



# Dotmocracy / Dot Voting



Facilitates fast decision making and prioritization by collecting and revealing individual votes on a set of options using a limited number of dot stickers, marks or post-it's.



Information  
Ideation  
Consultation  
**Co-Decision**



**<15 people**  
**15-30 people**  
**30-100 people**  
**100-250 people**  
**> 250 people**



**Preparation:**  
30min for  
defining set up  
& questions  
**Implementaton:**  
5-30min  
**Follow-up:**  
30min for  
analysis and  
documentation



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Resources for a  
voting/ material



**At least one  
person** for  
preparation,  
moderation and  
documentation

## The Method: What is it, when to use it and what outcome to expect

Dotmocracy, or dot voting, allows to arrive at a decision or prioritization simply, quickly and democratically. Participants vote on a set of choices in a facilitated process, each with the same limited number of dots. Dotmocracy is usually used within a process of decision making or prioritization after the group has brainstormed ideas or worked out different alternatives. The method prevents endless discussions on decision taking, eases the mental load of choosing and offers the group a compact, visual overview of the level of agreement to different options.

## The Process: How to conduct it in an in-person setting or online using a PC/laptop with video option

The method follows three steps :

- 1. Overview:** Each idea/alternative is put clearly readable on an individual (virtual) post-it or index card. All ideas then are put on a whiteboard. Participants may group similar options into clusters and remove duplicates. The facilitator asks if all ideas are clear for all participants and enables clarification if needed.
- 2. Voting:** Each participant is provided with the voting rules, the same number of dots and silent time to think up his/her voting. Once everyone has made up their mind, participants place their dots on the options at the same time to prevent bias voting. Dots may be distributed in any way: One dot each per one idea, all dots to one idea or otherwise. There may be several rounds of voting, e.g. in case of a draw. Variation: Color coded dots, each representing a different category, may be used to have a differentialized decision process.
- 3. Outcome:** Participants evaluate the voting result, may form a prioritization list and decide whether and how to proceed with the option(s) with the most dots.

### Blended participation

If you want to connect this method to digital format, have a look at the method "Online Voting". You can combine both methods to have an inclusive blended approach (digital and face-to-face)

### Digital communication

Useful to mobilise participants to join for the session (whatsapp groups, facebook) and to share results (pictures, videos) of the dot voting process.

### Good to know

- Instead of dots, any stickers or markers will do, too
- The number of dots depends on the number of options, usually 3-5 dots per participant is feasible
- Facilitators should find a balance of the number of options to vote on: The fewer options there are, the clearer and easier the voting will be, but too little options limit choice
- Facilitators should ensure that options are distinct as otherwise too similar choices may cause vote-splitting and thus dismissal of ideas
- At times, dot voting may over-simplify decision taking, thus reflecting the winning option is vital, maybe even with some time distance
- Read further:
  - <http://dotmocracy.org/dot-voting/>
  - <https://www.betterevaluation.org/en/evaluation-options/Dotmocracy>