

The National Archives Digital Services: Guidelines for using Slack

Slack is a web-based collaboration and discussion tool which Digital Services will be using for informal communication, brainstorming and collaboration.

If you are working and available, be on Slack!

Slack is an area for informal collaboration and discussion, but please remember that it's a professional work space – we all need to be polite and behave appropriately. ([Cat GIFs](#) are welcome, trolls are not.)

Users and usernames

[The TNA Digital Services Slack](#) is available to anyone in Digital Services and occasionally collaborators from other teams across the organisation.

It is important that it's clear to everyone who is who on Slack - you can [update your profile](#) and you should include your **full name** and an unambiguous **display name**.

While we've been pretty relaxed around the use of profile pictures it would be best to either use a picture of yourself or, if you choose not to, then don't change your profile picture too often so that other users can get used to the idea of you being an otter or a member of the crew of the Enterprise-D.

People who leave The National Archives will be removed from the TNA Digital Slack.

Notifications

All users should set up Slack so that they at least receive notifications for **Direct messages, mentions & keywords** - you are able to also set **do not disturb** times so that you don't get bothered out of hours.

Channels

Channels enable smaller teams to enter into discussions. Anyone is able to set up a channel and they can be up as either **public** or **private** - all channels should be **public** unless there is a very good reason for the channel to be hidden and invitation only - we're all part of the same team and don't need secrets!

By default everyone is subscribed to **general** and **random** (and latterly **five-percent**). You are not able to leave **general** and this should be used for department-wide discussion or information.

You can see all the available channels by clicking on the word **channels** in the left-hand navigation.

Channels will periodically be **archived** as part of routine Slack housekeeping.

Direct messages

Direct messages enable you to have one to one (or one to a few) conversations.

Posts

We're on Slack's free plan which means we're limited to 10,000 messages so each new message you add means that one falls off the other end - this means you shouldn't assume that you can go back and find something because chances are that it'll be gone. Currently (2018-03-21) the limit of 10,000 messages is giving us about 4 to 6 weeks of content.

The 10,000 message limit includes **anything typed into the message input box and sent as one message** - that includes direct messages and private channels. Every time you hit enter in an input box a message falls off the other end.

However 4 to 6 weeks of messages is plenty so don't worry too much about what you type just be aware that it won't always be there for you to go back and find!

If something said on Slack is considered important it should be moved somewhere more permanent - e.g. Objective or Github

Files

Slack's free plan also has a file storage limit of 5GB so it makes sense to go back and delete those big hilarious cat GIFs periodically.

5GB is a lot of space but Slack doesn't manage it like messages and when it fills up we can't add more until space has been freed up.

[Delete files from Slack](#)

Account administrators can see and delete any public files - other users can only see delete their own.

If this becomes an issue we might put measures in place to automatically remove all but the last few months of files. So, if a file posted on Slack is considered important it should be moved somewhere more permanent - e.g. Objective or Github

Privacy

While the network is only available to team members be sensible about what you post - if you think it'd be risky for the world to see it then it probably doesn't belong on Slack.