Top 5 tips for getting started in Slack

We created this guide with two types of people in mind: anyone who's new to Slack (welcome!) and the more advanced user who wants tips to share with others. Each tip has two parts:

Why this tip matters

How this works for teams at Slack

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*A note before we begin: To help you learn more about these tips, we've **bolded** handy words and phrases that you can copy and paste into the search bar at slack.com/help for more information.*

1 Get connected to your team

WHY IT MATTERS

Slack allows you and your team to stay connected anywhere—on the road, in a home office or two desks down. First, download the **Slack apps for desktop and mobile** with **notifications** on. This is what you need to share documents, start a video call in Slack or discuss tomorrow's big meeting. Next, help your workmates find you by uploading a clear profile photo and by **filling out your Slack profile** with your name, job description and/or title, phone number and time zone.

HOW THIS WORKS AT SLACK

Right now we have 25 people named Matt at Slack, making it essential that each one set up a complete profile. (If you've ever tried to find "Joe in Accounting," you'll appreciate how much time this will save.) At Slack, we use our profiles to share our office locations, managers, even dietary restrictions. (You may see additional fields in your profile if your organization is on a paid plan.)

Edit your profile ×

Full name
Liza Dawson

Display name
Liza
This could be your first name, or a nickname — however you'd like people to refer to you in Slack.

What I do
Senior Brand Marketing Manager
Let people know what you do at Marketing.

Phone number
333-555-1212
Enter a phone number.

Time zone
(UTC-08:00) Pacific Time (US and Canada)
Your current time zone. Used to send summary and notification emails, for times in your activity feeds, and for reminders.

Profile photo

Upload an Image
Remove photo

Cancel   Save Changes

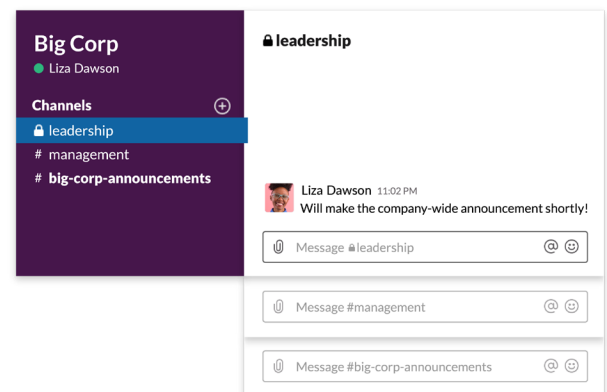## 2 Move a project from email to channels

WHY IT MATTERS

Work in Slack is organized by channels. So to really understand what working in Slack is like, start using channels right away. Bring your most active project or work conversations out of multiple email threads and into one **Slack channel**. Add **teammates** and **related files** to the same channel and continue the conversation there. By doing this many teams find:

- It's much easier to assemble the right people and organize around a common goal
- They have more control—anyone can join or leave a channel as needed
- Folks coming into a project ramp up faster because messages and files are saved and searchable

HOW THIS WORKS AT SLACK

Here are some of the key ways we use channels at Slack:

- Default to public channels so that knowledge is shared, and reserve private channels for sensitive conversations
- Create and use consistent channel **naming conventions**, like #proj-website-launch (proj = project), so that conversations are easy to find
- Use **shared channels** to work with external partners, clients and vendors

Big Corp
● Liza Dawson

Channels ⊕
🔒 leadership
management
big-corp-announcements

🔒 **leadership**

Liza Dawson 11:02 PM
Will make the company-wide announcement shortly!

Message 🔒leadership @ ☺
Message #management @ ☺
Message #big-corp-announcements @ ☺
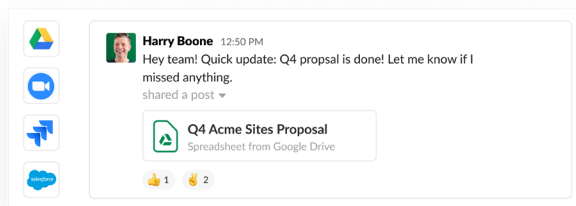
③ Add the tools you use every day

WHY IT MATTERS

In a typical day, we all move from app to app to app: one for calendars, another for file-sharing, still another to log account updates. Slack is the hub for all these apps, saving time and boosting productivity.

