# Computer Skills Assessment

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Author: Ella Foster-Molina

# Introduction

This assessment is designed to briefly assess your computer skills. As our computing devices have become more sophisticated, many core computing skills as as keyboard shortcuts, file management, and navigating sections in a document have become less familiar. Yet these skills streamline all computer work. They also open the door to more advanced computing such as complex research projects, coding, and quantitative analyses.

The assessment does not comprehensively test your skills. Instead, it quickly spot-checks them; it should take 10-20 minutes to complete all sections. If any of the tasks are unfamiliar, you are likely missing other key skills as well. If so, practice a more comprehensive set of computer skills in the [tutorials.](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials)

## Tutorials

You can find tutorials on computer skills at online at <https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials> or [download a Word version](https://github.com/swat-ssql/computer-skills-tutorials-docx/raw/refs/heads/main/Computer-Skills-Tutorials.docx).

* If you are confident in your skills for any or all sections, complete the relevant section(s) of this assessment without the tutorials. If you complete it easily, congratulations! You likely know most of the skills in each completed section.
* If you are not confident in your skills, complete the tutorials first.

## Guidelines

The assessment is modular. Each section can be completed independently in a few minutes. It should take around 10-20 minutes to complete in full.

Most sections in this assessment are compatible with any text editor. The “Organization within a Document” section requires Google Doc or Microsoft Word.

The assessment is a spot check of your skills. To test yourself fairly, do not look through the tasks before starting them.

## Skills and Practice

If you are unable to complete the tasks, don’t fret! Just like learning the piano, you need to know the skills and practice them. You can train your fingers to dance over the computer keyboard like a pianist's fingers dance over piano keys.

* **Skills**: Work through the tutorials at <https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials>. You can also Google topics such as “[computer shortcuts,](https://letmegooglethat.com/?q=computer+shortcuts)” “[file management,](https://letmegooglethat.com/?q=file+management)” and “[navigation pane](https://letmegooglethat.com/?q=navigation+pane)” to find additional tips and tricks.
* **Practice**: Spend time practicing the skills. Play Minesweeper and Solitaire on your computer.

Come back to the assessment, [online](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-assessment/) or in this Word version, once you feel prepared.

# 1. Organization within a Document (untimed)

**Requirements:**

* This assessment open in a Word document or Google Doc.
* A keyboard and mouse/trackpad.

**Read the tasks:** For a fair test of your overall knowledge, do not refer to any external document after you have read the tasks. If any of the tasks feel foreign, return to the [tutorials](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials/doc_nav.html) to practice a more comprehensive set of skills.

## Tasks

1. If you cannot see a navigation pane in the left-hand panel of your Word document or Google Doc, change the settings so you can see the outline.
2. Using only your keyboard, turn the “Requirements” label above into a new heading in your document and the navigation pane.
3. Using only your keyboard, remove a heading that appears in the outline *without* changing any visible text in the document.

# 2. Mouse/Trackpad Skills (timed)

**Requirements:**

* This assessment open in a Word document, Google Doc, or specialized text editor of your choice.
* A mouse or trackpad.
* A timer.

**Read the tasks**: Take approximately 1 minute to read the following tasks. This is primarily so you do not feel inclined to practice the tasks or refer to external documents before completing the tasks. If any of the tasks feel foreign, return to the [tutorials](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials/mouse_trackpad.html) to practice a more comprehensive set of skills.

**Start your timer:** Once you start your timer, you should be able to complete both tasks in less than *30 seconds* total.

## Tasks

1. Using *only your mouse/trackpad*, highlight, cut, and paste the underlined words in this sentence.
2. Using *only your mouse/trackpad*, highlight, cut, and paste this entire sentence.

Try these tasks again with only your keyboard. As with most tasks, these are faster with a keyboard. They can be completed 10 seconds or less.

Fill in how much time you took here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If it took longer than 30 seconds, return to the tutorials and practice. If it took less, congratulations! If you have time, see if you can beat your own time.

# 3. Keyboard Skills (timed)

**Requirements:**

* This assessment open in a Word document, Google Doc, or specialized text editor of your choice.
* A keyboard.
* A timer.

**Read the task:** For a fair assessment of your preexisting knowledge, take approximately 2 minutes to read the task. This is primarily so you do not feel inclined to practice the tasks or refer to external documents before completing the tasks. If any of the tasks feel foreign, return to the [tutorials](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials/keyboard.html) to practice a more comprehensive set of skills.

**Start your timer:** Once you have read the tasks, you should be able to complete all tasks with just your keyboard in less than *30 seconds*.

## Task

Start with your cursor blinking at the end of this sentence then take your hand off your mouse/trackpad for the entirety of the task.

Highlight this sentence, copy it, and paste it 3x below.

Select and bold one of the copied sentences above.

Select and italicize one of the copied sentences above.

Select and bold three words in this sentence.

Fill in how much time you took here: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_

If it took longer than 30 seconds, return to the tutorials and practice. If it took less, congratulations! If you have time, see if you can beat your own time.

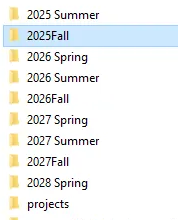
# 4. Folder and File Management (untimed)

**Requirement:** A Mac or PC. Similar principles may apply to a Chromebook.

**Read the tasks:** For a fair test of your overall knowledge, do not refer to any external document after you have read the tasks. This assessment spot checks your skills. If any of them feel foreign, return to the [tutorials](https://swat-ssql.github.io/computer-skills-tutorials/file_management.html) to practice a more comprehensive set of skills.

**Prepare your environment:** Open a Finder (Mac) or File Explorer (PC) window on your computer. Resize it and this document so you can see these instructions and your Finder (Mac) or File Explorer (PC) window at the same time.

## Tasks

1. In your Finder (Mac) or File Explorer (PC), create a new folder using your keyboard.
2. Do the following without using the context menu (right click). Deselect the folder. Reselect it. Now access the renaming function using your keyboard or mouse/trackpad. Use your keyboard to rename the folder “random name.”
3. With only your keyboard, open a new Finder (Mac) or File Explorer (PC) window.
4. Verify
   1. you have a logical folder structure. If you are a student or faculty, it may resemble this one. 
   2. your files are mostly in reasonable locations. They should be organized in your “Documents” folder unless you have a strong reason to keep them elsewhere. They should not live in your “Downloads” folder.
   3. your most commonly accessed folders are in your Quick access/Favorites menu.

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| Mac | PC |