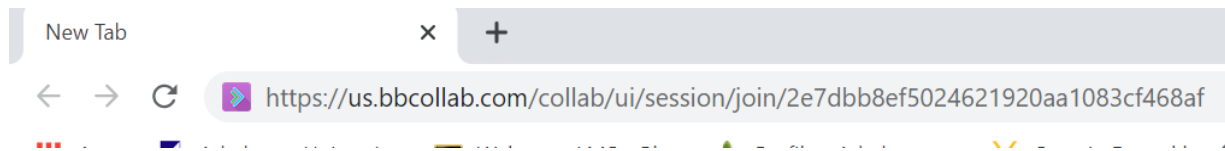


Accessing Your Collaborate Session in Blackboard

Your instructor has either sent you a link or created a menu area in your Blackboard course so that you can log into the collaborate session at the correct time. Please check with your instructor to determine where the link is located.

NOTE: You will need to use a **Chrome browser for the best experience**. If Chrome is not your default browser, you will need to cut and paste the link into the Chrome web url. (web address bar)



If you do not have Chrome on your computer, you may need to download it prior to starting the session.

It is recommended that you try to log in a few minutes prior to the start time so that you can set up your audio and video if needed.

Once you click on the session link you in Blackboard you will see the option to join the session. Once there you will follow the instructions to get set up.

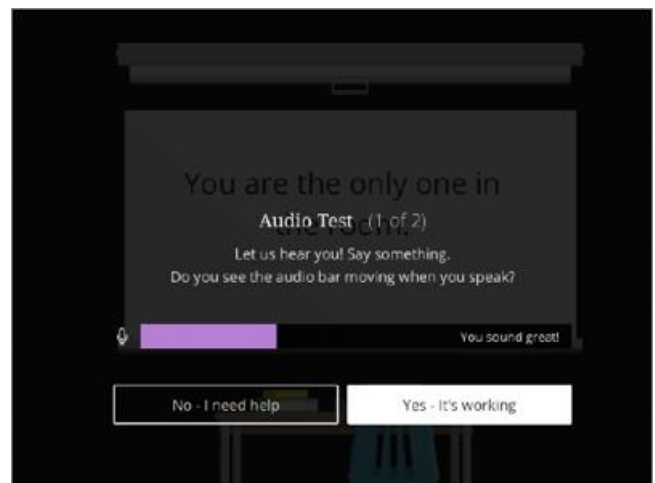
Getting Set Up

You must give the browser permission to use audio and video to participate in a session. This is necessary so that you are seen and heard.

You'll be asked to do this when you first join a session or when you first go to share your audio or video.

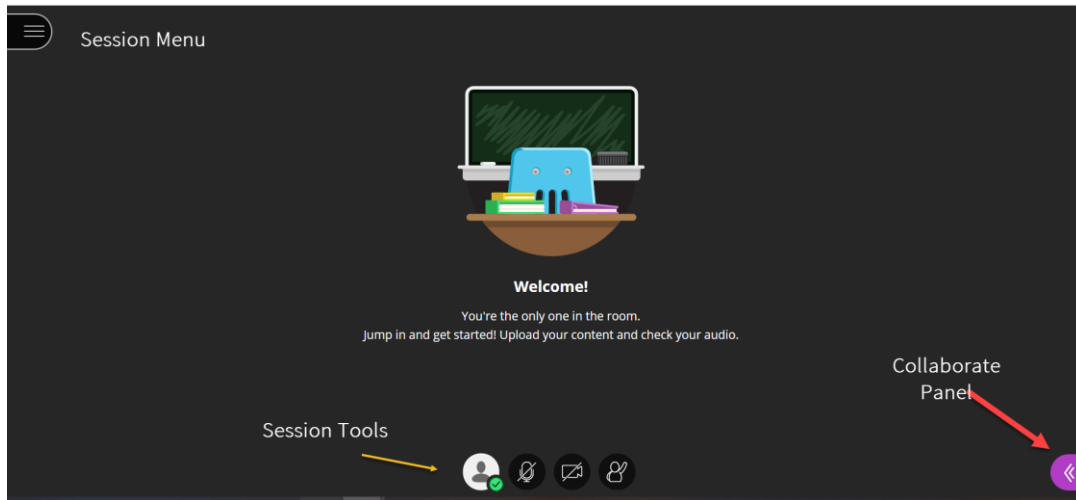
Some browsers need access to your microphone to play audio, even if you don't plan to speak. To hear others in the session, give the browser permission to access the microphone.

See [Audio and Video](#) issues below.



Participating in a Collaborate Session

Once you join the session you will see the session panel. Depending on whether the moderator is sharing anything you will see the participants or the shared content. In the image below no one else has joined the session.



You will also see the collaborate panel icon. If you click on the icon it will expand the panel so that you can join the chat, which allows you to send messages to other participants and the moderator during the session. You can also see the other participants and change any of your settings.

The session tools allow you to turn your audio and video on and off as needed (if the moderator has permitted use) as well as raise your hand when you have a question. **Note:** your mic will be muted when you start the session you will need to unmute it if you want to speak.

It is a good idea to close all other applications during your session as they may slow down your connection and cause some issues.

