30 Scroll-Stopping Hook Formulas

An exclusive Pickzox bonus for ScrollStop readers - a slide-1 hook cheat sheet.

Your hook slide has one job: stop the scroll. These 30 fill-in formulas cover the five hook angles that perform best in educational carousels - curiosity, listicle, mistake/lesson, story, and contrarian. Pick one, fill the brackets, and paste it straight into ScrollStop's slide 1.

How to use this sheet:

1. Choose the angle that fits your topic. 2. Copy a formula and replace everything in [brackets]. 3. Keep it under 12 words on the slide - shorter hooks stop more thumbs. 4. Deliver the promise: the carousel must answer the question the hook opens.

Curiosity Hooks

Open a loop the reader must swipe to close.

The 3 things nobody tells you about [topic] - #2 saved me [time/money].

Why it works: Fill the brackets with your niche's unspoken truths; put the payoff on slide 4.

I spent [X hours/dollars] on [topic]. Here's what actually worked.

Why it works: Credibility hook - your cost becomes their shortcut.

Why [common advice] stopped working in [year] (and what replaced it).

Why it works: Date-stamp makes it feel fresh; the replacement goes on slides 2-9.

The [niche] trick that takes [X minutes] and works even if you're a beginner.

Why it works: Low-effort framing + inclusivity.

What I wish someone told me before I started [topic].

Why it works: Confessional tone; best for teachers and coaches.

Nobody talks about the downside of [popular tactic] - so I will.

Why it works: Contrarian-adjacent; builds trust immediately.

Listicle Hooks

Promise a number; deliver exactly that many slides of value.

[X] [topic] mistakes that are costing you [result].

Why it works: Slide 10 CTA: a checklist that fixes them.

[X] free tools for [task] (you only need #1 to start).

Why it works: Relief in the parenthetical - removes overwhelm.

[X] signs your [thing] isn't working - and how to fix each one.

Why it works: Diagnostic; readers self-identify and keep swiping.

The only [X] [topic] tips you'll need this year.

Why it works: Bold claim; make slides 2-9 genuinely excellent.

[X] ways to [desired result] without [painful effort].

Why it works: Result + objection removal in one line.

Mistake / Lesson Hooks

Lead with the error - your audience's or your own.

I made this [topic] mistake for [X months]. Don't be me.

Why it works: Vulnerability hook; the fix is your carousel.

Stop doing [common habit] - do this instead.

Why it works: Direct command; 'instead' promises the better way inside.

The #1 reason [audience] fails at [goal] (it's not what you think).

Why it works: Parenthetical kills the obvious answer and forces a swipe.

If I could restart [topic] from zero, I'd do these [X] things.

Why it works: Hindsight authority without bragging.

[Popular belief] is wrong. Here's the proof in [X] slides.

Why it works: Challenge hook; deliver real evidence, not clickbait.

You're not bad at [topic] - you're just missing this one step.

Why it works: Reframe: removes shame, creates curiosity.

Story Hooks

A tiny narrative arc on slide 1 earns slides 2-10.

Last [timeframe], I was [painful situation]. Then I changed one thing.

Why it works: Before/after in one sentence; 'one thing' = the hook.

From [bad state] to [good state] in [timeframe]: exactly how.

Why it works: Transformation promise; the 'how' is your 8 slides.

My [client/student/friend] went from [X] to [Y]. Here's the process.

Why it works: Third-party proof feels more honest than self-praise.

I posted [X] times before this one worked. These are the differences.

Why it works: Relatable struggle builds authority.

[Year] me would never believe [current result]. [X] lessons did it.

Why it works: Time-travel framing; nostalgia + growth.

Contrarian Hooks

Disagree with the feed - politely but firmly.

Unpopular opinion: [common advice] is [adjective]. Here's why.

Why it works: Invites saves AND arguments - both are engagement.

You don't need [thing everyone says you need] to [result].

Why it works: Liberation hook; removes a barrier your audience believes in.

[Guru advice] works for [them]. For beginners, do this instead.

Why it works: Niche-down contrarianism; speaks to the overlooked majority.

Forget [trendy tactic]. Boring [classic tactic] still wins.

Why it works: Counter-trend; great for evergreen topics.

More [X] won't fix [problem]. This will.

Why it works: Challenges the 'more is better' reflex.

I ignored every [niche] rule and got [result]. The [X] rules I broke.

Why it works: Rebel framing; the carousel lists the broken rules + what replaced them.

[Topic] isn't about talent. It's about [unsexy truth].

Why it works: Democratises the topic; the 'unsexy truth' goes on slide 2.

Bonus tip - the 3-second test

Before you export, read your hook out loud in under 3 seconds. If you can't finish it, it's too long - cut it. Then ask: 'Would I swipe to find out?' If the answer is yes, your hook is ready for slide 1.

Made by Pickzox (pickzox.com) as a companion bonus for ScrollStop readers. Free to share with attribution.