

How much do you know about ICT?

Self-assess your Internet Skills



Shaping
Connections

How confident are you around technology in general?

Answer yes or no as to whether you could confidently perform the following tasks...

Technical Skills	No	Yes
Download files or photos from the internet		
Change my passwords and privacy settings		
Use shortcut keys on my computer and mobile devices (e.g., CTRL-C for copy, CTRL- S for save)		
Bookmark a website on my computer and mobile devices		

Information and search skills	No	Yes
Find the best keywords for online searches		
Navigate websites to find what I am looking for		
Tell the difference between real and fake information online		
Find a website I visited before		

Mobile device use skills	No	Yes
Download apps to my mobile devices (e.g., phone, tablet)		
Set up apps on a mobile device so that they work well for me		
Synchronising the use of mobile devices and other ICT		
Keep track of the costs of mobile app use		

Social and sharing skills	No	Yes
Change who I share content with online (e.g., friends, friends of friends, public)		
Add or remove people from the contact lists		
Block people from seeing what I post online		
Purposely deciding when and which information I should and shouldn't share online		

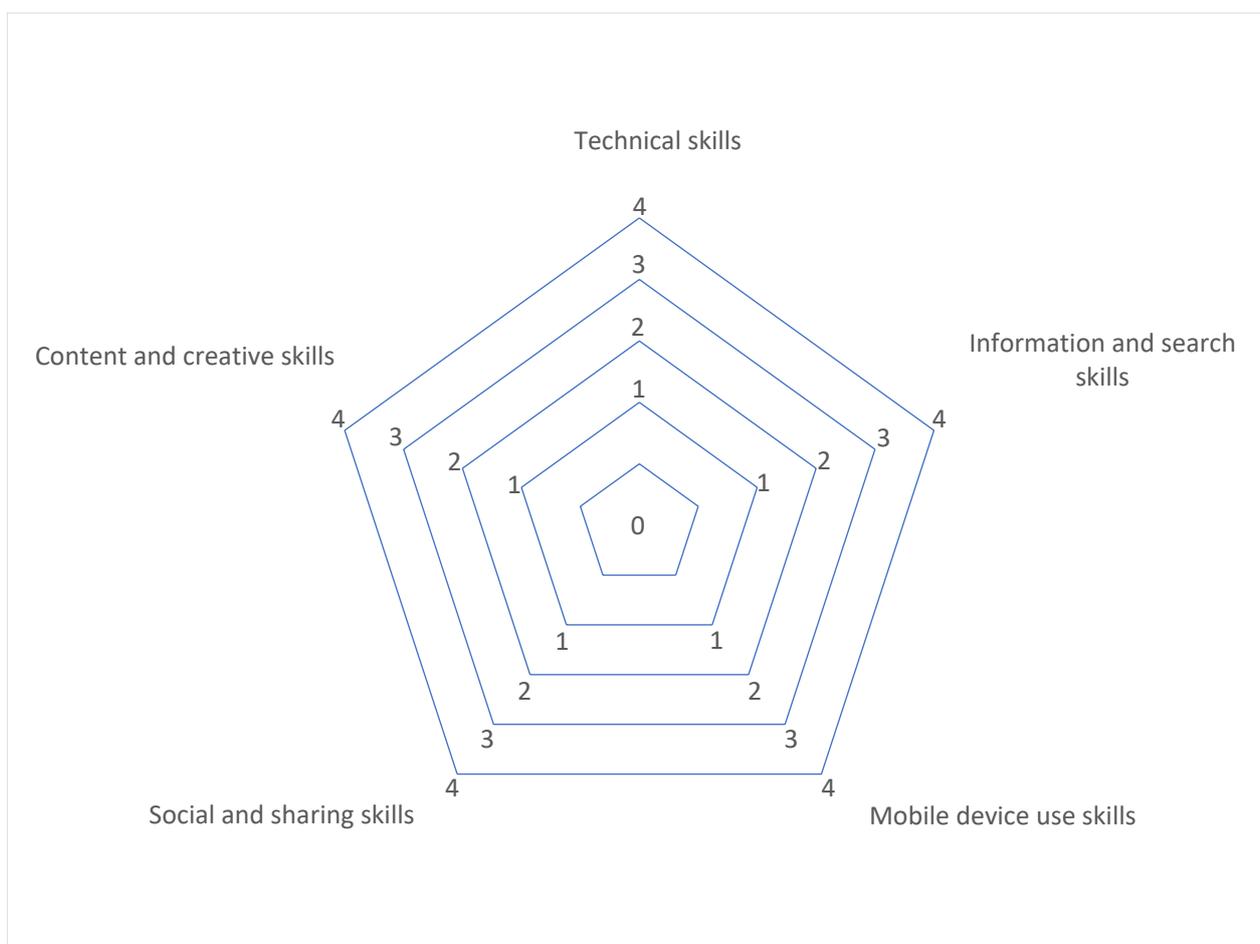
Content and creative skills	No	Yes
Design a website (e.g., setting up a personal blog on WordPress)		
Create and post video content online (e.g., on YouTube or Tik-Tok)		
Create something new from existing online images, music, or videos		
Make basic changes to the content that others have produced		

