

# SLACK TIPS & TRICKS

## WHY USE SLACK?

Slack helps teams coordinate and communicate internally in real time – it’s quicker than email. Slack allows you to either message people directly, in selected groups or to your whole team. It also helps you organize information by topic so there is no need to search through your inbox for the relevant email. As a remote team working across several continents and time zones, it is a versatile internal communication tool that helps us feel more closely connected. Plus, it’s really easy to learn and use.

## HOW IT CAN HELP YOUR TEAM

- Improve internal communications
- Enhance coordination and collaboration
- Build relationships
- Increase access to information



## Quick tour to get started

### Workspaces

- A Slack [workspace](#) is a shared hub made up of channels where team members can communicate and work together. When you join a workspace, you’ll need to create a Slack account using your email address.
- You can be part of [more than one workspace](#) - although we recommend that an organization only has one. You can switch workspaces by clicking on the top left-hand side of your Slack application where you see your profile preferences. Click on “Switch to...” then the name of the workspace you want to visit.

### Channels

- In Slack, teamwork and communication happen in channels. A channel is a single place for a team to share messages, tools, and files. You can [create as many channels](#) as you need, but it’s helpful to think through how you want to organize your channels before creating them.
- You can [browse and join any channels](#) (that are not private) and also bring in any other members of your team to any channel.

### Direct messages

- Although most discussions in Slack happen in channels, [direct messages](#) work well for one-off conversations that don’t require an entire channel to weigh in. Direct messages

are smaller conversations outside of a channel, between you and up to eight other people. They are private and you can't add new people to the chain of discussion.

- Messaged the wrong person or noticed a misspelling in a message? You can still [edit or delete messages](#) after you send them. This also applies to any messages in channels.

## Your profile

- Let people know who you are by setting up your profile with your photo and title. It's useful to add your phone number, and other contact details such as phone number and skype name so that people know how to reach you when you're not on Slack.

## Some tips to get everyone going

### Start slow - test it out first

- Once a team decides to use Slack you could first start a channel on a particular project or topic and use it for all relevant conversations among a small team for a few days. This allows you to get comfortable before bringing it to the wider team.

### Identify a Champion

- Find someone in your team to be your "Slack Champion" who will lead on rolling it out and will help people troubleshoot any issues they might have. Ask everyone to commit to using the tool for a certain length of time before reviewing it.

## Get organized

### Use Channels to stay organized

- Make sure the right people are on a channel, you can [add others](#) if needed and they will still be able to see the history of the discussion.
- Avoid joining unnecessary channels. Don't be afraid to [leave a channel](#) that isn't useful, you can always rejoin later.
- You can make channels private when you set them up - this is useful for sensitive topics (or if you want to plan a fun surprise for a colleague - they won't be able to see it!). If you leave a private channel you won't be able to rejoin unless someone in that channel invites you back in again.
- Use 1:1 Slack channels if you are collaborating on a piece of work. Direct messages are always private and can (depending on your settings) trigger notifications that can distract from important work. Setting up 1:1 channels is a great way to leave non-urgent messages for each other (which will still show up as "unread" in the sidebar) on a particular topic. It also means you can add more people to the discussion when needed without losing the thread and it's easier to remember where to find information on a specific project or topic later on.
- If a channel no longer serves any purpose you can [Archive](#) it. Archiving a channel removes it from the list of active conversations in your Slack workspace. The channel won't be open for new activity, but the history will be retained for easy browsing and searching.

### Build your to-do list

Slack does not allow you to print out messages or files but you can stay organized and on top of your tasks using the existing features.

- You can click '[Save](#)' to bookmark any important message or file. All saved messages are kept in your 'Saved items' so you can quickly access them later - from messages that you need to come back to, important links or resources you constantly need, passwords or other information you reuse again and again.
- If you want to remember to come back to a message later, you can mark it unread.
- You can also '[Pin](#)' a message so that it remains visible at the top of any channel or direct message exchange.
- [Set a reminder](#) for important messages. Slack allows you to set reminders around all your important messages and essential tasks so nothing that needs your action goes unnoticed before a deadline.
- [Save notes and files](#) in your personal DM channel. Your personal direct message channel (under your own name) can be used as an always-accessible notepad.
- If you have forgotten to save a message or want to refer to an old conversation or file later on, you can [search](#) your team's conversation history in Slack to find the relevant messages, files, channels, and people you need to get work done.

## Keep discussions organized using Threads

- Use '[Start a thread](#)' to keep group communications clean and in one place. For example, you could share a proposed meeting agenda and ask for input in the thread below.

## Enhance communications

### Use channels for announcements and updates

- Because every member who joins your workspace is added to the default #general channel, it's a great channel to use when you want to make organization-wide announcements. This will help your team stay informed and connected.
- If you want to [send a message to all the members](#) of any channel, just start your message with @channel and they will all receive an alert.
- If you want to make sure a specific person (or number of people) sees your message, tag them using @ in any channel.

