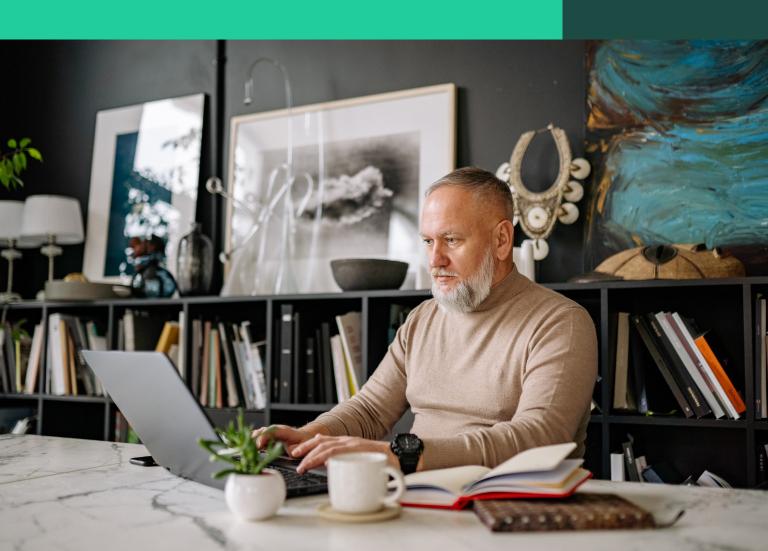# Validate your course idea in under an hour

It's important that you know your course has the potential to be successful **before** you create it.

To validate your online course idea, we'll follow Jeff Cobb's framework of searching, listening, asking, and testing. Here is a brief overview of those four categories, as well as recommended tools for each category.

Searching for your course topics online is the easiest and fastest way to validate your topic. Simply type your topic into a popular search engine or site (such as those listed to the right) and scan the results. You'll be able to understand what other people are looking for, clicking on, and engaging with by investigating the results that come up. Some may be directly related to your topic, others might be direct competition. Both types of results mean your idea could have potential.

To read more, see our blog post on [Validating Your Course Idea](#).

teach:able

Searching

Searching is the easiest and fastest way to validate your course topic. All you do is search the internet to see what other people are looking for, clicking on, and engaging with.

Google
BuzzSumo
Udemy
amazon

Listening

Listening means paying close attention to the language and behavior relevant to your course idea. You can do this online where people are writing or talking about your topic or related topics.

Quora
feedly
Google Analytics
Blogger

Asking

Ask your audience questions directly. Be aware that asking people directly if they will buy your course rarely produces reliable results. Instead, ask less direct questions that elicit the challenges and opportunities your audience is facing. Look for signs that your course would address their needs.

Interviews
Surveys
Focus groups
Niche forums

Testing

Extra credit: Put something in front of people and see how they react. Do they visit and share your blog post? Will they download your freebie? You'll never really know until you try.

Mini course
Covered in Build Your Audience

Lead magnets
Pre-selling
Live pilot