Respect Your Participants

The NUMBER ONE RULE is to always treat your participants with respect!

Remind them that they can pause or stop ANY TIME THEY WANT. Do not show disappointment if they do. Thank them for their time and let them leave.
Respect their time

Don’t waste their time.
- Have everything prepared and tested and set up before they arrive.
- Don’t have them doing things that you don’t care about.
- Thank them for their time and help at the end.

Respect their curiosity

Keep them informed.
- Make it clear what you are testing (which is NOT them).
- Ask if they have any questions and answer those that you can and let them know you can answer the others after the experiment is over.
- If something goes wrong because what you are testing broke, let them know that and how long it might be if you try to fix it on the spot.
Respect their comfort

Make sure they have a comfortable working space.
– This could include a good chair, fresh air, etc.
– Realize that a dorm room with laundry around is not good…
– Give them breaks if the experiment takes a while.
– If something goes wrong, don’t show emotions which make the participant think they did something wrong.
– There will be several of you at each session, so remind them that they aren’t being tested, you are.

Respect their privacy

A part of respect is privacy.
– Keep data confidential.
– Don’t do testing in public spaces.
– Do not discuss experiment details with them before or afterwards in a public space.
– When writing your reports, make sure there’s no way to figure out who you are discussing in your anecdotes.
– If videos were made for data collection, do not post them anywhere public.