iChat is a Macs-only platform that allows you to talk via text chats, voice chats, or video chats with one other person or a group of people. You can talk to anyone with Internet access and a .Mac, AIM, Google Talk, or Jabber account. iChat comes standard on modern Macs.

How to Setup your iChat Account

There are several ways to set up and use an iChat account. When you first open iChat on your Mac, it will give you the option of using a .mac or Aim account. If you don't have either, AIM is a common used platform and completely free. To sign up for an AIM account, visit http://dashboard.aim.com/aim and click “Get a Screen Name.” After you register, AIM will send you a confirmation email and you can use your screen name to sign into iChat.

• Start iChat by clicking on its icon on your dock. You will be asked to enter an AIM screen name (see above) or a .Mac member name. Click Continue.

• If you have a Jabber Account, you can set it up on the next screen. Otherwise, just ignore it.

• The next screen asks if you would like to use Bonjour Messaging. Bonjour allows you to exchange messages and files with computers that are nearby and/or on your network. It is not recommended for users who commonly use public wireless networks or a modem. If you are unsure, leave it unchecked and click “continue.”

• The next screen will test your camera. If you have a modern Mac with a built in camera, its green light should turn on and you should see yourself in the window.

• The last screen tells you how you how to get started and change the settings you’ve chosen if you change your mind. Click “Done” to begin.

Add Contacts

• To add a new contact, either click on the button in the bottom left corner of the Buddy List or choose “Add Buddy” from the Buddies menu.

• On the next screen, type in your contact’s account name in the Account Name field and select the type of account they have.
• Next, choose which group you would like them added to, type their real name in the appropriate fields, and click the Add button.

• Once added, the person’s name will appear in your buddy list, along with their current status.

Create Groups

Groups help you organize your contacts. To create a group, click on the button at the bottom. Scroll down to “Add Group...” and fill a name in the pop-up window. Now when you add a buddy, you can add them directly to a group.

Talk with a Buddy

iChat provides four different way to talk with a contact. They are found on the bottom toolbar of your buddy list. Once you select a contact’s name, you can click on one of these buttons to initiate conversation. You can also right click any contact to find these options.

Text Chats

Button: This starts a text conversation, similar to AIM or Zimbra chats. Double click a buddy’s name in the list, and then type a short message in the window that appears. Press your Return key to send it.

• Your buddy will receive a small window with your message. They accept the invitation by clicking on your message or typing a response. Then your window will display your conversation and icon pictures.
You can send pictures or files by dragging them into the box where you type text and hitting “Return.” You can also go to “Buddies” on the top toolbar and scroll down to “Share File…”

**Voice Chats**

- **Button:** This starts an audio-only conversation, like a phone-call. Most modern Macs include a built-in microphone along with the camera. You can talk with up to nine buddies at a time using voice chat.

  - If a buddy has a telephone icon next to their name, you can chat with them by voice. To begin a conversation, click on phone icon, rather than their name. A window will appear, saying you are “Waiting for reply….”

  - A window pops up your Buddy’s computer with a ringing sound, inviting them to chat. To respond they can click anywhere on the Invitation window.

  - Each person will see a small window with a Volume controller and green bars to indicate when someone is talking.

  - To add another buddy, go to your buddy list and Command-Click (hold down the ‘Apple’ key and click) on each buddy you want to invite. You can also click on their name and the phone button on the bottom toolbar, or hit the “+” button.
**Video Chats**

Button: This starts a video-chat. If a buddy has a camera icon next to their name, you can video-chat with them. You can chat with up to three buddy's simultaneously in a videoconference.

- To begin a conversation with one buddy, click on the video icon next to their name, rather than their name. A window will appear, saying you are “Waiting for reply…”

  - Once a contact accepts your invitation to video-chat, a window will pop up with their video feed. Your video-feed, what they will see on their screen, appears in the bottom corner. You can drag to resize either picture.

  - To add another buddy, go to your buddy list and Command-Click (hold down the 'Apple' key and click) on each buddy you want to invite. They must have a multi-camera icon next to their name.

**Screen Sharing**

Button: This allows you to share computer screens with your contact. You can ask to share your screen with a buddy, or ask them to share their screen with you. Being able to share, observe, and control a single desktop allows you collaborate with a buddy on projects, share PowerPoint presentations, and browse the web together. You will be able to talk with voice chat while sharing screens.
• Select a buddy’s name that you would like to share screens with. Then click the screens button on the bottom toolbar and select how you would like to share screens.

• Once they accept your request, you should see their screen on your Mac, or a text message should appear notifying you that your screen is being shared.

• To exit the screen-share, go to the top right of your screen, where the screen-share symbol appears in red. Click it and scroll down to “End Screen Share....”

Settings

• To change your current status, click on “Available” under your name at the top of your buddy list. Scroll through and select a pre-written status, or write your own. If you select “invisible,” you will not appear on any buddies’ lists as online. As such, only you can initiate chats.

• You can change more settings, like the font and color of your text, by clicking “iChat” in the top toolbar and scrolling down to “Preferences.” You should browse the general account settings to make sure they are to your liking.