


Chapter 13: Questions in Detail

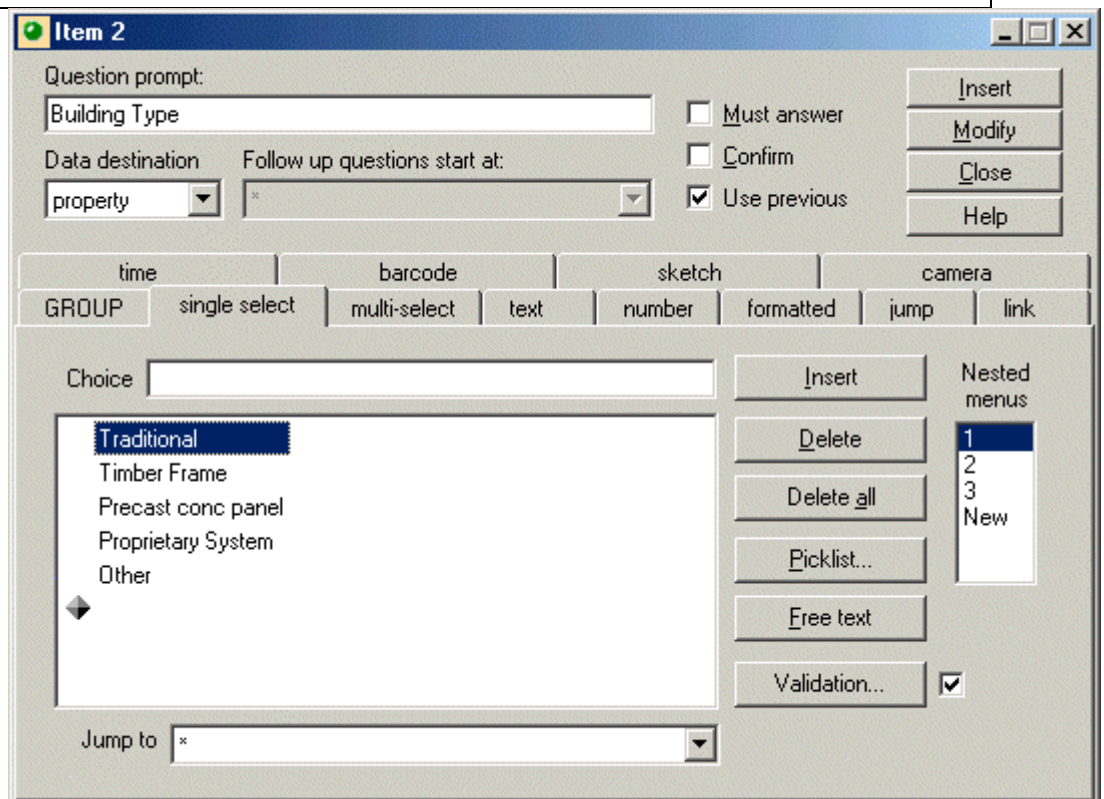
The main content of a questionnaire survey is the questions you ask. PocketSurvey has a comprehensive range of question types to suit every need from customer satisfaction surveys to complex property condition surveys.

The **DESIGN | QUESTION** menu option displays the question definition screen as shown below. This special 'tabbed' screen lets you to **INSERT** a new question or **MODIFY** an existing one and even change between question types without losing any common information.

Tip

You will find it quicker to double click on a question or the diamond  in the questions display area to bring up this screen. You can then change the question details or insert a new one at that point.

For a guided tour creating questions, see "[Chapter 5 – Creating Your First Survey](#)".



The screenshot shows the 'Item 2' question definition screen. It features a 'Question prompt' field with the text 'Building Type'. Below this are 'Data destination' (set to 'property') and 'Follow up questions start at' (set to '*'). There are checkboxes for 'Must answer', 'Confirm', and 'Use previous' (checked). A 'Nested menus' section on the right shows a list with '1' selected. The main area is a list of choices: 'Traditional', 'Timber Frame', 'Precast conc panel', 'Proprietary System', and 'Other'. A diamond icon is visible next to 'Other'. At the bottom, there is a 'Jump to' field with '*' selected. The interface includes various buttons like 'Insert', 'Modify', 'Close', 'Help', 'Delete', 'Delete_all', 'Picklist...', 'Free text', and 'Validation...'. The question type is currently set to 'multi-select'.

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Common Question Information

Apart from Question 0, all questions have some common information displayed at the top part of the questions definition screen shown below.

Question Prompt

This is the text that will be displayed to the user when you run the survey to capture answers as shown below.

Data Destination

Defines where the result of answering a particular question will be directed. The output from a survey is in the form of one or two comma separated data files (.CSV files). Typically you will import these data files into a database program such as Microsoft Access or a spreadsheet such as Microsoft Excel for later analysis.

For a more detailed discussion of how questions map on to data, see "[Chapter 3: — Questions and Collected Data](#)".

Follow Up Questions Start At

If you want to follow the current question with a series of common questions you choose the starting question or group from the list. For example, if you are surveying a house and wanted to ask the same set of questions for each room you would first ask for a room number in the main group and use follow up questions about your room from the common group.

Use Previous

If you ask a question more than once in a survey, for example with questions in a common group, the answer may be similar to the previously answered question. To save the handheld user typing this in again, turn this option on to automatically display the previous answer to the question. The user can then accept the answer with the enter key or change it as required.

Confirm

Tick **CONFIRM** to prompt to the user running the survey to verify their answer by accepting or retyping the answer as shown below




Must Answer

This forces the user to answer the question before leaving the survey.

Working With Questions

Before we explain the detailed options available for the different question types you should learn how to insert, modify, delete and move questions around.

Inserting Questions

Double click on a question or the diamond  in the questions display area to bring up the question definition screen. Type your new question text, choose your question type and click **INSERT** to insert the question. The question is always inserted above your original position in the question list.

With the question definition screen still on display, you can add more questions very quickly by entering the **question prompt**, selecting the **question type** and clicking the **Insert** button.

If you prefer to use menus, you can bring up the questions definition screen from the **QUESTIONNAIRE | QUESTION...** menu option.

Modifying Questions

Double click on a question in the questions display area to bring up the question definition screen. Change the question settings and click **MODIFY** to update the question.

With the question definition screen open, you can move around different questions in display area by single clicking the left mouse button. Once you find the question you want to change, change the details on the screen and click the **MODIFY** button.

If you prefer to use menus, you can bring up the questions definition screen from the **QUESTIONNAIRE | QUESTION...** menu option.

Deleting Questions

To delete a question, simply select the question with the mouse and press the **DELETE** key on your keyboard.

If you prefer to use menus you can delete questions from the **EDIT | DELETE** menu option.

Tip

To select consecutive questions, click the first item in the list, press and hold down SHIFT, and then click the last item.

To select multiple questions that are not consecutive, press and hold down CTRL, and then click each item.

Sometimes you may be prevented from deleting a question if it is the destination of a jump from another question. You should first change question that has a jump to the question you are trying to delete.

Moving Questions

You can move questions by selecting and dragging them with the mouse. However, many users prefer to use **CUT** and **PASTE** from the **EDIT** menu option or the right click popup menu.

You can move questions between groups, and also between different survey designs.

Copying Questions

You can copy questions by selecting them with the mouse and using **COPY** and **PASTE** from the **EDIT** menu option or the right click popup menu.

You can copy questions between groups, and also between different survey designs.

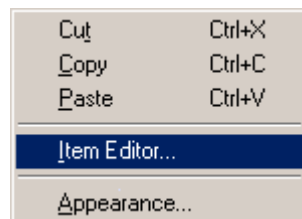
Working with Several Items

To select consecutive questions, click the first item in the list, press and hold down SHIFT, and then click the last item.

To select multiple questions that are not consecutive, press and hold down CTRL, and then click each item.

Popup Menu

If you click the right mouse button in the question display area you will get a popup menu, shown below, that allows you to manipulate questions.



Question Type | Time

There are four types of time questions.

Auto Time

Enters time or date automatically from the handheld computer's clock in the format set in the Setting screen. These Questions are not shown on screen as no user input is required. Often used to log the start time and/or finish time of a survey, so that hours worked can be calculated for bonus payments etc.

Auto Date

Enters time or date automatically from the handheld computer's clock in the format set in the Settings screen. These Questions are not shown on screen as no user input is required. Often used to log the start time and/or finish time of a survey, so that hours worked can be calculated for bonus payments etc.

Input Time

Allows a time to be entered for example to enter an appointment time.

Input Date

Allows a date to be entered, for example to enter an appointment date.

Question Type | Number

The user is prompted to enter a number. Used where a predictable number is to be recorded, e.g. property code or serial number of equipment. Numbers have a pre-defined precision and optional range checking.

The screenshot shows a configuration dialog for a 'Number' question type. It features three tabs: 'number', 'formatted', and 'jump'. The 'number' tab is selected. The dialog is divided into three main sections. The 'Size check' section has three radio buttons: 'None' (selected), 'Optional', and 'Obligatory', along with 'Low' and 'High' input fields. The 'Number of digits' section has 'Whole part' and 'Decimal part' input fields, with values 3 and 2 respectively. The 'Navigation' section has three radio buttons: 'None', 'Spin buttons' (selected), and 'Trackbar'.

Number of Digits

Is defined as the number of digits allowed before the decimal point, referred to in the dialog as the whole part, and the number of digits allowed after the decimal point, and referred to as the decimal part.

Size Check

None

Disables range checking.

Optional

This will warn the user if the number is out of range. However, execution is allowed to continue and the number accepted if the user wishes to do so.

Obligatory

Will not allow execution to continue until a number entered is within range.

Low and *High* range limits are inclusive.

Navigation

None

The user must type the number

Spin Buttons

The user can select a number by clicking up and down arrows on a 'spin' control, shown below, or can type the number

How many storeys are there?

OK Group view

Trackbar

The user can select a number by dragging a bar, as shown below or can type the number

Customer satisfaction 09:47

Run Tools

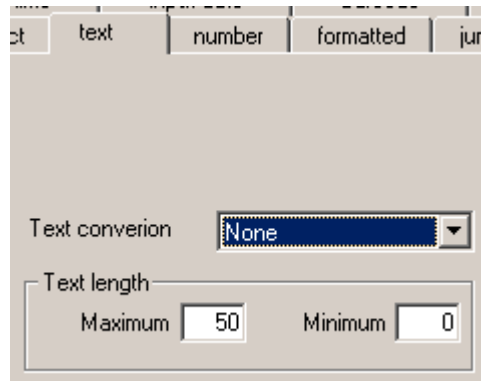
Quality rating

Between 0 & 10

OK Cancel

Question Type | Text

Text questions prompt the user to enter text. Text length can be constrained by setting maximum and minimum lengths. Certain text conversions can also be applied.

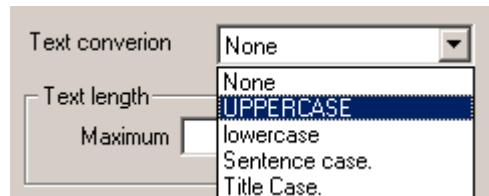


The screenshot shows a configuration window for a text question. At the top, there are tabs for 'text', 'number', 'formatted', and 'jump'. Below the tabs, there is a 'Text conversion' dropdown menu currently set to 'None'. Underneath, there is a 'Text length' section with two input fields: 'Maximum' set to '50' and 'Minimum' set to '0'.

Text Length

Maximum text length is inclusive and the user will be prevented from exceeding it. If the **minimum** text length = 0, then the user may skip the question without entering any text. Any other value will mean that the user must enter at least that many characters before continuing.

Text Conversion



The screenshot shows the same configuration window as above, but with the 'Text conversion' dropdown menu open. The menu is expanded to show five options: 'None', 'UPPERCASE', 'lowercase', 'Sentence case.', and 'Title Case.'. The 'UPPERCASE' option is currently selected and highlighted in blue.

None

Accepts the text exactly as entered by the user.

Uppercase

Forces all text into upper case.

Lowercase

Forces all text into lower case.

Sentence

Automatically capitalises a sentence.

Title Case

Capitalises each word.

Question Type | Formatted

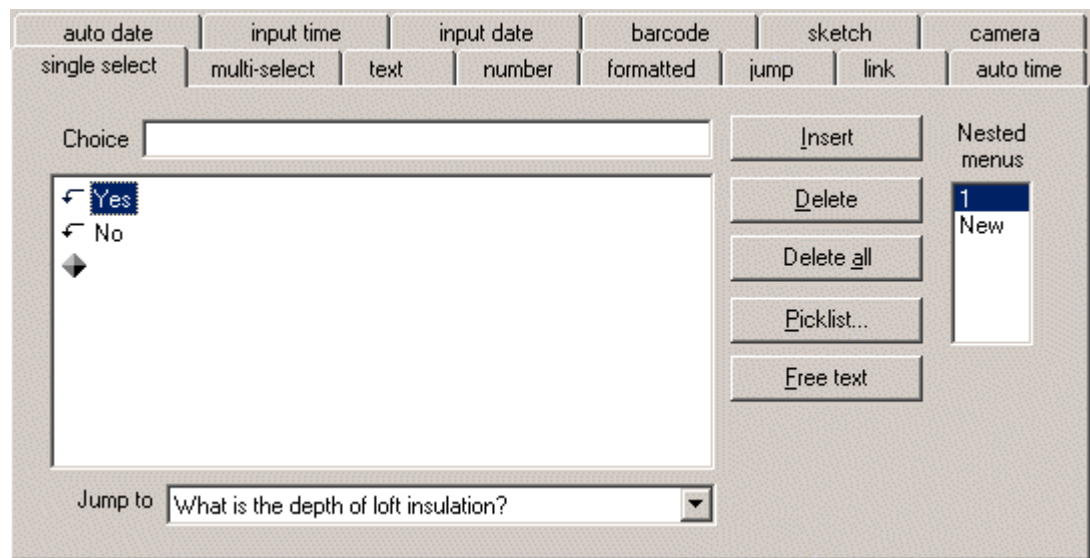
Entry of formatted string by user. Used where a predictable code is to be recorded, e.g. property code or serial number of equipment.

Formatted questions restrict the entry of letters and numbers according to a pre-defined way:

- '9' means that a numeric entry is required
- 'A' means that an uppercase letter is required
- 'X' may be (uppercase) alpha-numeric
- 'a' means that an uppercase or lowercase letter is required
- 'x' may be (uppercase or lowercase) alpha-numeric
- 'z' will allow any printable character to be entered.

Question Type | Menu Single Select

Allows the user to choose one or more answers from one or more lists of choices. Used where answers are predictable, multiple choice questions make the resultant data quicker to record and easier to analyse than where free text has been used.



Choice

Choice is the editable area where you can add items that will appear on the user's menu.

- ⇒ Use the **Insert** button to insert a new choice
- ⇒ Use the **Delete** button to delete the currently selected choice
- ⇒ Use the **Delete All** button to remove all choices.

Jump to

Each item in a list may have a jump attached to it. The target of the jump can be selected from the pull down list. The current question does not appear in the list and is represented instead by an asterisk (*).

At run time, jumps are executed as soon as the item is selected. If jumps are used in random mode then the run-time effect will be to move the menu cursor to the target if the jump is selected. If the jump is to the end of the questions then the group will be exited (unless already at root level).

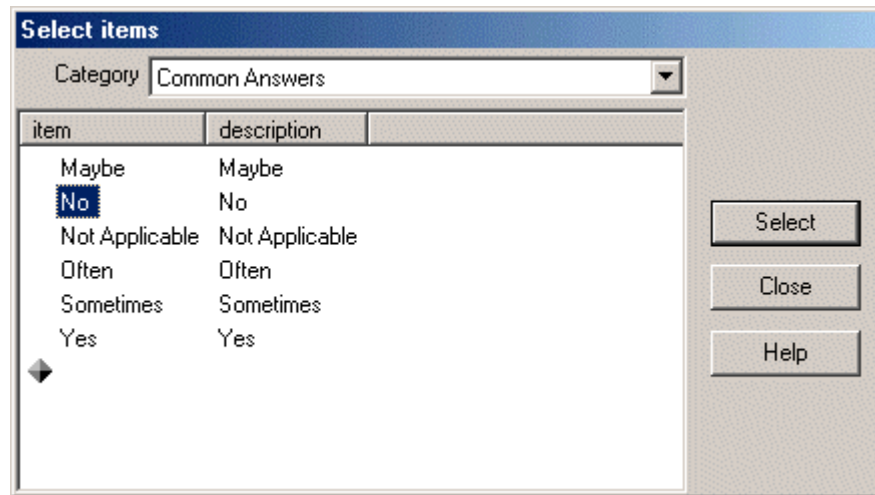
Free Text

The Free Text button inserts the legend 'Free text' into the choice list; this permits the user to enter text from the hand-held computer's keyboard.

