
April 1996

**QPL Data
Collection
Programs
Version 4.0**

QPL Data Collection Programs

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The Questionnaire Programming Language (QPL) is a system of programs that are designed to automate much of the process of gathering and analyzing questionnaire data. This manual describes how to use two of the programs, COLLECT and NCOLLECT, to enter data, usually during a telephone interview, and add it to a data file.

The COLLECT program can be run on either a floppy or hard disk IBM personal computer or compatible. It should be installed on your computer according to the instructions given in the manual, *QPL Reference Manual Version 4.0* (Chapter 9). Follow the instructions that the questionnaire designer has given for starting the COLLECT program with his or her particular questionnaire.

The NCOLLECT program is run on a local area network (LAN). It works just like the COLLECT program, but lets several interviewers share the same data file on a network file server. It should be installed on your network according to the instructions given in chapter 10 of the reference manual.

The instructions given below on how to run the software apply to both the COLLECT and NCOLLECT programs.

Overview

The COLLECT and NCOLLECT programs display only one question at a time. The current question number and the question variable name (*i.e.*, the name that will be used later when the question is statistically analyzed) are displayed in the upper left-hand corner of the monitor screen. The current date and time are shown in the upper right-hand corner of the screen. The first question you see may not be question number one because the computer can answer some of the questions itself, such as the current date and time. The questionnaire designer may have also specified that additional information, such as the name of the person you are going to call, be continuously displayed on the screen.

Each question is displayed in a box in the center of the screen. The question itself is in the upper half of the box and the answer, or answers, are located in the lower half of the box.

The COLLECT and NCOLLECT programs ask six different types of questions:

- Multiple choice
- Check-all-that-apply
- Number

- Short answer
- Long, open-ended answer
- Date

How you answer each type of question varies, and specific instructions are given below. Certain commands, however, are common to all four types of questions. You may page forward through the questions, one at a time, by pressing the Enter or PgDn (page down) keys. You can page backward by pressing the PgUp (page up) key. The Escape key may also jump to a specific question when pressed. What question it jumps to depends upon how the questionnaire was programmed. Typically, it will be programmed to jump to the last question so that the questionnaire can be exited quickly when the interview cannot be completed. Finally, you can display a list of all the keys and their function for the question shown on the screen by pressing the F1 key.

Global Key Summary

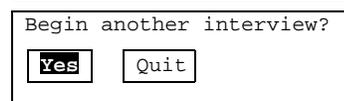
PgDn or Enter	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary

Note: If a control file is being used to keep track of the calls, pressing the Escape key also records which question was asked last. This allows incomplete interviews to be reloaded and started at the point where they were interrupted.

Quitting the COLLECT and NCOLLECT Programs

You must answer all of the questions before you may quit the program. After you answer the last question, the COLLECT and NCOLLECT programs will save your answers in a data file. Then it will ask if you want to begin a new questionnaire or quit the program (*i.e.*, return to the DOS command line). Select a yes or no response by highlighting an answer using the left or right arrow keys and then pressing the Enter key.

Starting a New Interview



Begin another interview?

Respondent Control List

In some applications, the questionnaire designer may have set up a list of names or places for you to call. If this has been done, the COLLECT and NCOLLECT programs will display the list in the middle of the screen before it starts the questionnaire. The questionnaire designer can program this list to show such things as each respondent's name, how many times he or she has been called, and whether

Control List

```
Soccer Team Survey
1991 Season
Control List 10
Keith Lenert, University of Virginia
Stephen Pfeil, American University
Duncan Reynard, England
Keith Trehy, American University
Walter Tombini, Argentina
Abdulwab al-Khaldi, American University
Omid Namazi, West Virginia
Jean Harbor, Alabama A&M
Marcelo Bauza, Argentina
Leonel Sauzo, Honduras
```

the interview has been completed. The control list also can be used to reload partially completed interviews.

Use the highlight bar to select the person you want to call from the list. Move the highlight bar up and down the list using the up and down arrow keys. If the list is very long, you may move through the list one page at a time using the PgUp and PgDn keys. (The total number of outstanding calls is shown on the Control File screen to the right of the questionnaire title.) After you have highlighted the name you want to call, press the Enter key to select that name and begin the questionnaire. Often, the questionnaire designer will program the name of the person you selected to be displayed continuously on the screen as you proceed through the questionnaire.

Control List Key Summary

up	Move highlight bar up the list
down	Move highlight bar down the list
PgDn	Move down the list by one page
PgUp	Move up the list by one page
Enter	Select a respondent and begin the questionnaire
Esc	Quit COLLECT program

Note: Pressing the Escape key will display a message in the middle of the screen that asks you if you want to quit the COLLECT or NCOLLECT program. Highlight your answer, "Yes" or "Cancel," using the left or right arrow keys, and then press the Enter key to carry it out.