Best practices for best experience

- **Use a hard-wired (Ethernet) connection**, if available. If not available, use a Wifi connection. If using Wifi, try to be as close to the router as possible.
- **Close other programs.** Close all programs and streaming services on your computer except for the browser you are using for your Collaborate session.
- **Keep your browser current.** Only use up-to-date Internet browsers (Chrome is best)
- **Limit video use.** Use video during the session only when necessary.
- **Use supported mobile browsers.** For the best experience, use Safari on iOS devices and Chrome on Android devices.
- **Use headphones.** Cut down on the background noise and use headphones.

Make a strong impression

- Join the session early. Give yourself time to learn what you can and can't do in the session. Set up your audio and video. Practice using the tools.
- Be on time. If you can't be early, be on time. Let the moderator know if you are going to be late or absent.
- Introduce yourself. Don't assume everyone automatically recognizes your voice. State your name the first few times you speak. Let moderators know who is participating. Give everyone a chance to know you.
- Make eye contact. If you are sharing video, look at the camera and not the session. It may feel weird but it shows you are engaged in the session. If you need to multi-task during the session, shut your video off to avoid looking distracted.

- Mute yourself when not speaking. Nothing is more distracting than background noise. For example, typing or a private conversation. It can also give the impression that you aren't paying attention.
- Be professional. You may be joining the session from somewhere private but you are not alone. You are face-to-face with your peers, instructors, and guest experts. Make a good impression. Participate. Don't talk over someone. Raise your hand if there is no opening to speak. Type questions and feedback in the chat. Pick your best profile picture. Watch your mannerisms and facial expressions.
- Take an active part. Use the feedback feature and chat to show your engagement.

Audio and video issues

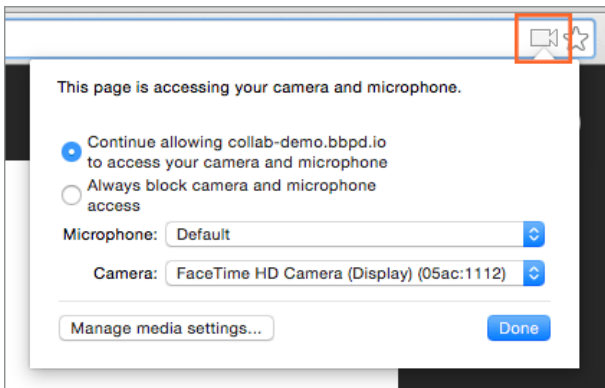
If you are having issues with your audio or video, please check your session and browser settings.

Are the audio or video controls on? A line through the icons means that a device is not enabled.

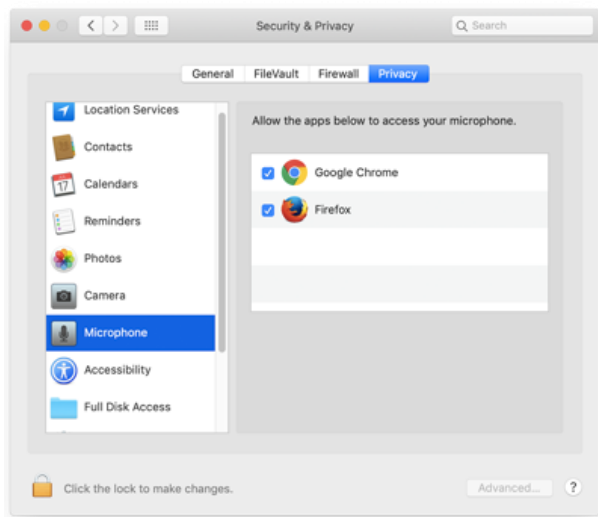
Are you using the latest version of Chrome? Update your browser.

Does the browser have permission to access your camera and microphone?

Select the audio/video icon in the URL bar to check the default audio and video settings. From the pop-up window, you can change devices or step through your device setup again to set the default devices. You may need to refresh the page for the change to take effect.

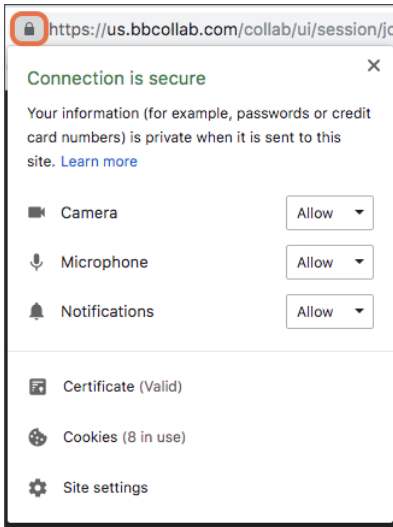


If you are using macOS X 10.14 and higher, open your computer System Preferences and select Security & Privacy. Select Privacy. Make sure your browser is a selected app for both the Camera and Microphone.



Open Chrome Preferences, select Advanced and Site Settings. Select Camera or Microphone. Make sure the session is in the Allow list.

Select the View site information icon to the left of the URL to view site information and see if anything is blocked.



Troubleshooting Tips

If the session is unstable and/or you are having trouble being heard or hearing your instructor see the following;

- Ensure you are using **Chrome** and not IE, Edge, Firefox. [Review Accessing Your Session](#)
- Check to see that your settings have been enabled correctly. [Review Audio and Video Issues](#)
- Ensure you have closed all other programs
- Use hardwire internet whenever possible, if using wifi make sure you are close to the router
- Turn off video
- See [Best Practices for Experience](#)
- You will need to log out of the session and log back in after making any of the changes above.