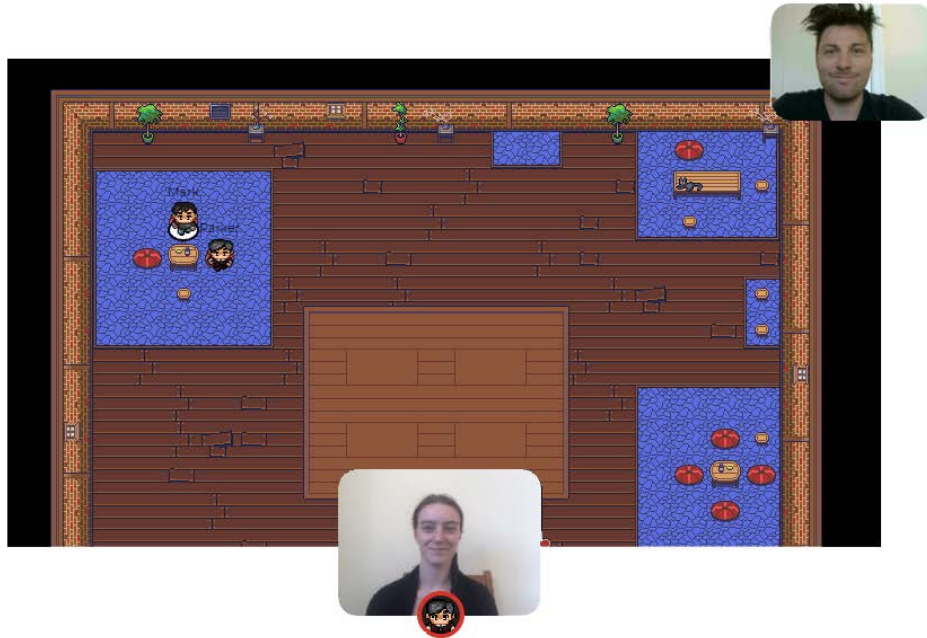# Gather

Welcome to Gather

*Gather is a wonderful new tool for getting to both explore and chat with other people. It is also a very new tool and has a few quirks. This document is to help you with the **basics** so you can discover and play on your own.*

What you need:
- A **desktop/laptop** with a **mic** and **camera**.
- A web browser (Chrome or Firefox recommended).
- We strongly recommend using **headphones** to help prevent feedback.
- That's it! There's nothing to install, no software to download.

How it works:
- Gather is a video chat platform that has avatars move around a map. As you get close to other avatars, your video's will pop up and you will be able to chat.
- Move around the space using the **arrow keys**.
- By moving your avatar around you can have spontaneous conversations with those around you. These can be either one-on-one or small groups depending on how many people are around you and what you set your interaction distance to be.
- When your avatar moves closer to an interactable object, there will be a notification that shows up saying 'Press x to interact with -object-'. This can range from informational flyers, playable arcade games, integrated Zoom meetings, and more!

Icon explanation:

Screen sharing ability

Change your **avatar** character and clothing

Change your **interaction distance**

Mini map to preview the space you're in

Raise hand feature: good for Q&A in keynotes or classrooms

Opens the **settings** menu:
- Change Name
- Change Audio/Video Devices
- Respawn button to return to start
- Click for Mod Settings: Change room password, change mod message, toggle force mute whole space

Not-So-Obvious Features:

Here are some things you might find useful but aren't immediately obvious.
- There is a **messaging feature** that allows you to message people in four ways:
    1. *individually* by clicking on their name in the participant panel,
    2. *locally* to the people you are video chatting with,
    3. *room chat (must be requested)* with all the people in the current room you are in,
    4. *globally* to all the people in your map.
- There is a **locate feature** to find others by clicking their name in the participant panel.
- Interaction distance is also sometimes altered by **designated private spaces**. This allows conversations to only include people inside that space.
- Want to **full screen someone else's video**? Just click on their video.
- Talking to a group of people? Click the down arrows centered below the videos to shift into **grid view**.

Technical difficulties:

- Refreshing the page will fix most things!
    - If that doesn't work, try muting and unmuting your mic and camera in Gather.
    - Check if your browser permitted camera and mic access
    - Additional troubleshooting at https://gather.town/video-issues

Gather

Features

on Gather

Basic functionality

- Interaction Distance
- Private Spaces
- Got Lost?
- Status Colors
- Screenshare
- Raise Hand
- Chat

Moderation controls

- Email Guest Lists
- Banning and Blocking
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- Calendar

Interactable objects

- Website Embeddings/iFrames
- Whiteboards
- Shareable Documents
- Spotlight (Podium)
- External Video Call
- Games
- Video Content through TV Objects
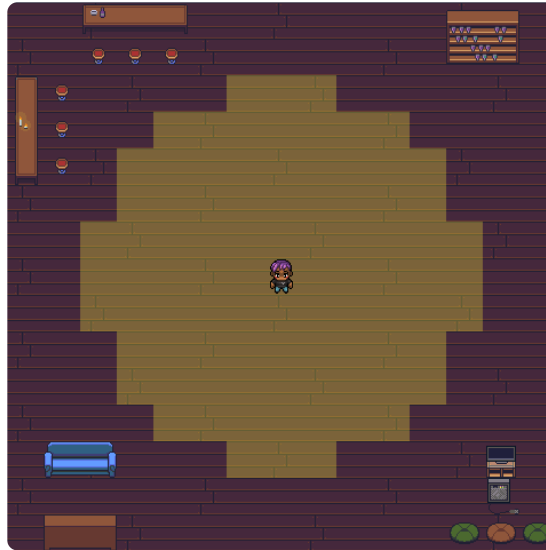- Sponsor Booths
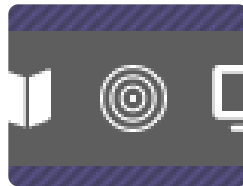- Posters

Custom maps

- Custom Maps

Basic functionality

Interaction Distance

Your interaction distance is what governs whose video and audio you connect to. The default interaction distance is everyone within 5 steps:

People can change their interaction distance with this icon in the bottom bar:

Connections are mutual—you only see someone if they see you—so whoever has the lower interaction distance will be deciding factor on whether a pair of people are connected.

