

# Using Slack

A Getting  
Started Guide  
for ITO 2.0  
Software  
Development  
Group

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# What is Slack?

- An instant messaging and collaboration app designed for teams
- Integrates with other tools for additional functionality
- Cross-platform access: browser on mac/windows, desktop app, or mobile app
- 35,000+ paying companies use Slack over 100 countries, including 29 Fortune 100 companies

# Why Slack?

- Easier to target communications to specific individuals/groups
- Allows collaboration for non-co-located scrum/sprint teams
- Integrates with Trello
- Accessible by all team members (computer/phone/watch)
- Employable skill
- Free tier pricing covers what our group needs

# How does it work?

- Organizes conversations via channels with specific purposes
- Also allows direct messaging for items that don't fit in channels
- Shows your availability/status
- Notifies you based on your chosen settings
- Useful features: Threads, Search, Star, @Mentions, Reactions, Personal notepad, Asynchronous Stand Ups

# Joining our Slack Workspace (ITOLMS)

- Step 1: Click Join Now button within invitation e-mail.  
(Should open browser window)

• lam Admin has invited you to join a Slack workspace

• Slack <feedback@slack.com>  
To: [redacted]@rogers.com



## Join ITOLMS on Slack

lam Admin (pmpeergroup@gmail.com) has invited you to join the Slack workspace **ITOLMS**. Join now to start collaborating!

**Join Now**



**ITOLMS**

Workspace URL: [itolms.slack.com](https://itolms.slack.com)

# Joining our Slack Workspace (ITOLMS)

## Join the Slack workspace ITOLMS

Full name

Display name (optional)

By default, Slack will use your full name — but you can choose something shorter if you'd like.

Password (required)

Passwords must be at least 6 characters long, and can't be things like *password*, *123456* or *abcdef*.

☐ It's ok to send me (very occasional)  
email about the Slack service.

Next →

- Step 2:
  - Fill in your full name if blank
    - This is how Slack will show you to others, so it should be the name you use within the peer group
  - Enter a password (minimum 6 characters, make it secure)
  - Recommend unchecking box
  - Click on Next button

# Joining our Slack Workspace (ITOLMS)

Step 3: Read User Terms of Service and click on Agree button.  
(Should open Slack in browser).

## Step 4: Edit your profile

- Click on down arrow beside ITOLMS and Select “Profile & Account”, which opens up Workspace Directory on the far right.
- Click on “Edit Profile” button to open your profile screen. Populate as follows:
  - Full Name: Enter your first and last name
  - Display Name: optional, if using, choose a name the peer group knows you by
  - What I do: Enter your project role (eg: “Developer” or “Tester”)
  - Phone Number: optional
  - Time zone: set to (UTC-05:00) Eastern Time (US and Canada).
  - Skype: optional
  - If you like, click on Profile Picture at top right and upload a photo to use (min 512x512 pixels, max 1024x1024 pixels.)
- Click on Save Changes button on bottom right.

# Slack Apps

You may also decide to take advantage of the Slack apps for computers, phones, and tablets

- stay signed in to multiple workspaces
  - have more control over notifications
  - stay in sync even when you're on the move
- 
- Desktop: Mac 10.9+, Windows 7+, Linux (beta)
    - Desktop notifications
    - launch from your tray
  - Mobile: IOS 9+, Android 4.1+ Windows Phone (beta)

Download here: [slack.com/downloads](https://slack.com/downloads)



# Bots

- Slackbot:
  - Interactive Slack help tool
  - Accessible through DM
- Standup Alice:
  - runs asynchronous standup meetings, prompts team members at appropriate time to post their standup, and posts results at specified time in specified Slack channel.
  - Accessible on left menu at bottom under App section
  - Waiting prompts will show as a red circle on App Name.
  - Desktop app may notify you as popup in bottom right of screen
  - May also send e-mail notifications

# Asynchronous Reporting through Alice

- Clicking on StandUp\_Alice app will show the 1<sup>st</sup> of the 3 questions
- Option of typing or clicking on quick reply buttons
- Next question will arrive after you respond until all 3 are answered
- Also gives 15 minute reminder



standup\_alice APP 8:00 AM

Hello, it's time to start daily standup. Please answer following questions (reply **no** to not report today).  
What have you worked on since the last StandUp to help the team finish the Sprint?

Quick reply

Not participating

Day off

Sick

Vacation



standup\_alice APP 9:45 AM

@Test Ing, heads up! your team stand up will be reported in 15 minutes. What have you worked on since the last StandUp to help the team finish the Sprint?

# StandUp Alice E-mail Reminder

Slack <no-reply@slack.com>  
To: alice.jones@rogers.com



Hi Test Ing,

You have a new direct message from the **ITOLMS** workspace  
([itolms.slack.com](https://itolms.slack.com)).