### Share your [status and availability](#) with teammates

- You can set your current status to let the people know what you are currently working on, if you're in a meeting, or what's your mood. You can apply the status for any length of time you choose.
- You can also show when you're not available by changing your 'Availability' from active to away (Availability refers to the dot next to your display name that indicates if you're active in Slack), so other team members can see that you're not around to reply to messages.

### Share weekly goals

- Set up a #goals channel for the whole team and ask everyone to post their top 5 deliverables for the week. People can check things off as they get completed. This gives the entire team visibility into each other's work and helps people prioritise and hold themselves accountable.

# Make it work for you

## Change your notification preferences to suit your work style and reduce distractions

- [Muting](#) any less important channels or direct messages is a good first step.
- You should also ensure your desktop and phone [notifications](#) are set to suit your personal needs.
- If you need focus time or time away from work, you can pause your notifications in Slack with [Do Not Disturb \(DND\)](#). Use DND as needed to help you concentrate, and even set a DND schedule for non-working hours you'd prefer not to be notified.

## Set up Slack on your phone

- Team members who are in the field or working from home without reliable WIFI can still download and use Slack on their phones. Your phone app and desktop app or browser will synchronize automatically whenever they are online. If they can WhatsApp then there's no reason they can't use Slack to communicate.

## Build your team dynamics

- Start a **#whereimat** type Slack channel for personal updates and pictures from the team to build engagement and relationships. This not only makes Slack fun, but creates a shared culture too.
- If social chatter happens in your team's work channels, clarify that conversations should stay on topic there, but banter is welcome in **#random**.

## When you want to get advanced...

### Integrate Slack with your other favorite apps

- Whether your team uses [Dropbox](#) or [Google Drive](#), [Zoom](#) or role-specific tools like Salesforce, [Slack integrates with the essential tools](#) that organizations rely on. This means less time switching between apps and browser tabs and more time focused on moving your work forward.

### Only show unread channels

- As your organization spends longer on Slack, you might have tens (or hundreds) of channels. If you're a member of more than 10 channels, we recommend you [set your sidebar](#) channels only to show unread channels. Then, 'Star' any channels you want to lock in place so they are always visible.

### Send selected emails to Slack channels

- Bring emails out of siloed inboxes and into Slack where you can quickly collaborate with your team or keep an eye on your incoming emails. Choose from three options: install the [Microsoft Outlook](#) or [Gmail](#) add-on, connect the [Email app](#) to your workspace, or [set up a forwarding email address](#). Sending email into Slack is useful for coordinating quickly on a response without creating a long email chain that might be hard to find later.

## Use keyboard shortcuts

- Slack provides a wide range of [keyboard shortcuts](#) so that you can save your time while typing your messages. For example, if you're looking to jump to a conversation with a team member or channel, but don't want to scroll until you find them there's another solution. Use Command + K on macOS, or Ctrl + K on Windows, and you'll see a search box pop up. Type in any character and select the channel or team member you want to message.

## Utilize the power of slash /

- You can make use of forward [slash](#) ( / ) while messaging in the text box to get a complete list of commands. There are many slashes that you might end up using every day. For example, to send direct messages via any text box all you need to type is /msg @user [your message] from any channel or direct message, and it'll be sent to the right person. If you have integrated zoom you just need to type /zoom to generate a live Zoom link that you and your colleagues can instantly join.

## Make calls or video calls

- You can launch a call (or video call) in a direct message with another person. If you're on a paid plan, you can do the same in channels or group messages with up to 15 people.
- You can also connect Slack to other voice and video conferencing services, like Zoom. Your Slack administrator can even set them as the default app for the call button. You can learn more about integrating Zoom with Slack [here](#).

## Get notified when someone mentions a topic you care about

- [Highlight words](#) are a special type of notification in your Slack settings. You'll get a push notification whenever those words are used in Slack in any public channel. Use it to stay on top of projects or when people mention you by nickname.

## Run surveys and polls from Slack

- [Create a poll](#) to gather the opinions of your team members right inside Slack using the Simple Poll or Survey Monkey apps. This will allow you to brainstorm ideas and get feedback from your teammates quickly and easily.

## Switch to a paid plan

- You can use Slack with your team for free. You will always be able to access the 10,000 most recent messages in your account and can use up to 10 third-party app integrations. Later on, you may decide to [upgrade to a standard paid plan](#) that will give you:
  - An unlimited message archive
  - Unlimited app integration
  - Group video calls with screen sharing for up to 15 participants
  - Guest accounts & shared channels
  - File storage of 10GB per team member (up from 5GB per person on the free plan)