The questions in our assessment tool were based on: Alexander J.A.M. van Deursen, Ellen J. Helsper & Rebecca Eynon (2016) Development and validation of the Internet Skills Scale (ISS), *Information, Communication & Society*, 19:6, 804-823, DOI: [10.1080/1369118X.2015.1078834](https://doi.org/10.1080/1369118X.2015.1078834)

How confident are you around technology in general?

The questions are a way for you to self-assess your confidence in internet skills. Use the pentagonal chart below to plot your skill level for each category. For each 'yes' answer, put a mark in the corresponding cycle away from the centre in each category. Then, draw a straight line between each mark for each category to complete the illustration of your level of internet skills confidence. You can also do this activity online using our interactive tool at www.shapingconnections.org.

Compare your chart with your peers and use the descriptions on the following pages to discuss where you may grow your confidence level.



How confident are you around technology in general?

Internet skills form a crucial part of digital inclusion to assist you with:

Everyday living: Using a search engine for research, emailing, banking, paying bills, reading news, accessing services (e.g. MyGov), making Zoom or other video calls.

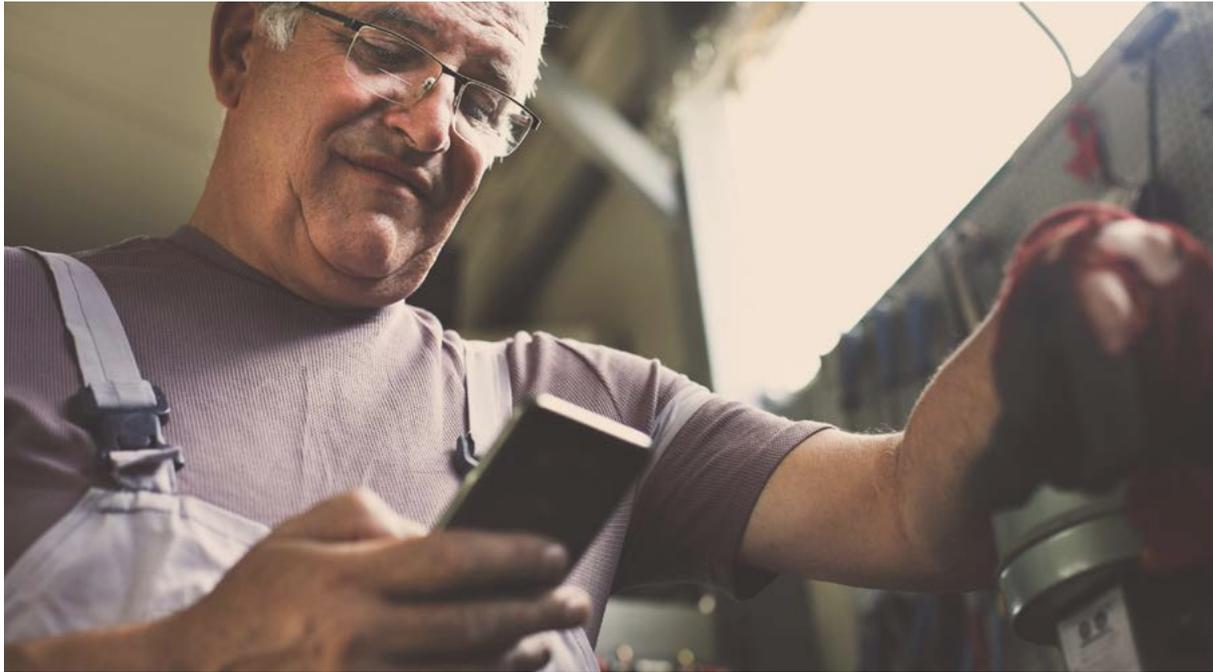
Shopping and entertainment: Various forms of online shopping, consuming books/magazines/movies/TV online.

