



A Reference guide to Using the Collaborate tool in your LMS (Windows Users)

Your LMS includes a synchronous (real-time) tool for online communication within your subject or community. The Collaborate tool in your LMS enables you to participate in webinars, real-time discussions, workshops, test review sessions etc. You can also access this tool to view recorded sessions and use them for later reference.

This guide includes instructions on how to join a collaborate session or access a recorded session. For instructions on specific tasks as outlined below, click the links corresponding to each task.

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Download and install the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher

To use the collaborate feature in your LMS, Java must be enabled in your browser. If you do not have Java on your computer, you can download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher. The launcher is a utility for Windows and Mac that helps you easily launch a collaborate session. Installing the launcher triggers the automatic download of the .collab file. When you open the .collab file, the launcher unpacks this file to launch the session using a known and stable version of Java. The launcher includes the required Java and therefore, you do not need to maintain a system version of Java.

Before you start, please ensure that pop-ups are enabled for your browser and browser toolbars such as Yahoo or Google toolbars.

To download and install the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher, perform the following steps:

1. On your subject's navigation menu, click the link with the word Collaborate in it
2. On the corresponding Collaborate page, click the link for the scheduled session. For example, to access the collaborate room for the subject 'Current Evaluation and Research Topics', on the **Collaborate room and session recordings** page, click the link **Press here to enter the CERT Collaborate room**.
3. On the **Room Details** page, click the link **download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher**. Please note that, first time users attempting to join a collaborate room or access a recorded session will be prompted to download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher. Also, if you use a different browser to log onto your LMS and try joining a collaborate session, you will be prompted to download the launcher. For example, you normally use the Chrome browser. However, due to some reason, you are using Firefox. In this case, when you try to join a collaborate session, you will be prompted to download the launcher.



Internet Explorer users

4. In the **First time using the Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Get the Launcher**, click the **Download Launcher** button.
5. In the notification bar at the bottom of your Internet Explorer window, click the **Save** arrow, and then on the menu, click **Save and run**. Please be patient when the zip file for the launcher is downloading. You can view the progress of your download in the notification bar at the bottom of your IE window.
After the download is complete, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup wizard is displayed.
 - a. On the **Welcome to the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Next**.
 - b. On the **Ready to Install** page, click **Install**.
 - c. On the **Completing the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Finish**.
6. Next, on your LMS, in the **First Time Using Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Install the Launcher**, click **OK**.
7. In the notification bar at the bottom of your IE window, click **Open**. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.
8. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. You will need to click OK for eight more Error pop-up boxes before your session opens in a new window.

Firefox users

4. In the **First time using the Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Get the Launcher**, click the **Download Launcher** button.
5. In the **Opening BlackboardCollaborateLauncher** dialog box, click **Save File**. Please be patient when the zip file for the launcher is downloading. This may take a while. You can view the progress of your download on the Firefox icon on your task bar.
6. After the download is complete, navigate to the location of the zip file in your **Downloads** folder, and then double-click the **BlackboardCollaborateLauncher** zip file.
7. In the **Open File – Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this file?**, click **Run**. This displays the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup wizard.
 - a. On the **Welcome to the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Next**.
 - b. On the **Ready to Install** page, click **Install**.
 - c. On the **Completing the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Finish**.
8. Next, on your LMS, in the **First time using the Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Install the Launcher**, click **OK**.
9. In the **Opening meeting,collab** dialog box, click the **Open with** radio button, and then click **Browse**.
9. In the **Choose Helper Application** dialog box, under **Send this item to:**, double-click **Blackboard Collaborate Launcher**, and then in the **Opening meeting,collab** dialog box, click **OK**. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.



10. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. After you click OK for five more Error pop-up boxes the Blackboard Collaborate dialog box is displayed.
11. In the **Blackboard Collaborate** dialog box, click the **Select connection speed** arrow, from the list, select your connection type, and then click **OK**. After three more Error pop-up boxes, your session opens in a new window.

Chrome Users

4. In the **First time using Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Get the Launcher**, click the **Download Launcher** button. Please be patient when the zip file for the launcher is downloading. You can view the progress of your download on the circular progress indicator in the downloads bar at the bottom of your Chrome screen.
5. After the download is complete, in the downloads bar at the bottom of your screen, click the **BlackboardCollaborateLauncher** zip file.
6. In the **Open File – Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this file?**, click **Run**. This displays the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup wizard.
 - a. On the **Welcome to the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Next**.
 - b. On the **Ready to Install** page, click **Install**.
 - c. On the **Completing the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Setup Wizard** page, click **Finish**.
7. Next, on your LMS, in the **First time using the Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, under **Install the Launcher**, click **OK**.
8. In the downloads bar at the bottom of your Chrome screen, click the **meeting.collab** file. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.
9. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. You will need to click OK for eight more Error pop-up boxes before your session opens in a new window.