HOW THIS WORKS AT SLACK

Every organization is different, of course, but at Slack we've found that a few types of apps add huge value for every person:

- **File-sharing and cloud storage**: Examples include Dropbox, Box and Google Drive
- **Email and calendars**: Gmail/Google Calendar; also works with Microsoft Outlook
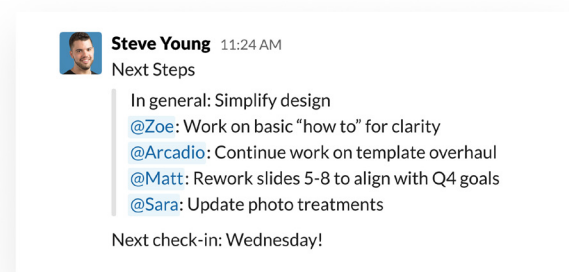
Harry Boone 12:50 PM
Hey team! Quick update: Q4 propsal is done! Let me know if I missed anything.
shared a post ▾

Q4 Acme Sites Proposal
Spreadsheet from Google Drive

👍 1   ✌️ 2

④ Reach key people with @mentions

WHY IT MATTERS

Work often involves waiting for others—to review work or to get an approval before moving forward. Grab the attention of anyone in Slack by mentioning their name in a channel, preceded by an @ symbol. They will get a notification that you've mentioned their name. Use it to get quick responses on time-sensitive matters, or when you need a question answered in channel by a specific person you know is *the* expert.

HOW THIS WORKS AT SLACK

After meetings, we often post summary notes to the project or team channel with action items and deadlines. We use @mentions to reiterate who agreed to take on each task, and each person gets a notification with a link to the message.

Steve Young 11:24 AM
Next Steps

In general: Simplify design
@Zoe: Work on basic "how to" for clarity
@Arcadio: Continue work on template overhaul
@Matt: Rework slides 5-8 to align with Q4 goals
@Sara: Update photo treatments

Next check-in: Wednesday!

⑤ Say more with less

WHY IT MATTERS

When it comes to communication, *how* you say it is often just as important as what you say. Look out for opportunities to use "reacji," or emoji reactions, in place of messages that might otherwise clutter communication. Here's a good list to start:
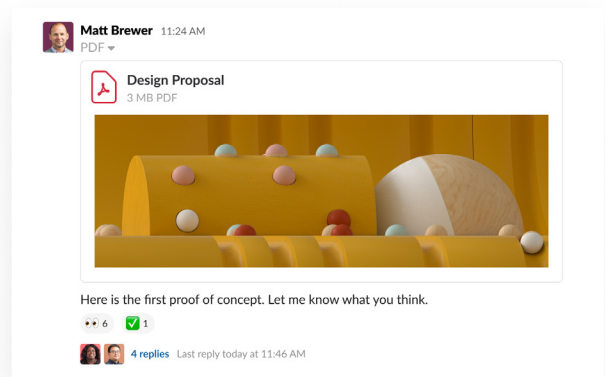
👀 = "I've seen your message"
✅ + ✔️ = "approved" or "I finished the training"
➕ = "I agree"
👍 = "Great job!" or "Well done!"

HOW THIS WORKS AT SLACK

We use emoji/reacji all the time to speed up work—it's serious business at Slack. In the example below, you can see how reacji are used to let the designer know that the draft ad copy for our conference has been approved, without needing to type another message. If needed, write more detailed responses in a thread, while the designer can hover over each reacji to see who reviewed and approved the draft.

Matt Brewer 11:24 AM
PDF ▾

📄 Design Proposal
3 MB PDF

Here is the first proof of concept. Let me know what you think.

👀 6   ✅ 1

4 replies   Last reply today at 11:46 AM

Learn more

There are more resources available to learn how to use Slack effectively. In addition to our Help Center referenced above, you'll likely find these two places useful for learning more: our new Slack curriculum with eight easy-to-follow modules at slack.com/resources/slack-101 and our company blog at Slackhq.com.

slack