Double clicking on a choice item will copy the item into the edit box.

Picklist

Boilerplate answers from the picklist file may be inserted into the text window by using the picklist screen, shown below.

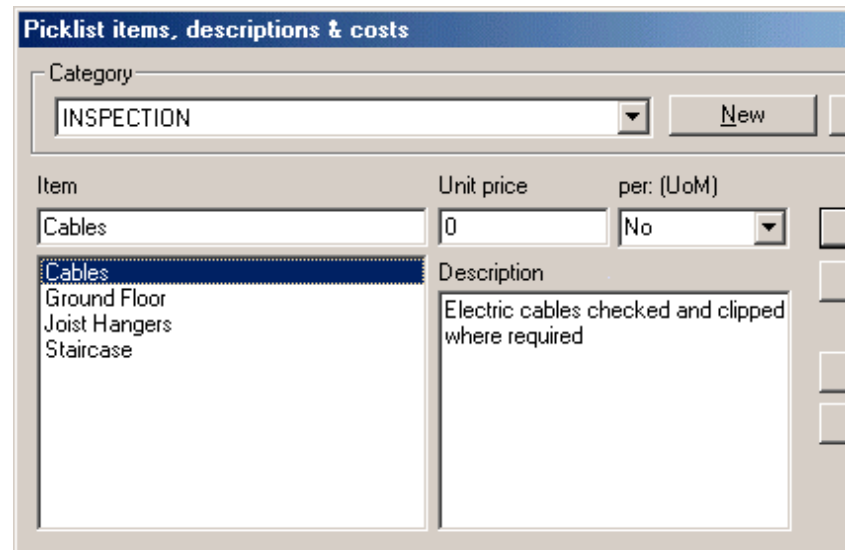


Each working folder where you store your questionnaires can have a picklist that can therefore be shared between multiple questionnaires.

However, if you want to have a unique picklist for a particular questionnaire copy the file named **PICKLIST.DATA** to the individual questionnaire folder, and then use the picklist editor to modify it.

Tip

To create a picklist use the picklist editor, shown below, by selecting **Picklist Editor** from the **Questionnaire** menu.

**Nested Menus**

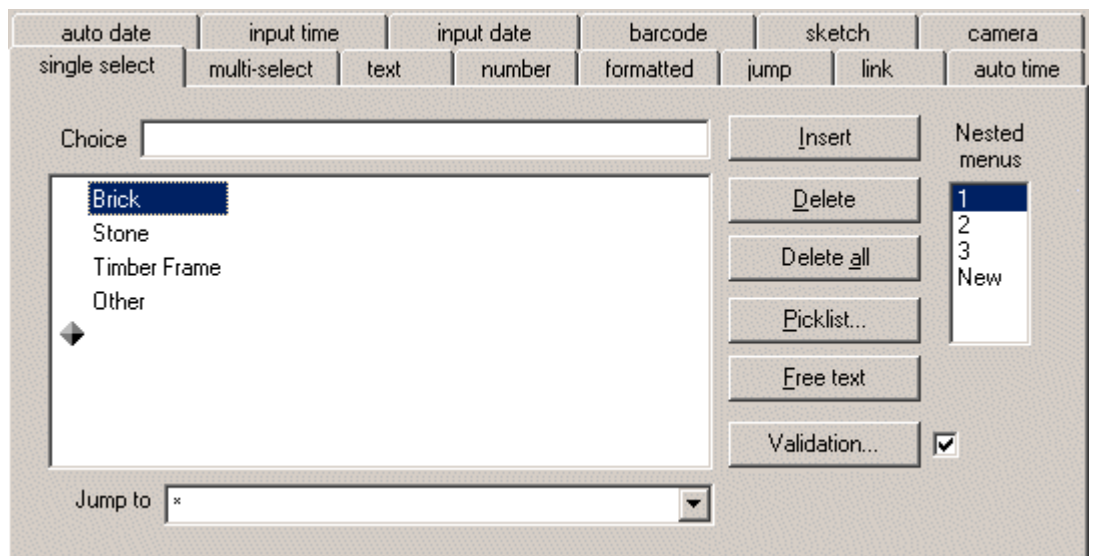
Multiple lists may be defined, each list of items being referred to as a **Nested Menu**. If more than one menu list is defined then the user will be presented with each list in succession starting with the first menu list.