@alice [View in the archives](#)



**standup\_alice** 9:45 AM, September 13th

@Test Ing, heads up! your team stand up will be reported in 15 minutes.  
What have you worked on since the last StandUp to help the team finish  
the Sprint?

Snooze these notifications for: [an hour](#), [eight hours](#), [a day](#), [three days](#), or [the next week](#). Or, [turn email notifications off](#). For more  
detailed preferences, see your [account page](#).

# StandUp Alice “Daily” Scrum Results

- At specified time, Alice will post the results from all sprint team members in the appropriate sprint channel



Standup Alice APP 10:00 AM

Hey @here, daily standup complete☕☕☕

@Robert\_Cano

What have you worked on since the last StandUp to help the team finish the Sprint?

Worked on Agile presentation, will work on selenium plugin for Chrome, issue: MySQL Grant command is deprecated, replacement?

What are you working on now to help the team finish the Sprint?

will work on selenium plugin for Chrome

How you are going to blast through any obstacles unfortunate enough to be standing in your way?

issue: MySQL Grant command is deprecated, replacement?

# Channels

- Accessible on left menu between All Threads and Direct Messages
- Act as chatrooms, each has a specific purpose
  - General → project-related items intended for ALL active software peer group members
  - Random → non-project related items (ie: job fairs, etc)
  - Sprint-Team-1 through 3 → sprint team discussion, including stand-up meetings
- Public channel: Anyone in ITO workspace can join channel \*
- Private channel: Joined or viewed by invitation only

\* Transparency (Agile Value)

# Threads

- Let you respond directly to a message in a channel (instead of only below most recent message)
- Keeps replies organized neatly in a single, threaded conversation
- Can also send threaded reply to entire channel

## Managing Threads

- Accessible through All Threads on left menu above Channels
  - Catch up on threads you follow
  - Reply to a thread
  - Jump back to conversation
  - Unfollow threads

# Direct Messages (DM):

- Accessible from left menu between Channels and Apps
- DM yourself:
  - Private, searchable only by you, always-accessible notepad.
  - Useful for:
    - Works in progress
    - Quick notes
    - To do lists (strikethrough or emoji to show complete)
- DM a teammate:
  - Visible and searchable only to you and the teammate
  - Useful for:
    - Quick, private conversations between you and that teammate that would clutter up the other channels

# Availability/Status

- Slack Availability:
  - Gives team an idea of how quickly you might respond
  - Shown by circle to the left of your name in top left corner
    - Active → green circle
    - Away (30 minutes inactive) → empty circle
    - DND → circle with Z
- Slack Status:
  - Icon to the right of your name in top left corner
  - More specific about what you are doing
    - Eg: Commuting, working remotely, sick, or 100 character custom status
  - Teams should decide if they want to use Status (in addition to Availability)



# Notifications

- Managed through “bell” icon to right of your name (top left)
- Email and mobile notifications when you're away from the app
- Desktop notifications when working in another application.
- Default: any Slack posts when you are “Away”
- Customizable:
  - @mention
  - Direct message
  - Keyword used
  - Do Not Disturb Schedule
  - Snooze (manually disable notifications for selected timeframe)

# Search

- Access via text box near top right corner
- Prompts you with search modifiers once you click in box
- Helpful to search for messages
- Supports advanced search features except fuzzy search

# Star (Important Items)

Mark messages, channels or direct messages to easily locate later

Channels and Direct Messages:

- Appears top left of sidebar under “Starred”
- Star and un-star by clicking on star at top left of main pane

Messages:

- Shown by clicking Star icon near top right
- Has option to jump to that message
- Star and un-star by click on star to left of message

Visible only to you, must pin to mark as important for others

# @Mentions

Address someone in particular or group at large by using the @ symbol

1. Ensure you are in the correct channel.
  2. Type @, or click on @ symbol at right of text box.
  3. A pop up list should allow you to select a specific team member, or provide “group at large” options
  4. Click on option you want, then type your message.
  5. Hit enter to send.
- Group at large:
    - @channel: notifies every member in the channel, whether online or offline.
    - @everyone: notifies everyone on your slack team (general channel only)
    - @here: notifies every online desktop member within channel
  - Slack should send you a notify if you are @mentioned

# Emoji Reactions

- Functional and Fun
- Can add to message you are sending using smiley face on right of text box
- Can react to someone else's message by mousing over message and clicking on smiley face with plus sign
  - Slack will tell them in Activity pane on right of screen

## More information

<http://www.pocket-lint.com/news/136472-what-is-slack-and-how-does-it-work>

<https://get.slack.help/hc/en-us/categories/200111606>