

Take a moment  
to calculate your

# CANOPY RISK QUOTIENT

Wondering where you fit in with all  
the talk about canopy piloting?  
Complete this questionnaire, and see  
where your score falls on the canopy  
risk scale.



**UNITED STATES  
PARACHUTE  
ASSOCIATION**



Answer the following questions using the value of  
the answer provided in parentheses.

### Experience and Currency

- Number of jumps: 26-50 (5); 51-200 (4); 201-500 (3); 501-2,000 (2); more than 2,000 (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Years in the sport: Less than six months (5); six months to a year (4); more than a year to three years (3); more than three years to five years (2); more than five years (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of jumps last year: Fewer than 25 (8); 26-50 (5); 51-200 (3); 201-500 (2); more than 500 (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of jumps last month: 0 (5); 1-9 (4); 10-25 (3); 26-49 (2); 50 or more (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of jumps at your current DZ: 0-10 (6); 11-25 (4); 26-50 (3); 51-200 (2); more than 200 (1) \_\_\_\_\_

### Canopy Information

- Wing loading: .6-.9:1 (1); .91-1.1:1 (2); 1.11-1.3:1 (3); 1.31-1.7:1 (6); 1.71-plus:1 (8) \_\_\_\_\_
- Canopy square footage: 260-plus (1); 210-259 (2); 170-209 (3); 135-169 (4); 120-134 (6); 119 or smaller (8) \_\_\_\_\_
- Canopy design: Low aspect ratio, rectangular (1); rectangular (2); elliptical (3); high aspect ratio, elliptical (6); cross-braced (8) \_\_\_\_\_
- Number of jumps on your current canopy: 0-10 (5); 11-25 (4); 26-50 (3); 51-200 (2); more than 200 (1) \_\_\_\_\_

### Training Experience

- Structured lessons or competitions on your canopy: 0 (5); 1-3 (4); 4-6 (3); 7-9 (2); ten or more (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Hop-and-pops above 5,000 feet dedicated to canopy practice (no RW, etc.) on your current canopy: 1-5 (5); 6-10 (4); 11-25 (3); 26-50 (2); more than 50 (1) \_\_\_\_\_
- Give yourself one point for each maneuver you have **NOT** performed on your canopy in the last 50 jumps:

- Braked turn \_\_\_\_\_
- Flare turn \_\_\_\_\_
- Reverse turn \_\_\_\_\_
- Braked landing \_\_\_\_\_
- Riser flare (high or on landing) \_\_\_\_\_
- Extended glide \_\_\_\_\_
- Flying a pre-planned pattern \_\_\_\_\_
- Accuracy within two meters \_\_\_\_\_
- Crosswind or downwind landing \_\_\_\_\_
- Induced-speed landing \_\_\_\_\_

Add up your entries to determine  
**Your Canopy Quotient:**

# What does your score mean?

## 11-25: Comfortable

You appreciate your canopy's capabilities and have been getting training from a coach and practicing on a target or course regularly. You're staying current and enjoying your canopy's performance, maybe making lots of different types of landings and approaches. You're good with accuracy on that canopy and practice with a target on almost every jump.

If you're keeping your canopy skills and equipment in the comfortable range, that allows you to explore new avenues in freefall, like larger freefall groups or DZs at higher elevations. Being in the comfortable zone might reduce the risk of exploring more aggressive canopy maneuvers, if that's the direction you want to take.

## 25-36: Average Risk

If you're on the high end of the score for this group, you might be jumping fairly conservative gear but without a lot of training on it. As long as you don't get into a difficult situation, you might be OK, but you can never count on that. Be especially careful when you travel, and you should probably put off that decision to downsize for a while until you can get with a coach and make some more jumps.

You might earn a high average-risk score if you're very experienced and well trained on a small wing but not too current or not too current at a certain DZ or with your current canopy. Be careful until you regain your edge with more experience and training. If you find yourself uncurrent a lot, you might want to upsize a little.

## 36-50: High Risk

This is a bad place. The combination of attributes that add up to high risk were derived from profiles of jumpers involved in the many scores of canopy-related accidents reported to USPA. This isn't about a bunch of old people telling you not to do something fun. It's for you to see for yourself how you compare to the people in those reports.

You may have gotten to this point with the best intentions, but you should assess how to reduce your



This isn't a scientific survey, and you have to consider what you did to get your score. Your canopy risk quotient can change up or down depending on your circumstances on any given day. Look especially at the number of jumps in the last month or year and the number of jumps at a particular drop zone or on a new canopy. Visiting a new DZ with a brand-new canopy or signing out a demo at a boogie can really punch up your canopy risk quotient. And although not on the survey, fatigue and health figure in, of course . . . Make sure to factor in that hangover.

actual current risk. You can start by getting training, up-sizing or both. Also, after a bad spot, you should not be one of the jumpers who tries to stretch it out to the last couple hundred feet to make it back to the DZ. Pick a safe alternative early.

Jumpers who want to learn performance landings and get ready for swoop competitions should not move into the high-risk category by getting smaller canopies to train with. To reduce your risk before trying high-speed landing maneuvers, start jumping more, make only high hop-and-pops, and consider downsizing only after your score fits you into a lower risk profile. Before going big on landing, train with a coach. Always keep your risk low when learning performance moves.

## 51-76: Scary

No matter how you got this score, you and the jumpers around you are in trouble. You're jumping a canopy that's too advanced for your experience and currency, and you haven't been trained well enough to fly it safely. You probably should not continue to jump your current equipment, and you definitely should not visit other drop zones. Overly aggressive canopy pilots new on the DZ have become one of a DZ manager's biggest headaches.

At home, your friends should insist that you land by yourself, away from them. You really should put your current canopy away for a while, upsize to something safer and work with a coach until he feels you have the skills to handle your current gear. And please don't try anything fancy on landing.

If you feel that you got this score unfairly because you bought gear that some people told you would be fine if you jumped it conservatively or were careful until you got used to it, then those people have simply not gotten the message. Advice a lot of people in the sport used to consider a little aggressive but reasonable turned out to be dangerous. Sometimes, it takes a while for people to get the word. Not only does the scary profile describe those in the accident reports, but the accidents themselves have severe consequences for the jumpers and others around them. Frankly, the rest of the jumpers in the sport are sick of it.