Multiple Choice Questions

Multiple choice questions allow you to select one answer from a predefined list of possible answers. The answer list is displayed in the lower half of the question box on the screen. One of the answers will always be highlighted with a bright background. This highlight bar indicates which answer is currently selected. You

can select a new answer by moving the highlight bar up or down using the arrow keys (which are located on the right side of the keyboard) or by typing the first letter of an answer. When your choice is highlighted, press Enter or PgDn to move to the next question.

Multiple Choice Question

QUESTION: 4 (COLOR)		6-26-1991 12:47:32 p.m.	
What is your favorite color?			
Red			
Yellow			
Orange			
Violet			
Green			
Blue			
Brown			

If you go back to a multiple choice question, using the PgUp key, your answer will still be highlighted. You can change your selection and press Enter again to re-record your answer and move to the next question. You can back up and change your answers as often as you like.

Multiple choice questions have one special feature that the other types of question generally do not have. Sometimes choosing a certain answer will make the computer jump to a different series of questions. For example, if one of the questions was, "Do you drink diet sodas?," answering yes may make the computer jump to a series of questions about soda flavors, while answering no would make the computer skip over these questions. If you back up and change your answer in one of these branching questions, the computer will go to the question that follows from your new answer. These skips are defined in the questionnaire and may not always be used.

**Multiple Choice Question Key
Summary**

up or left	Move highlight bar up
down or right	Move highlight bar down
character	Move highlight bar to the next answer that starts with this character
Home	Move highlight bar to the top of the list
End	Move highlight bar to the bottom of the list
Enter or PgDn	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary

Note: No other keys do anything. The computer will beep if any other keys are pressed.

Check-All-That-Apply Questions

Check-all-that-apply questions allow you to select more than one answer from a list or to select none of the answers. Although these questions look similar to the multiple choice questions on the screen, check marks are used instead of the highlight bar to indicate which of the answers have been selected. The highlight bar is used only to move from one answer to another. You can tell that these questions are not multiple choice questions because the answer list is indented to the right to allow room for the check marks.

Check-All-That-Apply Question

QUESTION: 5 (COLORS) 6-26-1991 12:47:32 p.m.

What are your favorite colors?

Red

Yellow

Orange

Violet

Green

Blue

Brown

Press the SPACEBAR to toggle check marks on and off.

Move the highlight bar to an answer you want to select by using the up and down arrow keys, or by typing the first letter of the answer. When your answer is highlighted, press the space bar to put a check mark by the answer. You can turn a check mark off by highlighting it and pressing the space bar again.

After you have selected your answers, press the Enter or PgDn keys to go to the next question. If you back up to this question by pressing the PgUp key, the answers you selected will still be checked but the highlight bar be on the first

answer. You can change your selections by moving the highlight bar to an answer and pressing the space bar to toggle the check mark on or off.

Check-All-That-Apply Question Key Summary

up or left	Move highlight bar up
down or right	Move highlight bar down
character	Move highlight bar to the next answer that starts with this character
Home	Move highlight bar to the top of the list
End	Move highlight bar to the bottom of the list
space bar	Toggle check mark on or off
Enter or PgDn	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary

Note: No other keys do anything. The computer will beep if any other keys are pressed.

Number Questions

Number questions allow you to enter numbers as answers. These questions have only one highlighted answer line displayed on the screen, with a flashing cursor on the right side of the line. Enter numbers here just as you would using a calculator. Use the number keys along the top of the keyboard or use the number pad on the right side of the keyboard if you switch it from arrows to numbers with the NumLock key.

Number Question

QUESTION: 2 (AGE) 6-26-1991 12:47:31 p.m.

How old are you?

0 years

If a question allows a number with a decimal point, the decimal point will be displayed on in the highlighted line. The numbers you type will slide past the point. Be sure your number is aligned correctly with the decimal point before proceeding to the next question.

The questionnaire author also may have limited the range of answers that may be entered. This range can be from either a specific high or low number, or based on a number that was entered in a previous question. If you enter a number that is outside of this range, the computer will beep and display an error message on the bottom of the screen when you press the Enter, PgDn, or PgUp keys. This message will also tell you what the highest or lowest allowable number is. You must enter an answer that is within this range before you may move to the next question.

If the respondent does not know the answer, you can enter a “Don’t know” response by pressing the question mark key. This automatically changes the number to a question mark. Also, any range limitations are ignored when you press the Enter or PgDn to go to the next question.

Numeric Question Key Summary

0 through 9	Enter a digit
-	Toggle minus sign on and off (when number is not zero)
? or /	Set answer to “Don’t know”
Del or backspace	Delete the right-most digit
Ctrl-End	Erase the number (<i>i.e.</i> , set it to zero)
End	Move highlight pointer to the bottom of the list
Enter or PgDn	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary
F9	Use pop-up calculator

Note: A decimal point or a comma may not be entered in a number.