Join a collaborate session

Before you launch a collaborate session, ensure that pop-ups are enabled for your browser and browser toolbars such as Yahoo or Google toolbars. It would be advisable to join 15 to 20 minutes before your session starts so that, you have sufficient time to open the .collab file and set up for the session.

Please note that, first time users attempting to join a collaborate room or access a recorded session will be prompted to download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher. Also, if you use a different browser to log onto your LMS and try joining a collaborate session, you will be prompted to download the launcher. For example, you normally use the Chrome browser. However, due to some reason, you decide to use Firefox. In this case, when you try to join a collaborate session, you will be prompted to download the launcher. However, if you already downloaded the launcher, in the **First time using Blackboard Collaborate?** dialog box, click the link **Launch Blackboard Collaborate now**.



To join a collaborate session, perform the following steps:

1. On your subject's navigation menu, click the link with the word Collaborate in it.
2. On the corresponding Collaborate page, click the link for the session you want to join.
3. On the **Room Details** page, click **Join Room**.

Internet Explorer users

4. In the notification bar at the bottom of your IE window, click **Open**. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. Click **OK** for eight more Error pop-up boxes, and then your session opens in a new window.

Firefox users

4. In the **Opening meeting.collab** dialog box, click **OK**. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. Click **OK** for eight more Error pop-up boxes, and then your session opens in a new window.

Chrome users

4. In the downloads bar at the bottom of your Chrome screen, click the **meeting.collab** file. If you access a collaborate session on campus through the proxy server, you will notice a series of 16 Java **Error** pop-up boxes. You need to click **OK** in each Error pop-up box. Please be patient as you do this. There is a time lapse between the Error pop-up boxes that appear. After the first eight Error pop-up boxes, the Security Warning dialog box is displayed.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**. You will need to click **OK** for eight more Error pop-up boxes before your session opens in a new window.

Set up your audio and microphone

The Audio Setup Wizard allows you to configure your speaker/headphones and microphone settings. You can access the Audio Setup Wizard by using the options in the Audio & Video panel to the left of the Blackboard Collaborate window or from the Tools menu on the action bar.

Let us now consider how to use the options on the Audio Setup Wizard:

1. To launch the Audio Setup Wizard, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, in the **Audio & Video** panel, in the top-right corner, click the **Options menu**  icon, and then on the menu, select **Audio Setup Wizard**. Or



In the **Audio & Video** panel, click the **Audio Setup Wizard**  icon to the left of the options menu icon. Or

On the menu bar, click **Tools**, on the drop-down menu, point to **Audio**, and then on the submenu, click **Audio Setup Wizard**.

2. To setup your audio device, in the **Audio Setup Wizard**, on the **Select Audio Output Device** page, select either the **Headphone** or the **Speakers/Headphones** option, and then click **OK**.
3. To adjust the speaker volume, on the **Speaker Setup** page, click **Play**, listen to the instructions and accordingly move the slider to increase or decrease the volume for the audio.
4. To confirm the setting, on the **Speaker Setup Confirmation** page, click **Yes**.
5. To configure the microphone settings, on the **Select Audio Input Device** page, click **OK**.
6. To test your microphone and adjust the microphone volume, on the **Microphone Setup** page, click **Record**. Move the slider to set your microphone volume.
7. To listen to the recorded audio and confirm your microphone settings, on the **Microphone Playback** page, click **Play**, and then on the **Microphone Setup Confirmation** page, click **Yes**. If you are unable to hear the recorded message with the same intensity and clarity when recording it, on the **Microphone Setup Confirmation** page, click **No**. Next, on **Microphone Problem Resolution** page, read the troubleshooting tips, click **Try Again**, and then follow the instructions on the corresponding pages to reset your microphone.
8. To finish your audio device and microphone setup, on the **Setup Complete** page, click **OK**.

Use the Blackboard Collaborate window tools

The Blackboard Collaborate window is the interface that includes tools which allow you to participate in real-time sessions, send text messages and use the whiteboard page. The Side Bar to the left of the window includes the Audio & Video, Participants and the Chat panels.

