tutorial](#) for step-by-step instructions.

Survey Taking

On a desktop and most laptops the Dropdown Menu question type looks like so.

What is your state of residence?

-- Please Select --

- Please Select --
- Alabama
- Alaska
- American Samoa
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut
- Delaware
- District of Columbia
- Federated States of Micronesia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Guam
- Hawaii
- Idaho
- Illinois
- Indiana
- Iowa

When optimized for mobile devices the Dropdown Menu question type displays in a very similar format. Many mobile devices have a native select interface to make it easier for respondents to select an option with their finger. Whether or not this is available depends on the device.

By default, survey questions show one at a time on mobile devices to prevent the need for scrolling on smaller screens. For single-select questions, like the Dropdown Menu, the screen will automatically advance after an option is selected. You can turn off this [one-at-a-time interaction](#) if you wish.

Survey

What is your state of residence?

-- Please Select --

20%

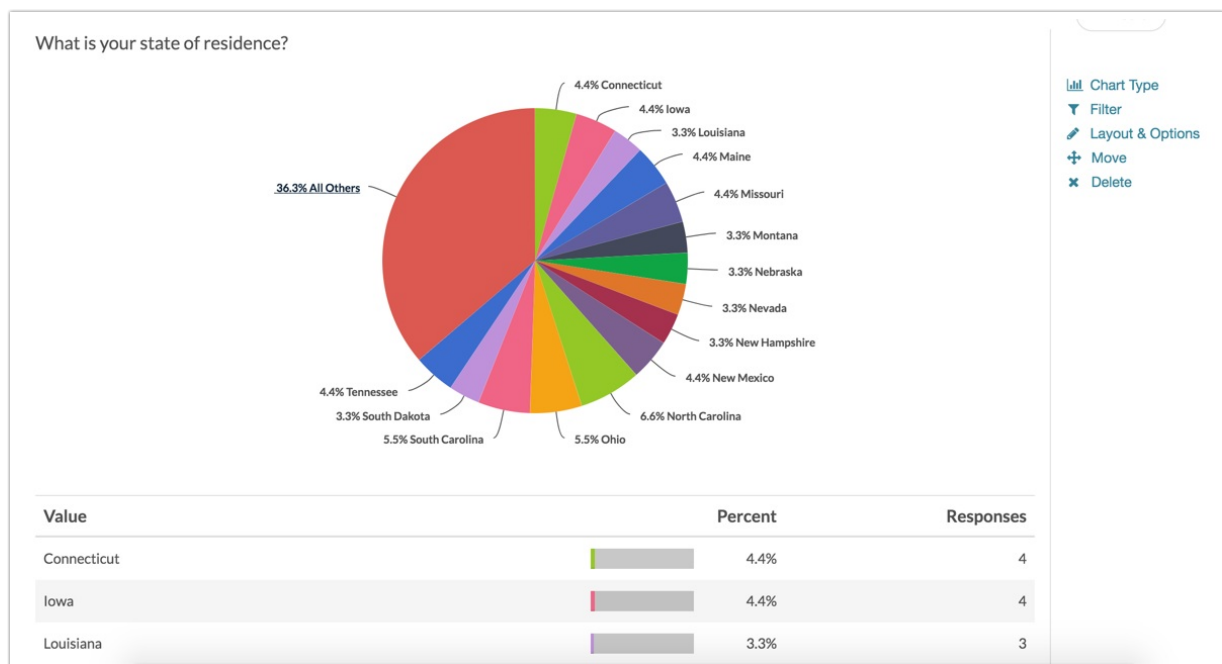
81° 59% 1:31 PM

-- Please Select --

- Alabama
- Alaska
- American Samoa
- Arizona
- Arkansas
- California
- Colorado
- Connecticut

Reporting

Dropdown Menus report as a [Pie Chart](#), by default, with a table that includes a count and percent for each answer option.



- + See additional compatible chart types
- + See what other report types are compatible

Exporting

The default Dropdown Menu is single-select, and the [export](#) will have a single column of data. However, if multi-select box is enabled, a column will be present for each answer option possible.

EY
What is your state of residence?
NJ
RI
AR
OR
NH
WY
SD

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