

Blackboard

Collaborate home networking troubleshooting tips

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Product: Blackboard Collaborate

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Summary

This article provides basic home network troubleshooting tips for users that are having issues accessing or participating in Collaborate sessions. Issues may include:

- Poor audio
- Poor video
- Can't connect to a live session
 - Endless purple spinner after clicking on join or using a guest link
 - Uh-Oh Cannot connect error
 - Uh-Oh Reconnecting... error
 - Refresh to reconnect error

Information: This article provides basic home network troubleshooting tips for users that are having issues accessing or participating in Collaborate sessions. This article is written ONLY for users who are accessing Collaborate from a HOME network. Issues may include:

- Poor audio
- Poor video
- Can't connect or stay connected to a live session
 - Endless purple spinner after clicking on join or using a guest link
 - Uh-Oh Cannot connect error
 - Uh-Oh Reconnecting...error
 - Refresh to reconnect error

However, if you are see a purple spinner because you can't get to the scheduling page to join a session, [click here](#).

Users connecting from a school or work network should contact their IT department and refer them to the [Collaborate Networking and Firewall article](#).

How Internet connectivity works with Collaborate

Before we get started, [click here](#) to learn the basics of how the Internet works.

While a fast Internet connection may be sufficient for viewing static web pages or reading email, synchronous “real time” communication services like Collaborate require more than just speed.

Collaborate is constantly sending and receiving data while a session is taking place. Therefore, Collaborate is more sensitive to general network conditions than a generic web page download.

A steady, consistent network stream is essential for a Collaborate session to function properly. Therefore, the network connection can not suffer from excessive latency, jitter, or packet loss as these things will cause session quality to suffer or even affect the ability of the user to connect to a Collaborate session at all. For more information about the network connection status displayed within Collaborate sessions, [click here](#).

While WiFi is the most convenient way to connect to the Internet, it is not necessarily the the best. [Click here](#) to learn about the advantages of using Ethernet instead of WiFi.

We do not recommend connecting to a Collaborate session over VPN as quality may suffer depending on the route of the VPN. We understand that some users may rely on a VPN connection for various reasons. If it is not possible to turn off your VPN while using Collaborate, please contact your IT Helpdesk for assistance.

Determining if your home network is the likely culprit

1. Try a different browser if possible OR try an incognito or private browser window to make sure an add-on or extension is not blocking the Collaborate page from loading correctly.
 1. [Chrome Private Browsing](#)
 2. [Firefox Private Browsing](#)
 3. [Safari Private Browsing](#)
 4. [Edge Private Browsing](#)
2. Collaborate provides a Network Connection Status tool that is used to monitor the health of your Internet connection. The tool will indicate if you are experiencing packet loss or latency on your network's uplink or downlink. [Click here for more information.](#)
3. Try a different computer on the same network connection. If the alternate computer exhibits the same symptoms, the issue is likely caused by your network or ISP.
4. If other devices on the same network are having issues, such as the ones below, the issue is likely caused by your network or ISP.
 1. Buffering while streaming videos or music/audio.
 2. Lagging while playing video games online.
 3. Webpages loading slowly.
5. If using WiFi, try switching to a hard wired connection to determine if the issues are affecting your entire home network.
6. Try the same computer on a different network connection (ex. coffee shop, local library, or cellular hotspot). If issues are resolved by changing networks, then the issue is most likely being caused by your home network or ISP.

If the issue seems to be related to your computer and NOT your network, [please click here for more troubleshooting steps](#).

Suggested network troubleshooting steps

If you suspect that your network or ISP is causing your Collaborate session issues, please try the following:

- Use a hardwired Ethernet connection to your router: [Windows instructions](#) / [Mac instructions](#)
 - Check cable for signs of wear and tear.
 - Ensure the cable plug “clicks” into the computer and router.
 - Ensure that the network setting on your computer is set to Ethernet instead of WiFi.
- If hardwiring is not an option and you must use WiFi try the following:

- Ensure that the WiFi router is properly placed in the home for maximum efficiency.
 - For example, place the WiFi router in a high spot in the center of the room, away from other electronic devices, windows, microwaves etc.
 - [Click here for more tips on how to place a router for maximum efficiency.](#)
- Be sure that you are located as close to the WiFi router as physically possible.
- If the WiFi signal is weak in the area of your home you are working, a WiFi extender or higher powered WiFi router might help.
- Ensure that your router is configured to use the best WiFi channel for a stronger signal.
 - [Click here](#) for OS specific instructions.
- Restart the modem and/or router.
- Reboot your computer.
- Clear your DNS cache. [Click here](#) for OS specific instructions.
- Shut down all unnecessary programs on the computer being used to access the Collaborate session, especially programs that use an Internet connection such as email, instant messaging clients, streaming services (YouTube, Disney, Amazon, Hulu, Netflix), social media apps (Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok), other web conferencing options (Skype, Webex, Teams), etc.
- Limit use of unnecessary network connected (including WiFi and Bluetooth) devices and services in the home like tablets, cell phones, Smart TVs, streaming devices and streaming services (YouTube, Disney, Amazon, Hulu, Netflix), gaming consoles, and other computers.
 - Please note that devices connected to mobile LTE networks do not affect your home network connection/bandwidth utilization.
- Contact your ISP support and ask them to test your network components. If a line test does not find any issues:
 - Have ISP support walk you through changing your IP address on your router.
 - Ask ISP support to check if router firmware is up-to-date.
 - Ask ISP support if your router needs a factory reset.
 - Ask ISP support if your router hardware needs to be upgraded.
 - If you own your own router, ask ISP support if your router model is supported.
- If you purchased your router separately, contact your router manufacturer for support.
 - Check your router configuration for potential issues with settings.
 - A factory reset may be necessary. **Consult router documentation or router manufacturer support first and backup your settings!**
 - Ensure that the router firmware is up-to-date. **Consult router documentation or router manufacture support first and only use firmware files downloaded from your router manufacturer's website!**