Instructors who organize collaborate sessions define permissions for its participants. Depending on the permissions assigned to you by your instructor, you can use tools such as chat, whiteboard, application sharing, and web tour. In addition, you can talk in a session and transmit your video if you are allowed to do so. If you have active permissions, you are represented with a full color icon. If you are not allowed access to certain tools on your interface, you are represented with a gray-toned icon. Icons for tools that you have permissions to use are displayed to the right of your name in the Participants panel. Point your cursor to an icon to view the description for that icon.



Let us now look at how you can use the tools in your Blackboard Collaborate window:

1. To send a text message to all participants, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, in the **Chat** panel, in the text box, type your message, and then press **Enter**.
2. To send a private message to a specific participant, in the **Participants** panel, right-click the name of that participant, and then on the menu, select **Send a Private Chat**. In the corresponding text box, type your message, and then press **Enter**. You will notice that a new tab with the name of that participant appears in the Chat panel. Please note that, private messages are not recorded. Private messages that you receive appear in the Chat panel as a new tab with the name of the sender and a callout symbol.
3. To view a private message that you received, in the **Chat** panel, click the tab that displays the sender's name with a callout symbol.
4. To close the tab for a private chat, in the **Chat** panel, on the private chat tab, point to the user icon to the left of the sender's name, and then click the close icon that appears.
5. To raise hand and request permission or register your presence, in the **Participants** panel, under your name, click the **Raise Hand**  icon.
6. To participate in a poll, in the **Participants** panel, under your name, point to the **Poll**  icon, and then from the list, select **Yes**, **No**, or **None**.
7. To step away from a session for a brief period of time, in the **Participants** panel, under your name, click the **Status**  icon. When you use this option, you will notice that your status is displayed as Away. Click the same icon to return to and continue the session.
8. To use the microphone and talk during a session if required, in the **Audio & Video** panel, click **Talk**. You will notice that a microphone icon appears on the Talk option and to the right of your name on the Participants panel.
9. To adjust your microphone volume when talking, in the **Audio & Video** panel, move the slider above the **Talk** option. To stop using the microphone, click the **Talk** option.
10. To turn on the camera of your device and preview your video, in the **Audio & Video** panel, click the user icon to the right of the **Video** option. You will be able to view yourself in the preview section of the Audio & Video panel. Click the icon again to close the preview.
11. To transmit your video during a session, in the **Audio & Video** panel, click **Video**. Click **Video** again to stop transmitting your video.
12. To exit a collaborate session and close the window, on the **File** menu, click **Exit**, and then in the **Confirmation** message box, click **OK**. Alternatively, use the close button on the title bar of the window, and then in the **Confirmation** message box, click **OK**.



Use the whiteboard and the associated Tools palette

When you join a session, the page you view to the right of your Blackboard Collaborate window is the whiteboard page. The whiteboard page is your Main Room and Public Page by default. If you have active permissions, you can enter text, point to areas of interest, draw, and insert screenshots on your whiteboard page to present information. You can use the options on the Tools palette to present different types of information on your whiteboard page. The Tools palette is available to the right of the Side Bar by default. Point your cursor to each option on the tools palette to view the description for that option. To move or relocate the Tools palette, click an area on the palette and drag it to the required location.

Let us now look at how you can use the options on the Tools palette:

1. To enter text on your whiteboard page, on the Tools palette, double-click the **Text**  icon, and then click an area on the whiteboard page. You will notice that a text box is placed in that area of the page. In the text box, type your text. A content editor toolbar appears below the Tools palette. You can format your text by using the options on this toolbar. Click an area in the window to hide the content editor toolbar.
2. To create a text label on your whiteboard page, on the Tools palette, click the **Text**  icon, from the two options, select the **Text label**  option, and then click an area on the whiteboard page where you want to insert the label. A text box is displayed in that area. In the text box, type the content for your label.
3. To capture a screenshot of a document or an application window, minimize the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, open the required document or application. Next, maximize the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, and then in the Tools palette, click the **Screen shot**  icon. You will notice that a rectangular selection area appears on your document. Click and move the rectangular selection to position it on the required area of your document or application window. Drag the corners of the rectangle to enlarge the selection area, and then click **OK**.
4. To insert the screenshot, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, move your cursor to the area on the whiteboard page where you want to place the screenshot, and then click that area of the pages. Note that, after you click OK and capture the screenshot, the view automatically toggles to display your Blackboard Collaborate window. You don't need to manually switch between your document view and the Blackboard Collaborate window view.
5. To point to an area of interest on the whiteboard page, on the Tools palette, click the **Pointer**  icon, from the list, select the required pointer, and then click the required area on the whiteboard page. If you click a different area on the page, the pointer moves to that area.
6. To underline or highlight a text on the whiteboard page, on the Tools palette, click the **Pencil**  icon, select a width for the pencil stroke, and then on the whiteboard page, click and draw under the required text.



