TRAFFIC LIGHT RATING

Rate ideas against criteria and quickly compare them with each other through the colour codes.

Participants
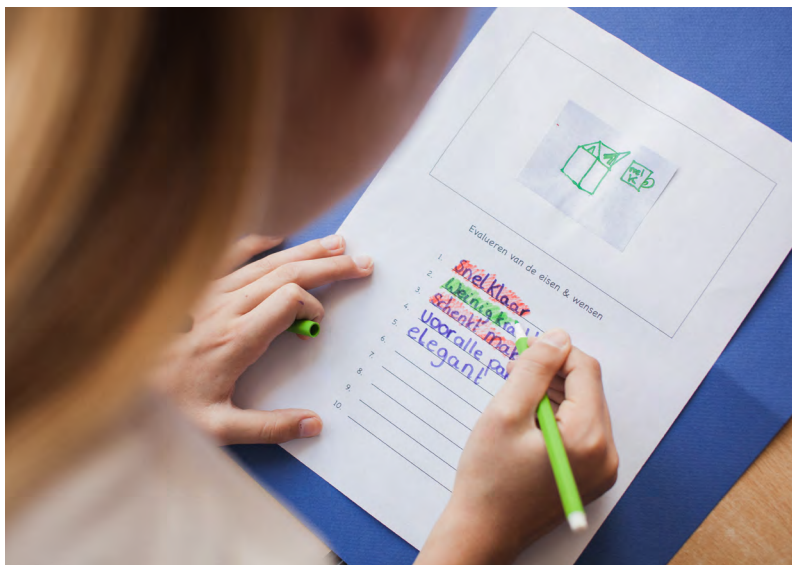**Group**

Design skill
Define your direction

Prior design experience
Average

Duration
15 minutes

Design step
Selecting ideas

Description

With this method, participants are able to evaluate and compare two to eight ideas and select a few ideas to develop in the design process. For each idea, participants indicate to what extent it meets their own criteria (requirements and wishes) with different colours. Green stands for 'this idea fully meets the criteria', orange for 'it partially meets the criterion' and red for 'does not meet the criteria at all'. Discussing arguments whilst rating and comparing is important.
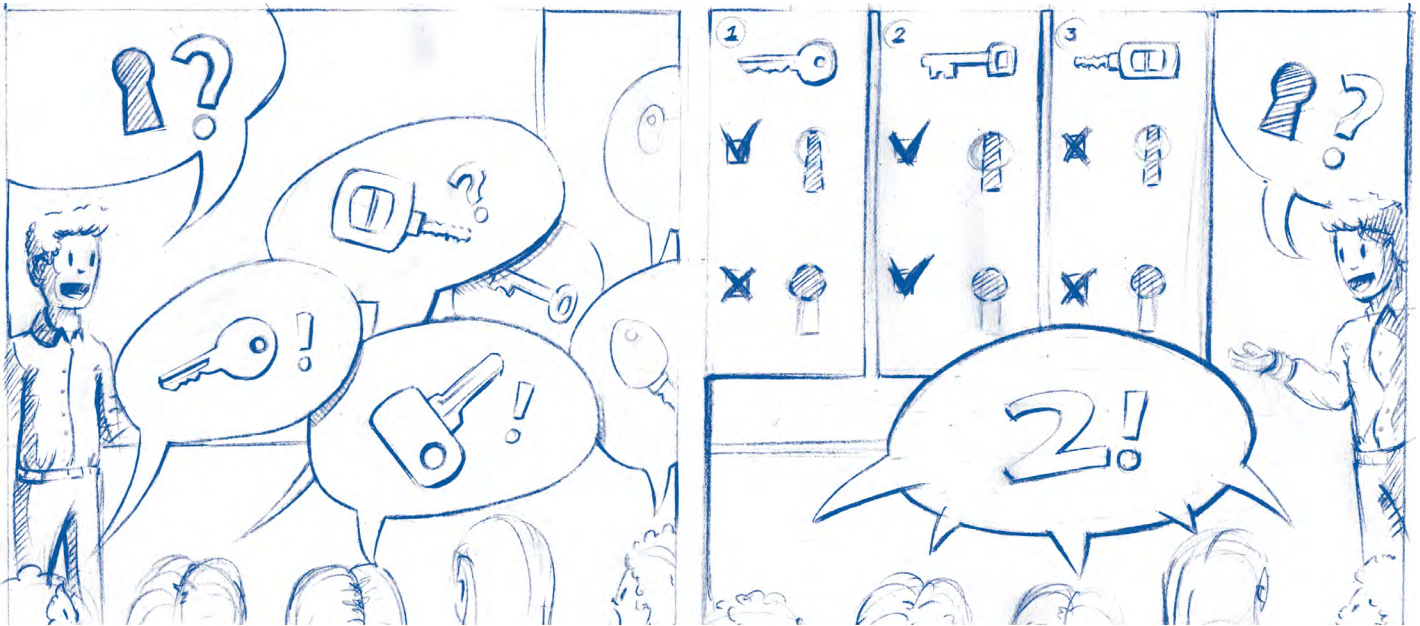
The colours give an overview of how their ideas rate against the criteria. They can then choose an idea that scores high. They can also choose an idea that has potential even if it does not score high on all criteria yet. When developing this idea, the aim is to improve it so that it scores high on all criteria.
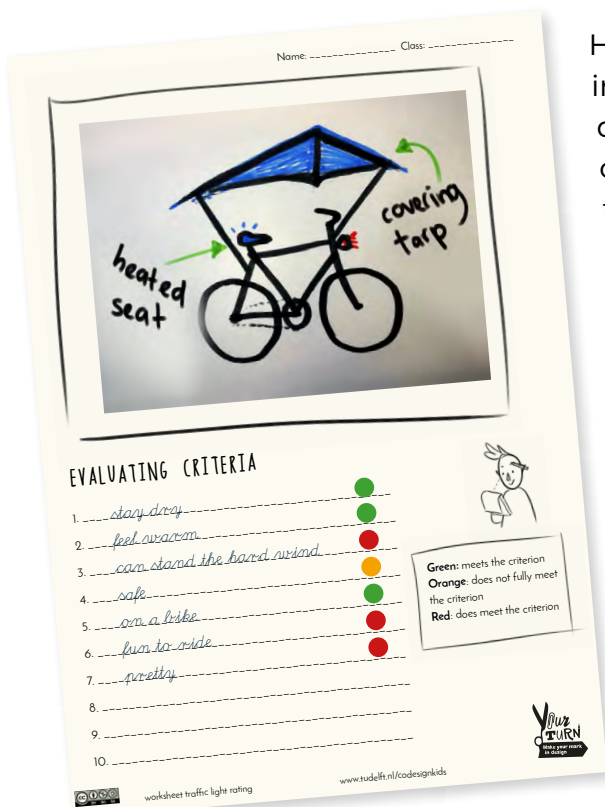
Effect

By using this tool, participants consciously search for a design idea that meets all their requirements. The participants learn how to assess and compare the quality of different ideas in relation to the design problem.

Without the Traffic light rating   *With the Traffic light rating*

Example

How can children in a wheelchair participate in the game marbles? A design team has devised more than thirty ideas, with the help of the Choice-box tool they have discovered that three ideas are innovative. Because they only want to build one prototype, they indicate with green, orange and red how the three ideas score against a list of their criteria. Each idea scores a number of 'green' points but they also have some orange and red points. They decide to make a wheelchair with a marble tube, because this is the only solution that can be made cheaply and can be taken anywhere. The challenge for further development is to ensure that the child in the wheelchair can properly aim the marble.

Step by step

1 Have each design team make a numbered list of their previously established criteria from most important to least important.

2 Have the participants paste all ideas they want to choose from, onto individual Traffic light rating worksheets.

3 Have the design team rate each idea based on each requirement: green (fully satisfies), orange (partially meets) or red (does not meet the requirement).

4 Let the design team look at the resulting colour distributions and choose the idea or ideas they want to evelop further. An idea with a lot of green is good. An idea with orange and red can be chosen if the participants think they can improve it sufficiently.

Tips

You should try another nice tool!

▶ Pause the process if they cannot select a colour. Ask supportive questions such as: 'Can you explain your opinion? Why do you think so? Is that your own preference or the preference of the end user?'

▶ Use the 'Yes/no list' or 'Choice -box' tools to let participants make an initial selection if they want to evaluate more than eight ideas.

Materials

▶ Worksheet Traffic light rating: one for each idea per team
▶ Green, orange and red felt-tip pens or small stickers.

References
This tool is derived from the Harris Profile, as found in:
van Boeijen, A., Daalhuizen, J., van der Schoor, R., & Zijlstra, J. (2014). Delft Design Guide: Design Strategies and Methods. BIS Publishers, p139

Place the idea here!

EVALUATING CRITERIA

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

Green: meets the criteria
Orange: does not fully meet the criteria
Red: does not meet the criteria

Your TURN
Make your mark in design