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See the topic **Nested Single Select Menus & Validation** for more information on nested menus.

Nested Single Select Menus & Validation

Nested menus are only possible with single-select menu question types. These types of menu questions allow you to present multiple menus for a single question in your design. In this way they are used to refine a question and ask more details depending on the answers selected.

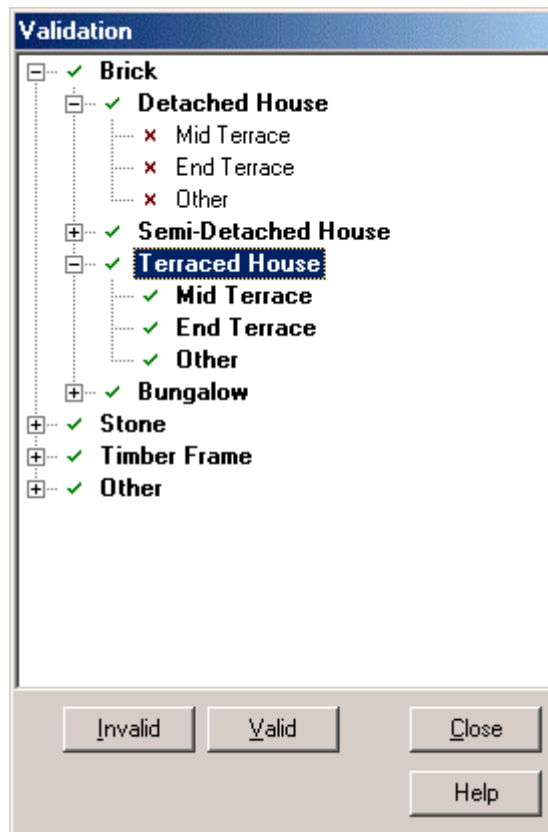


The important thing to notice with nested menus is that only a single answer is collected as a combined response. If you want data to be collected on each menu response you would use multiple menu questions rather than a menu with multiple nested menus.

Validation

It is possible to attach validation to menu questions. This is done using the Validations button. Click on this button to show a screen similar to that the one below, showing the nested menus and the valid combinations.

