



# Getting Started with Blackboard IM

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Blackboard IM is an academic-centric instant collaboration solution designed to promote learning through group work and academic and administrative help. One of the main differences between Blackboard IM and other collaboration solutions is that Blackboard IM synchronizes with your institution's enrollment records. This means that students and teachers are automatically connected with other Blackboard IM users enrolled in the same courses. Blackboard IM also includes advanced features such as video chat, screen sharing, and a robust whiteboard, which allow everyone at your institution to collaborate and communicate quickly and easily.

## Top Blackboard IM Features

These are some of the most helpful features of Blackboard IM:

- **Chat** to communicate quickly and efficiently with your classmates

- **Calls** for more natural communication with one-on-one or group conversations
- **Collaboration** to share ideas with others
- **Screen Sharing** for real-time display of any document or application on your computer
- **Whiteboard** to harness the power of visual instruction
- **Web Tour** to share webpages
- **Web Conferencing** to use Blackboard Collaborate 11 web conferencing for a full online classroom.
- **Office Hours** to create a focused setting where classmates and contacts can line up for individual attention
- **Help Desks** for virtual assistance from the administrative services at your institution
- **Broadcast Notifications** for institution-wide alerts.

## Getting Started

Blackboard IM is software that must be downloaded before it can be used. Use one of these methods to download and install the client on your computer:

1. **Through a Course Management System:** Navigate to any Blackboard IM link from your institution's Course Management System (CMS).

2. **By Invitation:** Follow the instructions and click the link in an email invitation.
3. **With a Registration Code:** Go to the Blackboard IM Registration page and enter the unique registration code provided to you along with your last name (surname) as it appears in your institution's system.

### Create a Blackboard IM ID:

Create your Blackboard IM ID:  [suggest more...](#)

Email:

Confirm Email:

Choose a Password:  Note: Passwords are case sensitive and must be at least 6 characters

Confirm Password:

Security Question:

Important! The answer to your security question will be required if you forget your password.

Answer:

I've read and agree to the Blackboard IM [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Privacy Policy](#)

After you create your Blackboard IM ID, you can download and install the Blackboard IM client. You may perform this step either immediately after creating your account, or at a later time. You log in to the Blackboard IM client using the Blackboard IM ID and password that you chose when creating your account. Whenever you launch Blackboard IM, the login window appears.

1. Enter your Blackboard IM ID.
2. Enter your Blackboard IM password.
3. Click the **sign in** button.

**Blackboard collaborate** »

**Blackboard IM ID**

**Password**

[Forgot your password?](#)

Remember me

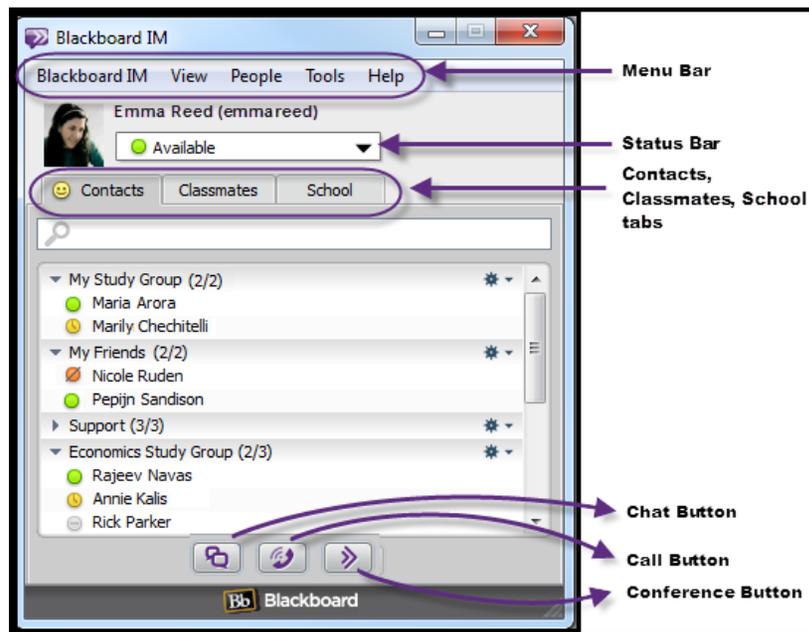
Sign in automatically

[Have a registration code?](#)

- You can set Blackboard IM to remember your Blackboard IM ID and password by checking the **remember me box**. If you do this, anyone with access to your computer can access your Blackboard IM account.
- You can also set Blackboard IM to automatically sign you in when you launch the program by checking the **sign in automatically** box. This setting can be changed in the Preferences window.

## Interface Overview

Blackboard IM is based around the Blackboard IM window, from which you manage communication with other users and access the program's more advanced features. The main elements at the top of the Blackboard IM window are: the Menu Bar, the Status Bar, the Contacts tab, the Classmates tab, and the School tab.



## Contacts, Classmates and School Tabs

The **Contacts** tab is where you keep track of your friends, study groups, and anyone else that you contact often. This tab is initially empty, but you can add any Blackboard IM user, as long as you know his or her

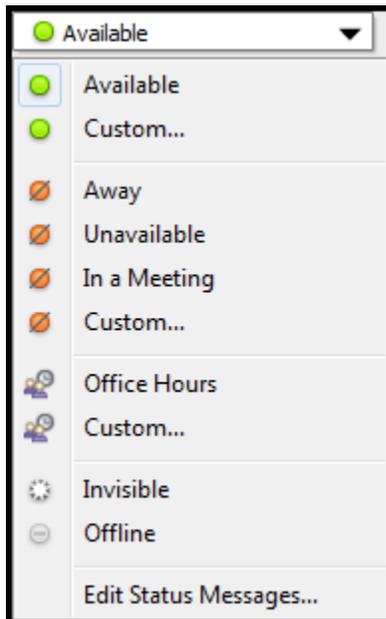
Blackboard IM ID; the user does not need to be in one of your classes, or even at your institution. The **Find** field allows you to search for a specific user in the list. You can also add groups to keep your contacts organized.

The **Classmates** tab lists all of the Blackboard IM users who are in your classes. If the instructor of a course has a Blackboard IM account, the label (**Instructor**) appears next to his or her name. You do not need to add users to your Classmates tab; it is automatically populated based on course enrollments within your institution's Course Management System. You also cannot manually add or delete classmates. The **Find** field allows you to search for users in the list.

The **School** tab lists the Help Desks that your institution has set up. These may include campus offices, library services, academic counseling, or any other resource that your institution wants to make easily available. A number appears in the tab label when Help Desks are available. Open Help Desks display the Office Hours icon next to their name, while closed Help Desks display the offline icon. Help Desks can only be added, deleted, or modified by your institution's Blackboard IM Administrator. The **Find** field allows you to search the list for a specific Help Desk.

## The Status Bar

The Status Bar shows your current availability. Since other Blackboard IM users see this status, you can use it to tell other people what you are doing and if it is a good time to contact you. Status messages are fully customizable and can be saved for future use. Click **Edit Status Messages...** to create a custom status.



## Tips for using Blackboard IM

- You can install Blackboard IM on as many computers as you wish, making it easy to keep in touch with friends and classmates, even if you are not at your primary computer.
- Classmates appear only while you are enrolled in a class. However, users remain in your Contacts tab indefinitely, so make sure you add classmates with whom you want to keep in touch as contacts before the semester ends.
- The School tab only appears if your institution has set up at least one Help Desk.