



Fundraiser format decision cheat sheet

Use this worksheet to figure out which fundraising format best fits your campaign. Tick the boxes that apply, then check the recommendations below.

Question	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Do you need to raise funds fast, with minimal planning?		
Is your audience mostly local or attending an in-person event?		
Do you have only 1 major prize or experience to offer?		
Are you short on staff or volunteers?		
Do you want to run the campaign online and reach a national audience?		
Do your donors love bidding wars or competitive giving?		

Do you have multiple mid- to high-value items to give away?		
Are you comfortable handling legal disclosures, free entries, and prize rules?		
Are local raffle rules strict, unclear, or hard to comply with?		
Are your donors more likely to respond to a clear win/loss outcome (vs competition)?		

What your answers suggest

If you ticked mostly YES to these

- *Do you need to raise funds fast?*
- *Is your audience local?*
- *Are you short on staff?*
- *Do you have only one prize?*

→ **Go with a raffle**

Raffles are simple, familiar, and fast to launch, especially at in-person events. Just make sure you're allowed to run one in your region, since raffle laws vary by state.

If you ticked YES to these

- *Do you want to reach a national audience?*
- *Do you have a strong single prize (car, vacation, VIP experience)?*
- *Are you okay managing legal disclosures and free entries?*
- *Are raffle laws too strict where you are?*

→ **Choose a sweepstakes**

Sweepstakes are flexible, digital-friendly, and great for visibility. With tiered donation options and a wide reach, they're ideal for online supporters—just don't skip the legal fine print.

If you ticked YES to these

- *Do your donors enjoy competitive giving?*
- *Do you have multiple good-quality items or experiences?*
- *Are you hosting a gala or sponsor-heavy event?*
- *Do you have time and people to plan and promote it?*

→ **Go for an auction**

Auctions bring in fewer people - but much bigger gifts. Perfect when you have a strong donor base, corporate sponsorships, or high-value items. Just be ready for the planning lift.



Hybrid hint

If your answers are all over the place, that's okay. Many successful events *combine* formats - for example:

- **Live or silent auction** for big donors
- **Raffle or sweepstakes** for broader participation
- **Instant buy or donation tiers** to keep everyone engaged

You don't have to pick just one - you just need to start with the format that best fits your current goal, audience, and resources.