jQuery is a free and open-source library for JavaScript that aims to help developers simplify building web applications. Some of the ways it does this is by making it easier to handle DOM manipulation, event handling and things such as animations. It is a very popular library and is said to be used by “73% of the 10 million most popular websites.” (Wikipedia) It can also allow developers to create plug-ins on top of the library.

It is supported in most of the top used browsers including Firefox, Chrome, Safari and Edge with the most recent versions and previous versions. It is supported by IE 9 and newer along with iOS 7 and newer and Android 4.0 and newer

Some of the major benefits to using jQuery is the ease of use due to the simplified syntax in comparison to JavaScript. jQuery also has a very large library making it incredibly versatile. The open-source community is very robust making it easy to find what you need and to gain access to help if it is needed and quality support.

There aren’t too many downsides to using jQuery but one of them is due to it being a library there will be at times some limited capabilities. However, this is the case with a any library and it requires a JavaScript file. Although the jQuery JavaScript file is relatively small at about 25-100kb depending on the server being used.

Overall jQuery can be a great way to add customization to a web page or application without having to add additional code with JavaScript alone