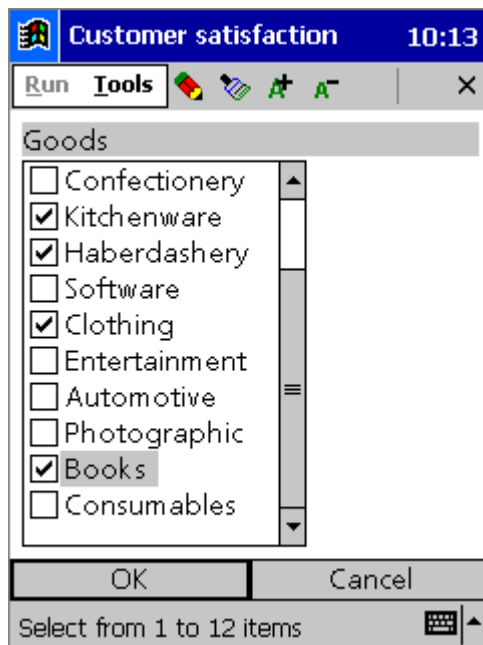
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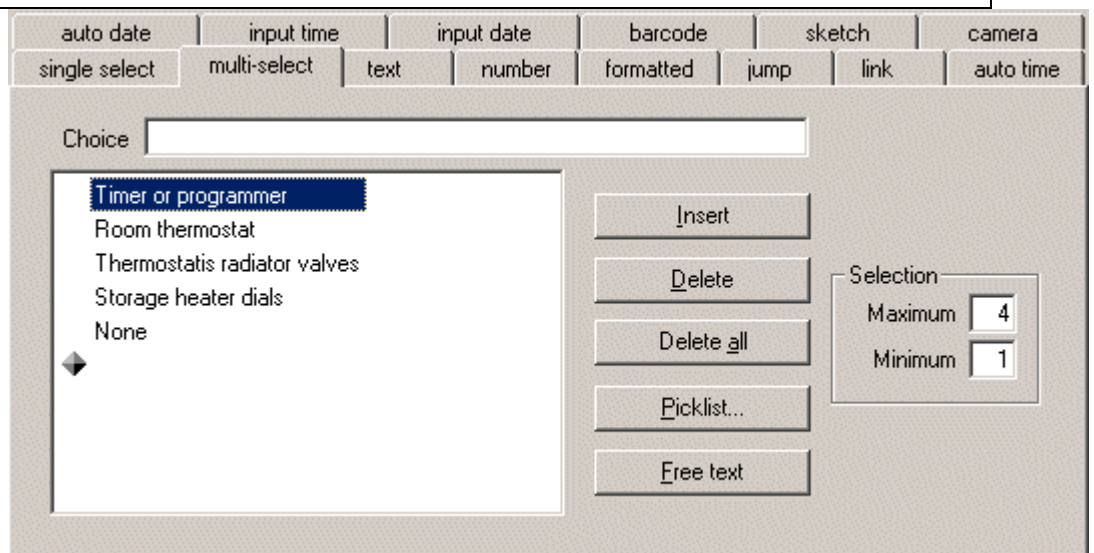
This question type is an advanced feature, if you wish to know more about nested menus just contact us.

Question Type | Menu Multiple Select

Multiple select menus allow the user to select more than one answer when the questionnaire is run on the handheld or simulator, as shown below.



Note The multiple menu question type is similar to the single select menu question type except that jumps, nested menus and validation are not available.



Choice

Choice is the editable area where you can add items that will appear on the user's menu.

⇒ Use the **Insert** button to insert a new choice

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- ⇒ Use the **Delete** button to delete the currently selected choice
- ⇒ Use the **Delete All** button to remove all choices.

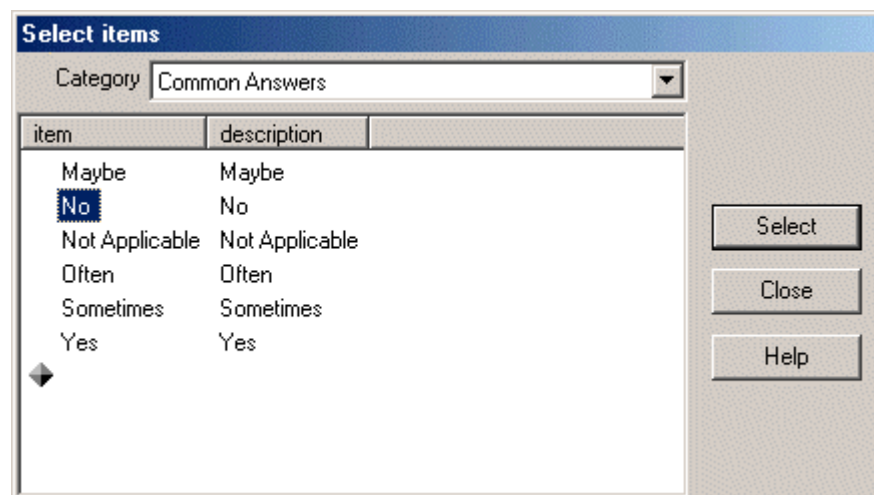
Free Text

The Free Text button inserts the legend 'Free text' into the choice list; this permits the user to enter text from the hand-held computer's keyboard.

Double clicking on a choice item will copy the item into the edit box.

Picklist

Boilerplate answers from the picklist file may be inserted into the text window by using the picklist screen, shown below.



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However, if you want to have a unique picklist for a particular questionnaire copy the file named **PICKLIST.DATA** to the individual questionnaire folder and then use the picklist editor to modify it.