Social networking: Chatting on messenger apps, uploading content for friends and family.

Gaming: Playing standalone or connected/networked games online.

You can use your pentagonal chart to indicate your skills in each of the five categories. Keep reading to learn more about why you need skills in each category, how you may improve them, and what our research says about the skills of senior Australians in each category.





Technical skills

Technical skills are essential to operate and use devices and applications. As such, these skills form the foundation for ICT usage in the first place and are your ticket into the more advanced skills. Our research shows that senior Australians were more confident with their technical skills compared with the other categories. You can obtain and maintain these skills through computer/ICT classes for seniors from services such as your local library or U3A. In addition, technical skills can often be learned step-by-step, which means you can write down instructions for later and practice at your own pace.

Information and search skills

Information and search skills are skills needed to use the internet to access and find online information sources. That is, they are more subjective and based on experience. These skills relate to your ability to search, select, and evaluate information in digital media. You need these skills to be able to use the internet on your own, to independently further your digital literacy, and purposely utilise the internet to find reliable information on any topic you are interested in. To get help to improve these skills, it could be a good idea to show others your trust precisely what you are doing on your device. If there is a gap between what you are doing and what you want to be able to do on your device, write it down and save it for future discussions with others.

Social and sharing skills

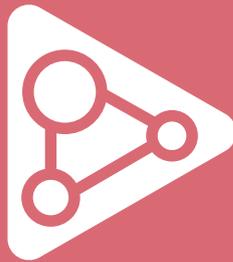
If you want to use the internet to maintain social connections or make new ones, you need social and sharing skills. These skills relate to the use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, or Twitter, WhatsApp, Messenger, and Telegram. The skills you need to use one of these platforms are often transferrable to another application. First, decide whether you are interested in only consuming content (viewing/reading what others do) or producing content (posting on your own). Content production requires a deeper understanding of how to manage social media. Also, consider your needs and what purpose or benefit you get from using digital platforms to decide whether you need to improve your social and sharing skills.

Mobile device use skills

Mobile device skills allow you to use more of the functions on your smartphone. To access many areas of daily life (e.g. scanning QR codes to enter buildings), you need to carry an internet-enabled smartphone. Many seniors struggle with mobile device use skills for various reasons (including small screens that can be difficult to read). The good news is that many of the mobile skills you need can be 'outsourced'. For example, downloading apps and setting them up are often one-time operations. As such, you can ask someone your trust to do that for you. It is generally good advice to have as few apps as necessary on your mobile device. Remember that apps use battery power, so only keep what you want and delete what you do not need.

Content and creative skills

Skills for creating content are the most advanced type of digital literacy skills. Our research shows that such skills are the least prominent among senior Australians – compared with their confidence in the other categories. Moreover, many internet users of any age do not have strong skills in this category. You may view these skills as aspirational if you are interested in creating digital resources on your own. These skills are not needed to use the internet. Instead, they are required to expand the internet and produce new content to share with others. Computer classes for seniors (or in general) can help here. The internet itself, in particular, videos on YouTube, can also be of great help in finding out 'how to' create various forms of content.



Shaping Connections