

TYPES & FORMATS OF FOCUS GROUPS

LESSON: VIRTUAL

How to Get Paid for Virtual Focus Groups

Welcome Back

In this module, we're going to walk through the major types and formats of the higher-paying focus groups. There is a lot of information in this section, and I know that can feel a little overwhelming at first — that's completely normal. I would be cheating you if I tried to condense this material down into a few sentences, so bear with me. I want you to be prepared.

Instead of rushing through it, we're going to take this step by step. I've broken this module into five separate videos so you can take it in at your own pace, come back to anything you need, and not feel like you have to absorb everything all at once.

By the end of this, you're going to have a clear understanding of how these different formats work and feel much more confident starting to apply for focus groups. Just take your time with it — you don't need to rush.

Virtual Focus Groups

Virtual focus groups happen over video — like Zoom or similar software. They will let you know ahead of time which platform to use so that you can be well prepared.

How Virtual Focus Groups Work

You'll be on camera with a small group of other participants, usually around 5 to 8 people, answering questions and sharing your opinions in real time. It's one of the most common formats right now — and the biggest perk is obvious: you don't have to go anywhere. No commute.

You'll log in a few minutes early through a link they send you, then there's almost always a brief moment where people are trickling in, adjusting their cameras, checking if their mic works, doing the classic "Can you hear me?" routine. Then the moderator shows up, sets the tone, and gets things moving.

Once it starts, it's basically a structured conversation. The moderator might ask about your habits, your opinions on a product, or even have you react to something live — like a commercial, a website, or an app they share on screen. Sometimes you'll be asked to type responses in the chat, sometimes it's all verbal. Every study has its own rhythm.

You do have to be a bit more “on” than you would be in person — camera on, paying attention, not drifting off — but it’s still pretty relaxed. Most people are sitting at their kitchen table or desk, maybe with a coffee nearby, just talking like they normally would.

One thing people don’t always realize is that they’re watching how you react just as much as what you say. Nodding, reacting naturally, even showing a little personality actually helps. Dead silence and one-word answers don’t get much traction.

Just make sure your internet is solid and you’re somewhere quiet. Bad connections or loud backgrounds may get you removed mid-session, which is the last thing you want.

■ Pay Range

Pay is usually in the **\$50–\$100 per hour range** for standard moderated sessions, sometimes more if it’s a longer study or something more specific. When it ends, you just... log off.

“It’s basically getting paid to sit at home, talk, and have opinions — which, let’s be honest, most people are already doing for free.”

Quick Tips for Virtual Sessions

- Test your internet connection and mic before the session starts
- Find a quiet space with minimal background noise
- Keep your camera on and engage naturally — reactions matter
- Log in a few minutes early
- Don’t give one-word answers — share your real opinions

■ *Up Next: Phone Interview Focus Groups*

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