Tip

To create a picklist use the picklist editor, shown below, by selecting **Picklist Editor** from the **Questionnaire** menu.

Picklist items, descriptions & costs

Category
INSPECTION

Item	Unit price	per: (UoM)
Cables	0	No

Cables

Description
Ground Floor Joist Hangers Staircase

Electric cables checked and clipped where required

Question Type | Jump

Provides a means of skipping to a particular question in the current group or to the end of a group.

auto date	input time	input date	barcode	sketch	camera		
single select	multi-select	text	number	formatted	jump	link	auto time

Jump to

- When did you first try Pocket Survey
- How did you get PocketSurvey?
- *
- Will you be buying PocketSurvey?
- End of Group

Question Type | Barcode

Entry of a barcode reference. Barcode readers may be available as an accessory for your handheld computer. At run time barcode questions activate the barcode scanning device and prompt the user to swipe the barcode. The user may re-scan until successful.

If the barcode being read does not conform to the encoding standard expected then a temporary error message will be displayed and the question will be exited.

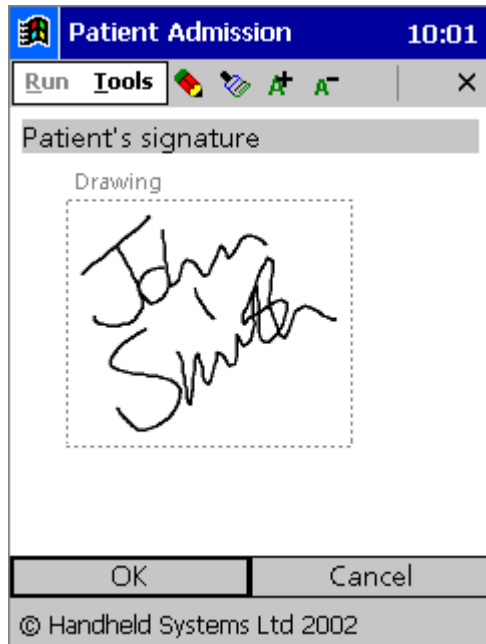
If a barcode scanner is not fitted or the barcode read persistently fails then the user can enter the code manually. This will present the user with a text entry box.

Max. length to be read

Up to 255 characters may be read at a time. The questionnaire designer may set this.

Question Type | Sketch

Sketch questions can be used to capture hand-drawn data (including signatures).



Sketch data cannot be placed directly into a database field - instead, each sketch is saved as an individual file, which is given a unique name. This file name is returned by the function. The filename is always prefixed with the Survey ID followed by a hyphen, e.g. "XYZ-001.pwi".

Note

Use previous and confirm have no meaning here, therefore they do not appear on the dialog.

Question Type | Camera

Camera data is not placed directly into the database field - instead, each picture is saved as an individual file, which is given a unique name. This file name is returned by the question. The filename is always prefixed with the Survey Identifier followed by a hyphen, e.g. "XYZ-001.bmp".

Note

Use previous and verify have no meaning here, therefore they do not appear on the dialog.

Question Type | Link

This is enables you to link to another questionnaire. At run-time PocketSurvey will open the linked questionnaire and start asking questions. The survey identifier of the calling questionnaire will be concatenated with that of the linked questionnaire with the specified delimiter between the two.

The screenshot shows the configuration interface for the 'link' question type. At the top, there is a horizontal menu with various question types: 'auto date', 'input time', 'input date', 'barcode', 'sketch', 'camera', 'single select', 'multi-select', 'text', 'number', 'formatted', 'jump', 'link', and 'auto time'. The 'link' option is selected. Below the menu, the configuration area is titled 'Survey ID: question type'. It contains a dropdown menu with 'Number' selected, an 'Edit...' button, and a 'Delimiter' field with a colon ':' as the default value. Below this, there is a 'Link to' dropdown menu with 'ex09 room survey' selected.

When the user comes to the end of the linked questionnaire they will not be asked to confirm that they wish to quit. Instead, the linked questionnaire will close and the calling questionnaire will continue.

Cost Calculations

A special type of question, to help with calculations & costing, is available in special versions of PocketSurvey. [Contact us](#) to find out more.