Collaborate Ultra: Requirements for Use

To participate in a session of Blackboard Collaborate with both audio and video, users should have equipment and software that meet or exceed certain minimum standards. As the application evolves, the requirements for hardware, operating system, browser and auxiliary programs may change along with it.

Operating System

As of February 2017, Collaborate Ultra is compatible with the following operating systems for both personal computers and mobile devices:

Personal Computers	Mobile Devices
MS Windows 7, 8, and 10	MS Windows 8.1 or later
Apple Macintosh 10.8 or later	Apple iOS 8 or later
Ubuntu and Fedora Linux (recent versions)	Android 4.0 or later

For Android and Apple smartphones and tablets, Blackboard recommends installing the Blackboard App (formerly BbStudent) or Blackboard Instructor. Blackboard mobile apps support Collaborate Ultra, but not the Original or "Classic" Collaborate experience.

According to Blackboard's documentation, "Microsoft Surface devices running Windows RT are not supported."

Browser

Moderators and Presenters

For anyone serving in the role of Moderator or Presenter in a Collaborate conference, Blackboard recommends using either *Google Chrome or Mozilla Firefox.* As of now, these are the only browsers that support WebRTC (Real-Time Conferencing) technology and Collaborate's Share Application feature. The minimum versions required are 41 for Chrome, 49 for Firefox.

When using the Share Application feature for the first time, both Chrome and Firefox require a Desktop Sharing extension that users must download. With a good connection, installation of the extension is almost instantaneous. Firefox may have some initial difficulties with the extension: If application sharing does not work, you may need to uninstall and reinstall the extension.

1. In Firefox, click the **Open Menu** icon on the toolbar.

2. Click **Add-ons**.

3. Click **Extensions**.

4. Find Desktop Sharing, and click **Remove**.

5. Return to the Collaborate session and start to share an application again.

6. Go through the wizard to reinstall the Desktop Sharing extension.

Participants

For Participant users, those not acting as Moderators or Presenters, the other browsers recommended for use with Collaborate Ultra are:

Windows	Macintosh
Microsoft Internet Explorer (version 11 or higher)	Apple Safari (version 7 or higher)
Microsoft Edge (with Windows 10)	

> *NOTE: Apple Safari for Windows is not recommended. Also, although Firefox is the default browser for the Ubuntu system, that combination is "Unsupported" for use with Collaborate Ultra.*

Joining a Collaborate conference via browsers other than Chrome or Firefox will produce a temporary banner at the top of the browser window, reminding users that Chrome or Firefox is preferred. Blackboard also recommends that users maintain their browsers in the most current available version.

Emptying the Cache

Regardless of which browser you use, clearing the browser cache (Temporary Internet Files) is a good troubleshooting step. Certain performance issues—e.g., images not displaying correctly or menus not working correctly—can be the result of cache build-up. Clearing the cache will allow Collaborate Ultra to work as intended. Below are some links to instructions for clearing the cache for the browsers that can be used for Ultra.

- Chrome: https://support.google.com/accounts/answer/32050?hl=en
- Firefox: https://support.mozilla.org/en-US/kb/how-clear-firefox-cache
- Edge: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/10607/windows-10-view-delete-browser-history-microsoft-edge
- Internet Explorer: https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/help/10607/windows-10-view-delete-browser-history-microsoft-edge
- Safari: https://support.apple.com/kb/PH21412?viewlocale=en_US&locale=en_US

Flash Player

To use Collaborate's content sharing features in browsers other than Chrome and Firefox, Adobe Flash Player is required. Regardless of which browser you use, we recommend keeping Flash Player updated. As of this writing (February 2017), the current version of Flash Player is 24; version 17 is the minimum required.

With browsers other than Chrome, Collaborate checks on launch whether the Flash plug-in is present. If it does not find the plug-in, it asks the user to download and install it, which is usually a quick and easy process.

Hardware Peripherals

Audio: For moderating or participating in Collaborate sessions, we recommend using a USB headset with a built-in microphone for two-way audio. The microphone mounted on a headset makes it easy to keep the microphone a suitable distance from the user's mouth.

Video: To provide video, users can make use of a USB webcam. A camera with a resolution width of at least 720 pixels is recommended.

Telephone (optional)

If a user encounters problems connecting to the Internet, is in motion, or is otherwise unable to maintain a network link, the user may participate via telephone instead. As with a typical conference call, a session Moderator can provide the user with a ten-digit phone number; each user receives an eight-digit PIN to join a Collaborate conference, and must retrieve that PIN by joining the conference.

Attendees in a Collaborate conference, even while using a computer or mobile device for video, may also use a telephone in lieu of a microphone for audio. This is useful when a microphone or headset is not available or not working, or if the computer's audio hardware has stopped working. The Interaction Bar at the bottom of the Collaborate screen displays a telephone icon to indicate that the attendee is using phone audio. Other users will see a telephone icon in the Attendees pane for each user connecting via phone.

Users of the Blackboard App on a smartphone may share audio through their phones. Tablets and laptop computers with built-in microphones may also be used for sharing audio.