



## Computer Proficiency Questionnaire (CPQ) User Guide

### What is it?

The Computer Proficiency Questionnaire (CPQ) is a survey that measures someone's ability to use a computer to accomplish different tasks.

### What is it for?

The CPQ can be used for a variety of purposes:

- To identify an individual's strengths and weaknesses to make computer training more efficient
- To group learners of similar skill level for computer classes
- To assess the impact of computer training
- To characterize technology experience in scientific studies
- To determine if training is needed in advance of deploying a telehealth solution

### How do I administer it?

The CPQ can be administered either on paper or online. There are long (33 question) and short (12 question) versions available depending on the level of detail desired. The short version can provide a brief overall picture of proficiency and is highly correlated with the full version. The long version can provide more comprehensive information about proficiency with respect to specific tasks.

### What is the structure of the CPQ?

The CPQ asks individuals to rate their ability to perform different operations on a computer using a 5-point scale (e.g., I can: Find information about local community resources on the internet). There are six different subscales of the CPQ measuring proficiency at performing different types of tasks. These subscales are: Computer Basics, Printing, Communication, Internet, Scheduling Software, Multimedia Use.

## How do I score it?

The scoring method is the same whether you are using the long or short version of the questionnaire. Follow these steps:

1. *Assign Numeric Values to CPQ Items:*
  - Each questionnaire item is assigned a value from 1 to 5, where:
    - 1 = Never Tried
    - 2 = Not at All
    - 3 = Not Very Easily
    - 4 = Somewhat Easily
    - 5 = Very Easily
2. *Calculate Subscale Scores:*
  - For each subscale (e.g., Computer Basics), calculate the average of the assigned values for the questionnaire items within that subscale. This will give you six subscale scores ranging from 1 to 5.
3. *Calculate Total Score:*
  - Add the six subscale scores together to obtain a total score. The total score will range from 6 to 30.

## How do I interpret scores?

Higher total scores are better. Younger (college-aged) respondents typically score close to 30. Older (65 years or older) adult computer users typically score around 24. Older adults with minimal computer experience typically score around 10. These numbers can help determine whether survey takers are below average and might need additional training or support.

For specific subscales, a score of 4 or above indicates that the respondent most likely can easily complete tasks related to that subscale.

## Where do I find it?

The long (CPQ) and short (CPQ-12) version of the survey can be downloaded here:

<https://create-center.org/resources/instruments-and-tools/computer-efficiency-questionnaire/>

## Want to learn more?

For more information about how the CPQ was developed, see:

Boot, W. R., Charness, N., Czaja, S. J., Sharit, J., Rogers, W. A., Fisk, A. D., ... & Nair, S. (2015). Computer proficiency questionnaire: assessing low and high computer proficient seniors. *The Gerontologist*, 55(3), 404-411.