

How to use Hick's Law

What it is

The more choices you have, the longer and harder it is to decide. Cutting your options down to a few makes the decision fast again.

Named after psychologist William Hick, who found that decision time rises with the number of options you're weighing.

When to use it

When you're stuck comparing too many options and can't seem to just pick one.

Steps

1. **List every option.** Write down everything you're considering, then cross out anything that fails your must-haves.
2. **Narrow to your top 3.** From what's left, pick only three worth real comparison.

Common mistake

Keeping a 'just in case' option on the list. That's exactly what stalls the decision.

Pairs with

MoSCoW Method and Occam's Razor.

Example: picking a streaming service

Date: Sat, Mar 8

Every option Cross out anything that fails your must-haves.

Netflix

Hulu

Disney+

HBO Max

Amazon Prime

Apple TV+

Peacock

Paramount+

Your top 3

1 Netflix

2 HBO Max

3 Disney+

I choose: Netflix

Option Cutdown Sheet

Date: _____

Every option Cross out anything that fails your must-haves.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Your top 3

I choose: _____