# Using HipChat securely

Government staff are responsible for checking the applications they use are secure. This guidance will help you use HipChat to communicate securely with colleagues.

HipChat is a cloud application for internal chat and messaging, either 1-to-1 or in a group. You can also use it to store files, make video calls, and search message history.

## Securing your account

Secure your HipChat account by using:

* a password made up of [3 random words](https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/three-random-words-or-thinkrandom-0)
* a secure (HTTPS) connection and a[modern browser](https://whatbrowser.org/) or a[HipChat client app](https://www.hipchat.com/downloads)

If you have a corporate Google (G Suite) account use this to log in to HipChat, and [enable two factor authentication](https://www.google.com/landing/2step/) on that account.

Tell your HipChat administrator if you:

* think someone may have accessed your account
* lose a device that can access your HipChat account (you should also [reset your password](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchat/your-profile-753404078.html))

You can also [deactivate your account](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchatkb/deleting-your-account-753404162.html) to prevent anyone from accessing it. Your administrator can reactivate your account later.

## Protecting your data

To protect your data when using HipChat, make sure you:

* don't use HipChat to store[sensitive, personal](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-data-protection/key-definitions/), or other high value data (like commercial or financial information) that could cause harm or embarrassment if lost or exposed
* use [1-to-1 chats](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchat/chat-in-rooms-740001121.html) when you need to control access
* [restrict your HipChat account to your domain](https://blog.hipchat.com/2016/04/25/domain-validated-signups-save-admins-time/) if appropriate

Preserve an open working culture by only using [private channels](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchat/chat-in-rooms-740001121.html) when absolutely necessary.

When using HipChat, you should also be aware that content, including archived or private content, can be:

* disclosed publicly under the[Freedom of Information Act](https://ico.org.uk/for-organisations/guide-to-freedom-of-information/what-is-the-foi-act/)
* [exported and viewed](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchatkb/exporting-chat-history-753404166.html) by administrators in paid HipChat accounts, including private rooms, but not 1-to-1 chats
* [accessed on request by your administrator](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchat/chat-history-744525822.html) if not included in the export above, including 1-to-1 chats.
* [subject to legal requests to share data](https://www.atlassian.com/legal/privacy-policy) by courts, government agencies, or parties involved in litigation in the US

Using HipChat for social or personal use must:

* not create exposure to legal liability or embarrassment
* not affect your performance or disrupt others
* follow the [Civil Service Code](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-service-code/the-civil-service-code)

Images or files in HipChat [can be accessed by anyone with the link](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchat/share-files-744525756.html), even if they can't access the room or chat it was posted to.

Atlassian - the company that runs HipCHat - have signed up to the [EU-US Privacy Shield](https://www.atlassian.com/legal/privacy-policy) which requires them to follow European data protection requirements for personal data for their European customers. [You own the data](https://www.atlassian.com/legal/privacy-policy) you put in HipChat, and their technical security is similar to other popular public cloud services.

## Managing information

You must record or summarise important work in a permanent record at regular intervals or at the end of a piece of work.

Make sure you don’t lose content by:

* creating a permanent record of shared information at regular intervals or at the end of a piece of work
* using your document storage or email service to capture important discussions or decisions (name the data so it can be found later)

You can export data from HipChat by:

* copying and pasting the text (while noting the date)
* taking a screenshot
* asking your administrator for [an export](https://confluence.atlassian.com/hipchatkb/exporting-chat-history-753404166.html)

## Getting started

Ensure your account looks official and similar to other government HipChat accounts by:

* setting your @mention name to FirstLastORGANISATION (for example AlexBlackMOJ)
* use a recognisable profile photo
* add your role to the Job title section

You can alert others to content you have shared on HipChat by typing @all or @here. This can trigger notifications on their computer or phone. You can read the HipChat guidance on ‘[Making an announcement](https://get.slack.help/hc/en-us/articles/202009646-Make-an-announcement)’ to understand how these alerts working the meaning of these alerts.

## Getting help

For help using HipChat, you can:

* use their [getting started guide](https://confluence.atlassian.com/get-started-with-hipchat/get-started-with-hipchat-854033505.html)
* find your administrators at: https://yourdomain.[hipchat.com/people](http://hipchat.com/people)

HipChat offer support through a:

* [support page](https://support.atlassian.com/)
* [status page](https://status.hipchat.com/)

You may also get help from your internal IT team if they have agreed to do it.