Pop-Up Calculator

The number question also has a pop-up calculator that you can use to compute an answer. For example, if a question asks the respondent for a percentage but he or she only knows the totals, you can use the calculator to compute the percentages. The calculator will automatically copy the result into the answer to the question.

Start the calculator by pressing the F9 key when a number question is displayed on the screen. The calculator dialogue box will be displayed below the question.

Pop-Up Calculator

QUESTION: 2 (COMMUTE) 6-26-1991 12:47:31 p.m.

During an average work day, what percent of the day do you spend commuting to and from your job?

0.0% of day

Enter an equation:

2 / 24 * 100_

You must type your equation on one line, using parentheses to group operations as necessary. In the example above, a percentage will be computed. When the Enter key is pressed, the calculator will first divide 2 by 24, and then multiply the result by 100.¹ The final result, 8.3, will be displayed in the dialogue box where you can use it in another equation. If you press Enter a second time (without changing the result), the calculator dialogue box will close and the answer will be put into the answer field. You may close the dialogue box without changing the answer by pressing the Escape key.

Pop-Up Calculator Key Summary

A-Z, 0-9, ^ * / @ + - () .	Enter numbers, variable names, math operators, keywords, or functions
left or up	Move cursor left without altering the text
right or down	Move cursor right without altering the text
Home	Move cursor to the left end of the highlighted line
End	Move cursor to the space after the last character
backspace	Move the cursor to the left and delete that character
Del	Delete the character at the cursor position
Ctrl-End	Erase from the cursor to the right end of the line
Enter or PgDn	Calculate equation (first time)
Enter or PgDn	Quit calculator and use result for an answer (second time)
PgUp	Recover last equation
Esc	Quit calculator without using result for an answer
F1	Display edit keys, math operator hierarchy, and function and keyword lists

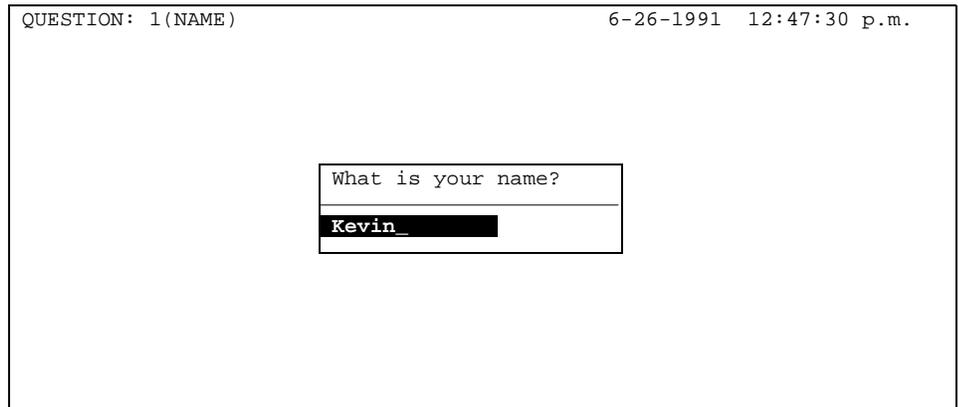
Note: The calculator editor is always in an insert mode.

¹The names of questions also may be used in equations. The current value of question will be substituted for the name when the calculator processes the equation. Various date and math functions may also be used. See chapter 4, *QPL Reference Manual Version 4.0*, for more information on the QPL equation processor.

Short Answer Questions

Short answer questions are used to input short phrases, such as your initials or name. These questions have a single, highlighted answer line. You can type letters, numbers, and punctuation characters in this space. Lowercase letters are automatically converted to uppercase, regardless of how the CapsLock (shift lock) key is set unless the questionnaire designer has turned this feature off. The computer will beep when you reach the end of the line. You cannot type beyond this point. This is all the space that the questionnaire author has allowed for this answer. If necessary, use abbreviations that have been specified by the questionnaire author in your answers.

Short Answer Question



QUESTION: 1 (NAME) 6-26-1991 12:47:30 p.m.

What is your name?

Kevin_

The short answer question has some simple editing capabilities that allow characters to be inserted and deleted in the answer. These functions are listed in the key summary below.

The questionnaire author also may have specified a specific range of answers that may be entered. The range is checked alphabetically. If you enter a word or phrase that is too high or too low, the computer will beep and display an error message on the bottom of the screen. This message will also tell you what the highest or lowest allowable answer is. You must enter an answer that is within this range before you can move to the next question.

If the respondent does not know the answer, you may specify a “Don’t know” response by typing a question mark in the first column of the answer. This automatically erases whatever else may have been written.

