

ComIT

Introduction to Slack

For the purpose of communicating with your teachers, classmates and the rest of the ComIT team, we will mainly use Slack. A Slack workspace is basically a virtual classroom where you can send messages to the whole classroom, or to individuals (or groups of individuals) in private messages. You can use Slack to share links, homework tips and questions, code, tech resources, or documents as well as messages.

Slack has a phone app, a desktop app and a website app. We would suggest you have it on the place you spend the most time, and ensure you adjust the notifications to your comfort level while ensuring you are not missing important information. You will receive a link to your email a day or two before the course begins to give you access to the workspace created for this class.

Please note: Slack is a common tool used among tech companies so being familiar with it will likely make starting a new job easier. We know this will be a new app for many people, so here are a few highlights on how to use it.

Channels

Channels are places where we can share messages with anyone who is participating in that channel, so they are semi-public. Normally, a ComIT course has a #random channel, a #course channel, #exercise channel and #general channel. Often, the #general channel is used by the program coordinators and your instructor to mention questions they would like to have everyone answer, or when there is a change to the course plan.

The #random channel you can share whatever you want, from online tech courses you are taking, to pictures of funny cats. #Course and #exercise channels are meant for course specific material to be shared (often by the teacher) or for questions to be asked. Please consider what notification settings you would like for each channel and set them accordingly.

If you want to ensure that a specific person gets a notification in the channel, you can tag them individually using @Pablo or @Sarah, or tag the whole group by saying @Everyone or @Channel (please remember that this will trigger a notification to everyone subscribed to that channel, so try to avoid using the tag during night).

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Direct Messages

Direct messages can be for one person or you can make groups with your classmates. Click the + button if you don't see someone on the list from the course and you can search for them. Program Coordinators may be sending you direct messages to see how you are doing or to ask about your resume or career interests or job opportunities specific to your background.

Sharing Documents

Slack has a document organizing platform, and allows you to share documents or links. To share a document, you can go to the text box, and click on the paperclip icon near the bottom right hand corner. From there, you can choose your attachment, type a message, and share your document with the Channel, in a Direct Message, or in a group chat.

Where to Use Slack

While the only Slack channel that is obligatory to use is the one we have invited you to use in the course, you might find there are many Slack Workspaces for tech professionals or other interest groups that you would like to join. Each city has a couple of slack channels dedicated to developers and they can be another good source to look for jobs, tips, advice and networking opportunities.

Additional Resources

- Visit and read articles the Slack Website:
 - <https://slack.com/intl/en-ca/help/articles/360016548313-About-Slacks-features>
- Watch this video on how to use Slack:
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dJmdHowChWk&t=42s>
- Learn how to share code and helpful shortcuts (video):
 - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVJAcEIFMUU>