

Resource – Common Comparisons

Here you will find a series of REDCap features that are commonly comparable in function but are sometimes misunderstood by users.

Autostart vs Autocontinue

These two features are effectively the same, serving the same function of allowing a participant taking a survey to be automatically advanced to the next survey in the instrument battery.

	Autostart	Autocontinue
Location	Set under the Survey Queue menu (from Online Designer page)	Set in Survey Settings, per survey-enabled instrument
Restrictions	Follows the settings of the Survey Queue, so only advances the participant if the Survey Queue is satisfied	If enabled, will ALWAYS advance the user once the previous survey is completed
Setting Visibility	Must check the Survey Queue	Easily seen in the Online Designer instrument table

Longitudinal Events vs. Repeated Instruments

Both of these features can of course be used together, and have plenty of attributes that stand on their own, but there are some similarities that are worth noting when each feature is best leveraged.

	Longitudinal Events	Repeated Instruments
Major Determining Factor	Use when data recollection time points are known, scheduled, planned, or expected	Use when data recollection time points are NOT known, scheduled, planned, or expected
Adding once in Production	Events can be added by users, but Administrators must designate instruments to the newly added Event, effectively incorporating it into your workflow	Normal users add repeating instances (for Events or instruments) ad-hoc as needed, without Administrator intervention
Major Consideration	Cannot edit/delete Events that are built after moving into Production	Can delete repeated instances if desired (user's data)

		responsibility), but cannot renumber/reorder once created
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Radio/Dropdown Logic vs. Checkbox Logic

While both of these field types are multiple-choice designs, radio button or dropdowns are single-answer while Checkboxes are multiple-answer. Therefore, the way in which REDCap addresses them in logic is different.

	Radio/Dropdown	Checkbox
Indicating "when choice 2 is chosen"	[radio_field] = '2'	[checkbox_field(2)] = '1'
Indicating when field is blank	[radio_field] = ''	[checkbox_field] = ''
Indicating when field has choices 2 and 5 chosen	[radio_field] = '2' AND [radio_field] = '5'	[checkbox_field(2)] = '1' AND [checkbox_field(5)] = '1'