# How to use Spatial Chat

Spatial Chat is a virtual video platform that allows people to communicate and interact in an organised digital environment. It's designed to simulate the experience of being in a physical space and interacting with others in a more natural and intuitive way, compared to traditional video conferencing tools.

Users are represented by avatars that move around a virtual room. When avatars are closer to each other, participants can hear and see each other more clearly, simulating the dynamics of real-life conversations.

## What you need:

* A **desktop/laptop** with a **mic** and **camera**.
* A web browser (Chrome recommended).
* **Headphones** to help prevent microphone feedback – this is **very** important!

## How to sign in

* You will be provided a URL (special.chat/s/YourEventURL).
* Enter your name in the Full Name Field.
* You can explain a bit about yourself in the About tab.
* Upload an avatar (Will be since whenever your camera is off).
* The next screen will then ask you to allow permissions for your microphone, camera (Make sure to press allow).
* Check everything works and test your speakers.
* Click Join Space’.

## How it works:

* Once you join, you will appear as an avatar in the main room.
* You can click and drag your avatar to move around.
* You can also click and drag on the background to look around.
* If you want to zoom you can the following ways
  + - Mouse: Use the track wheel
    - Trackpad: Move two fingers back and forth on your pad
  + To navigate to different rooms
    - On the right, you will see different rooms.
    - You can click on the drop-down arrow to see who is in each room.
    - To join, click on the name of the room.
  + How to communicate in Spatial Chat
    - You can chat via the microphone to other avatars.
    - The further away you move from an avatar, the quieter they will become (like an actual room).
    - If you want to teleport to someone, you click on their name in the room tab.

### Room types

**Breakout Room**

Breakout room emulates the dynamics of a physical office, class, and event with the Spatial Audio feature. Here, participants can enter a room and engage in group discussions by maneuvering their avatars closer to a cluster of people.

With a capacity limit of 50 users, each Breakout room allows for seamless interaction, screen sharing, and content addition.

**Stage Room**

The room is ideal for presentations, lectures, webinars, and other events that require a speaker to address a large audience with the ability to accommodate up to 10,000 people.

The stage can host up to 12 speakers, offering an engaging and interactive experience for both the audience and presenters. Its interactive functions, such as emoji reactions and real-time chat, offer a unique way to engage audiences.

**Workplace Room**

It provides a zoomable canvas where users can interact with Multiple screenshares, engage in Room Chat and Direct Messages, and work on projects together.

Hosts can navigate effortlessly between multiple whiteboards to cover various topics, while students can engage in live chat, making the virtual class almost as interactive as a physical classroom.

## Room Chat

Room Chat offers participants a space to communicate in real time, with the freedom to share insights, questions, and essential information while maintaining a sense of the physical space.

Unlike Direct Chat, messages are sent to a general chat room. They can be read by all users who are in the room.

* Room Chat is not just a sidebar in your virtual space; it's an integral part of your interaction experience.
* You can use it to provide real-time feedback, to break out into smaller discussion groups, or to share important links and resources.
* Room Chat offers a dedicated space for storing crucial academic resources, be it study materials, links, or important announcements, ensuring that nothing gets lost in the shuffle.
* During an online lecture, a teacher can use Room Chat to conduct quick polls, encourage students to ask questions or share supplementary resources like articles and videos.
* All messages appear above your avatar and in the side chat bar.

## Direct messages

Direct Messages is a feature in the SpatialChat platform that allows users to send messages to a specific individual, bypassing the Room Chat.

Educators can use this functionality to offer personalised support and feedback to individual students, helping to clear any doubts they might have without disrupting the class flow.

## Icon explanation:

|  |  |
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| Icon | Purpose |
| A green microphone icon on a black background | This is the **microphone** button. It will turn green when your microphone is live and red when it is muted. |
| A green camera icon on a black background | This is the **webcam** button. It will turn green when your microphone is live and red when it is muted. |
| A speech bubble with 2 lines in it. | This is the **balloon chat**. You can express your emotions with emojis or say something. Speech balloons are displayed for a short time and then disappear, but they will remain visible to all participants in the room chat. |
| A white play button | Click on **Spotlight me** icon on the toolbar at the bottom so that other room guests can see they are invited to join your screen presentation mode. Spotlight me is like presenting a screen for everyone in the room. |
| A white and black computer screen with an arrow pointing to the right | You can use the **Screen Share** button on the bottom panel to show the other people in the SpatialChat room your screen, application window, or browser tab. |
| A white pencil on a black background | Simply click the **pen icon** on the bar at the bottom of the screen, choose your favourite colour in the palette and start drawing. The tool is great for highlighting crucial things or visual explanations in real time. |
| A white plus button within a blue circle. | The **plus** button gives you further options to upload files, add notes and test boxes to the room, link a video (Youtube, Twitch, Vimeo), add a GIF or a Google doc. |
|  | The **chat** button allows you toggle whether you want to show or hide it. |
|  | The **room** button allows you toggle whether you want to show or hide it. |
|  | The **calendar** button allows you toggle whether you want to show or hide it. |

## Spawn points

Spawn means where your avatar will appear in the room when you log in. You will spawn into the main room, unless the host has created a **Spawn Spot,** which is a feature that lets you choose a specific location in the breakout room where guests will appear when they join.

## Accessibility

There is currently no integrated live captioning on Spatial Chat. The current advice is for students to use Chrome and toggle on Google Live Captions

Screen-reader compatibility and keyboard shortcuts are not currently a feature. A roadmap from the company details this is being worked on.

## Online etiquette

Spatial Chat is an online classroom and the same rules of etiquette apply! Be courteous and polite to all staff and students and follow any rules that the tutor has put in place. Use headphones to avoid any audio feedback and use the raise hand functions and the chat to aid communication. Remember that the same disciplinary rules will apply as if you were in a classroom on-campus and staff will have the ability to remove anyone from the room that is being disruptive. 

## Private spaces

Private Areas are a specialised feature available within the Breakout room designed to offer a secure and secluded environment. This allows for more private and focused conversations, collaborations, and one-on-one interactions.

## Technical difficulties

* Refreshing the page will fix most things!
* If that doesn’t work, try muting and unmuting your mic and camera in Spatial Chat.
* Check if your browser has permitted camera and mic access.
* Spatial Chat has a **help** button at the bottom of the screen for further issues.