

## Method Template: Diary Study



### Rationale

The aim of the method is to understand an aspect of longitudinal behaviour of an individual or group.

### Preparation

Buy several small notebooks (preferably spiral-bound). Choose an aspect of behaviour that is of interest. Examples include: shopping locations and items, communication partners and mediums, or items carried with an individual. If it does not unnecessarily constrain the activity, pre-label the notebook pages with headings to remind participants what to record. Alternatively, conduct a post-hoc study and use diary materials that have already been created for other purposes (e.g. Internet discussion forums or blogs.)

### Activity

Give the notebooks to participants and instruct them to keep notes for a day or two. Go through a scenario of writing in the journals before they start.

### What To Look For

Look for patterns in behaviour. See if there is anything unexpected or unusual. Find notes that are unclear or confusing to the researcher. Look for issues relevant for design of devices for that situation.

### Afterwards

If possible, do a short interview with each participant. Ask about anything that is confusing. Review the logs and ask the participant about the situations described.