

7.5 Google Hangouts



Description

Google Hangouts is a cloud-based communication platform developed by Google that incorporates four different elements: video chat, SMS, VOIP and an instant messaging service. Hangouts allows conversations between two or more users.

Conversations can include up to 150 people; video calls can include up to 10 people.

Google Hangouts allows for interconnectivity between iOS and Android devices, making it user-friendly for everyone; all you need is a Google account. Users can make calls one-on-one or in groups, and the chatting tool allows for an additional layer of communication and convenience. The Hangouts app is available for download on iOS and Android devices, and activity syncs across all user's devices. Google Hangouts offers end-to-end encryption using Wi-Fi or cellular data, so users can make secure calls from anywhere.

Company: Google

Company website: www.google.com | <https://hangouts.google.com/> | [Google Hangouts Help](#)

FDA & Regulatory:

Google Hangouts is not currently an FDA approved health platform. See security and privacy information below.

Data Sharing:

Patients must separately share data through some other mechanism; Google Hangouts does not directly integrate with diabetes devices.

Platforms & Modality:

What you need for Google Hangouts:

- A [Google account](#)
- A computer or phone with a camera and microphone; [learn how to use your camera and microphone](#) when you start a video call for the first time
- An internet or data connection

Computer Accessibility

Operating systems that work with Hangouts

Hangouts works with the current version and 2 previous major releases of the operating systems listed below:

- Mac OS X
- Windows
- Chrome
- Ubuntu and other Debian-based Linux distributions

Web browsers that work with Hangouts

Hangouts works with the current version and one previous major release of the browsers listed below.

- Google Chrome
- Microsoft Internet Explorer (IE)
- Safari
- Firefox
- On Internet Explorer and Safari, download and install the latest version of the [Hangouts plug-in](#).

What you need to make video calls

- Broadband connection to the internet
- USB web camera; other devices, like virtual cameras, may not work
- Any quad-core processor

How much bandwidth you need

Hangouts changes how much bandwidth is used based on your network.

Minimum bandwidth required

- Outbound: 300 kbps
- Inbound: 300 kbps

Ideal bandwidth for two-person video calls

- Outbound: 3.2 mbps
- Inbound: 2.6 mbps

Ideal bandwidth for group video calls

- Outbound: 3.2 mbps
- Inbound (with 5 participants): 3.2 mbps
- Inbound (with 10+ participants): 4.0 mbps

Android Accessibility

Download and sign in to Hangouts

1. On your Android phone or tablet, [download the Hangouts app](#).
2. Learn how to [sign in on Hangouts](#).

To call someone's phone number using the Hangouts app, [download the Hangouts Dialer](#).

Learn how to [use Android accessibility features](#) on Hangouts, like how to make phone calls.

iPhone & iPad Accessibility

Download and sign in to Hangouts

1. On your iPhone or iPad, [download the Hangouts app](#)
2. Learn how to [sign in on Hangouts](#)

Note: Hangouts works with Apple's mobile operating system version 8.0 and up.

Learn how to [use iPhone and iPad accessibility features](#) on Hangouts, like how to make phone calls.

Security & Privacy:

IMPORTANT NOTE: Google Hangouts is not HIPAA compliant.

During COVID-19 National Emergency, the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) issued the [news](#) that enforcement of HIPAA penalties around telehealth, patient communication, and remote communication technologies will be suspended and will go into effect immediately.

The announcement offered a few non-HIPAA compliant services that could now be used to communicate with patients including: Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, **Google Hangouts video** or Skype.

- Clinicians should notify the individual of the privacy risk of using such technologies
- Clinicians should make those applications as secure as possible by enabling encryption (done by default on most of these applications) and privacy modes if available

Official Wording: Under this Notice, covered health care providers may use popular applications that allow for video chats, including Apple FaceTime, Facebook Messenger video chat, Google Hangouts video, or Skype, to provide telehealth without risk that OCR might seek to impose a penalty for noncompliance with the HIPAA Rules related to the good faith provision of telehealth during the COVID-19 nationwide public health emergency. Providers are encouraged to notify patients that these third-party applications potentially introduce privacy risks, and providers should enable all available encryption and privacy modes when using such applications

Cost & Payment:

Free for you and your clients, but you must set up a Gmail account. Additional costs will be associated with internet use.

Note: There is a more robust suite of offerings called [G Suite with basic and enterprise pricing](#). It appears that it is possible to sign a business associate agreement (BAA) for a HIPAA compliant video option in this suite.

Details:

[Hangouts Basic Video Tutorial from Google \(1 minute\)](#)

[How to Use Google Hangouts – Beginner’s Guide \(7 minutes\)](#)

[Start a Group Conversation](#)