7. To draw a shape outline such as rectangle, square, circle or ellipse, on the Tools palette, click the **Square**  icon, select a shape, and then drag your cursor on the whiteboard page.
8. To insert a clip art, on the Tools palette, click the **Clip art**  icon, and then from the different categories available in the **Clip Art** dialog box, select a clip art and click the area on the whiteboard page where you want to place the clip art. Click the close button on the title bar to close the **Clip Art** dialog box.
9. To delete an object you added to the whiteboard page, on the Tools palette, click the **Select**  icon. Next, on the whiteboard page, right-click the object you want to delete, and then on the right-menu, click **Delete Objects**.
10. To delete all objects that you added to the whiteboard page, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, on the **Edit** menu, click **Select All**. Next, right-click, and then on the right menu, click **Delete Objects**.

Access a recorded collaborate session

The Collaborate tool in your LMS allows you to access and view recorded sessions. Your instructors can use the recording feature in the tool to record live sessions and make them available to you. The tool also includes features that enable your instructors to convert a recorded session into multiple formats such as Audio, Video, and Blackboard Collaborate. Accordingly, you can view the recorded sessions in a format that suits you.

Let us now look at how you can access and view recorded sessions:

1. To access a recorded session, on your subject's navigation menu, click the link with the word Collaborate in it, and then on the corresponding Collaborate page, click the link for the recorded session. This displays a page with the recording title at the page header.
2. To view the recorded session in the video format, on the recording page, in the **Video** column, click the **Play**  button for that recording.
3. To view the recorded session in the Blackboard Collaborate format, on the recording page, in the **Title** column, click the recording title. Alternatively, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** column, click the **Collaborate**  icon for that recording.

Internet Explorer users

4. In the notification bar at the bottom of your IE window, click **Open**.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**.

Firefox users

4. In the **Opening play.collab** dialog box, click **OK**.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**.



Chrome users

4. In the downloads bar at the bottom of your Chrome screen, click the **play.collab** file.
5. In the **Security Warning** dialog box, under **Do you want to run this application?**, click **Run**.

View a recorded collaborate session

Let us look at how you can use the different options in the Blackboard Collaborate window when viewing a recorded session:

1. To play or pause the recording, on the bar at the bottom of the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, click the **Play** or **Pause**  button.
2. To manually adjust the volume for your headphones or speakers, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, in the **Audio & Video** panel to the left, move the slider next to the volume icon. To setup your headphones or speaker, please refer to the [Set up your Audio and Microphone](#) section of this guide.
3. To stop or fast forward the recording, in the **Blackboard Collaborate** window, on the menu bar, click **Playback**, on the drop-down menu, point to **Player**, and then on the submenu, click **Stop** or **Fast Forward**.
4. To hide the Side Bar and expand the page view, on the menu bar, click **View**, and then on the drop-down menu, click to unselect the **Show Side Bar** option.
5. To move within the recording, on the bar at the bottom of the window, drag the indicator along the timeline of the recording.
6. To expand and view the session recording index, in the bottom-left corner of the window, click **Main Room**. Alternatively, on the **Playback** menu, click **Show Recording Index**.
7. To move to a specific topic or page in the recording, click and expand the session recording index, and then in the index, click the title for the required page or topic.
8. To view a previous or the next page in the recording, on **Playback** menu, click **Skip Back** or **Skip to Next**.
9. To print a page from the recorded session, on the menu bar, click **File**, on the drop-down menu, point to **Print**, and then from the submenu, select **Whiteboard**. Next, in the **Select Pages** dialog box, click to select if you want to print **All Pages**, **Current Page**, or **Selected Pages**.
10. To print selected pages from the recorded session, in the **Select Pages** dialog box, click the **Selected Pages** option, and then in the drop-down box, scroll down to the required page and click the page. To select multiple pages, Windows users press **Ctrl** key, and click the required pages where as mac users, press **command** key, and click the required pages.
11. Next, in the **Select Pages** dialog box click **OK**. Now, in the **Page Setup** dialog box, select the required page setup options, and then click **OK**.
12. To print the pages, in the **Print** dialog box, under **Printer**, in the **Name** list, select your printer, in the **Copies** section, specify the number of copies, and then click **OK**.
13. To exit the recorded session, on the **File** menu, click **Exit**, and then in the **Confirmation** message box, click **OK**. Alternatively, use the Close button of the window, and then in the **Confirmation** message box, click **OK**.