Short Answer Question Key Summary

A-Z, 0-9	Enter alphanumeric characters
left or up	Move cursor left without altering the text
right or down	Move cursor right without altering the text
?	Set answer to "Don't know" response (if in the first column)
Home	Move cursor to the left end of the highlighted line
End	Move cursor to the space past the last character the highlighted line
backspace	Move the cursor to the left and delete that character
Del	Delete the character at the cursor position
Ctrl-End	Erase from the cursor to the right end of the line
Enter or PgDn	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary

Insert and Type-Over Modes

A short answer question may be in either an insert or a type-over mode. Which mode it is in depends how the question was programmed by the questionnaire designer. Formatted answers (*i.e.*, answers that let you type in only certain parts of the answer line, such as "State: ____") are always in a type-over mode. In this mode, deleting a character with the Delete or backspace keys simply replaces the character with a blank space; the right side of the line is not moved to the left. Non-formatted answers are always in an insert mode. Here, you may insert characters by typing them where you want them. You must use the backspace, Delete, or Ctrl-End keys to erase characters.

Formatted Short Answer Question

QUESTION: 1 (STATE)	6-26-1991 12:47:30 p.m.
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px auto; width: fit-content;"><p>What is your state and Zip code?</p><p>State: MN Zip: 55110</p></div>	

Ctrl-W	Scroll down one line
PgUp	Scroll up one page
PgDn	Scroll down one page
Home	Move cursor to the beginning of the line
End	Move cursor to the end of the line
Ctrl-PgUp	Move cursor to the beginning of the answer
Ctrl-PgDn	Move cursor to the end of the answer
Ctrl-Home	Move cursor to the top of the page
Ctrl-End	Move cursor to the bottom of the page
Alt-M	Begin marking a block of text starting at cursor position (use arrow keys to stretch highlighted block)
Alt-C	Put a copy of the marked block in a temporary buffer
Alt-X	Delete marked block and put a copy in a temporary buffer
Alt-P	Paste text from temporary buffer at cursor
Alt-S	Search for a word (press Enter to begin searching, Esc to quit)

Note: Several of these functions require you to use the Ctrl (control) or Alt (alternate) keys in combination with another key in order to perform a function. For example, "Ctrl-PgUp," means hold the Ctrl key down and then press the PgUp key.

Date Questions

Date questions display a date on a single answer line. To enter a date, you must type the number of the month, then the day, and finally the last two digits of the year.² The cursor automatically skips over the dashes that separate the parts of the date. If the number of the month or day is less than 10, you must be sure to precede the number with a zero so that the number is correctly aligned.

The date question does not allow an invalid date to be entered. For example, if you try to enter February 31, 1989, the computer will beep and move the cursor to number of days after you press Enter. You must change it to a valid date before you may go to the next question.

The questionnaire author may have also limited the range of dates that can be entered. If you enter a date that is too early or too late, the computer will beep and display an error message that shows the earliest or latest allowable date. You must enter a date that is within that range before you can move to the next question.

²The questionnaire designer may instead use another version of the date question that requires all four digits in the year to be entered. This is usually done so that dates later than 1999 may be entered.

Date Question

QUESTION: 3 (GRAD) 6-26-1991 12:47:30 p.m.

When did you graduate
from High School

- -19

If the respondent does not know the answer, you may specify a “Don’t know” response by typing a question mark in the first column of the date. The rest of the answer will be erased and any range limitations will be ignored when you press Enter or PgDn to go to the next question.

Date Question Key Summary

0-9	Enter a number
left or up	Move cursor left without altering the text
right or down	Move cursor right without altering the text
?	Set answer to “Don’t know” response (must be in the first column)
Home	Move cursor to the left end of the highlighted line
End	Move cursor to space following the last character
backspace	Move the cursor to the left and delete that character
Del	Delete the character at the cursor position
Ctrl-End	Erase from the cursor to the right end of the line
Enter or PgDn	Record answer and move to the next question
PgUp	Record answer and move to the previous question
Esc	Record answer and jump to last question
F1	Display help screen key summary

Note: The date question is always in a type-over mode. That is, you may change an number by typing over it.

NCOLLECT Error Messages

The NCOLLECT program may display an error message when you are attempting to read or write information from the data file on the network file server. This file access occurs, for example, when the program is trying to save the responses to an interview or read the control list of outstanding calls. These error messages are usually due to some problem the program is having sharing the same file among several users or how the software was installed.

You should make a note of the error message and then try the file operation again (press any key to clear the error message and start the “Try again?” dialogue box). If you are not able to complete the file operation after repeated attempts, you should notify the person in charge of your project before possibly losing the data from your interview.

See chapter 10 in the *QPL Reference Manual Version 4.0* for more information on trouble-shooting these problems.