Private Spaces

Usually in Gather, you see and hear the people around you. For more flexible conversation dynamics, you can create "private spaces."

• Private spaces are areas in the map where everyone inside can see each other, no matter how far they are with no video/audio fading.

• Only other users in the same private space can see or hear you.

This is frequently used for one-on-one conversations, poster sessions, or sponsor booths.

(Each chair here is a private space, so folks sitting around this table can have a private conversation)

(There are private spaces around the booth, so company representatives can have private conversations with attendees)

Got Lost?

1. Click on the setting menu to "respawn" to the original entry point of the space.
2. Click on individual participant's names on the participant panel to "locate" them, then follow the yellow brick road:
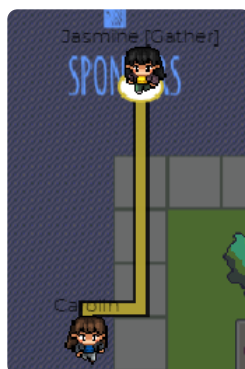
Status Colors

Click the green check mark in the bottom bar to change your status.

- **Green** means your video and audio always on (unless you mute yourself)

- **Yellow** means your video/audio is on when in the tab or in a conversation — very useful for work, where you want to be present in the space and open to interruptions, but don't have to worry about whether people can see you.

- **Red** means busy. Video/audio is off when you're not on the Gather tab, regardless of whether you're in the tab or not. People can still ring you to get your attention.

Screenshare

Click the screen icon in the bottom bar to start screen sharing.

Whoever you're connected on video will get your screenshare. Usually this is just who you're standing around, but it can also be who you're in a <u>private space</u> with, or everyone in the room if you're on the <u>spotlight</u>.

Raise Hand

Click on the hand icon in the bottom bar to raise / unraise your hand.

You can see who has raised their hand by looking at the participants list. Those raising their hand are at the top of the list. Moderators can then click on the audience member, and spotlight them to allow them to make a broadcasted response or question.
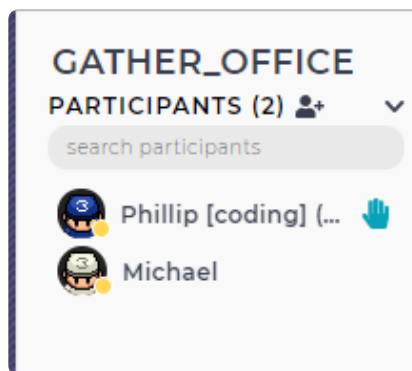
- **Local chat**: messages sent here are only seen by the people you're currently connected to. Everyone will have a different local chat history, based on who they were around. New users joining a space do not see the chat history.

- **Global chat**: messages here are sent to everyone who was in the room at the time. Different people may have slightly different histories if they were in the space at different times. New users joining a space do not see the chat history.

- **Private chat**: direct messages between two people.

Interactable objects

You can embed many websites inside Gather as an iFrame object! This includes games such as Set and poker, or Google Slides. All you need to do is paste in the link you're trying to embed.

The most common issues with iframe objects that don't work are:

- Need to be HTTPS

- Some specific websites block being embedded in iframes. You can test if it's the case here. If it is blocked, it's just a flag

that the website administrator needs to set to be allowed to embed.

Here is a demo video showing what an embedded website looks like. A larger but incomplete list of games can be found here.

Whiteboards

We use an external tool called cocreate, embedded in Gather spaces.

Whiteboards and poker tables have a special integration which makes each one unique. For other embedded websites such as Google docs, you'll need to use a unique link for each object if you want them to be different.

Whiteboards are really just an iFrame object with the whiteboard images attached — you can use any website you like, for example ziteboard. Just copy the link to a whiteboard you created and paste it in as the object URL for any of our objects which support that (e.g. custom whiteboard, iFrame, shared document, etc).

Shareable Documents

Just a regular iFrame, but using a Google Doc or similar service as the embedded website. Great for collaborative brainstorming sessions.

Spotlight (Podium)

The spotlight feature can be used in two main ways:

1. Adding the spotlight tile in your map, through our map editor tool. This allows the participant standing behind the podium to broadcast their video, audio and screen sharing to up to 100 people at once. Presenters frequently use this for lectures while moderators frequently use this for announcements within the room.

2. Moderators can also spotlight any participants at any time. This is frequently used for room announcements or "calling on" people.

Spotlighting is also a great feature for Q&A sessions! When audience members raise their hands, moderators can click on their names in the participant panel to spotlight them from wherever they are in the room. The audience member can then broadcast their video, audio, and screen sharing to the whole audience without moving. Or you can place an audience podium for people to line up for questions.

For rooms with more than 100 participants, please see our section on <u>External Video Call Integration.</u>

External Video Call Integration

Open to any video meeting app that uses a pre-made video meeting link: Zoom, Webex, GoToMeetings, Google Hangouts, etc. Our integration turns off audio + video in Gather, among other things, to make sure that the integration is smooth.

You can then enter the mapmaker, and click on the asset called "External Call Integration". Then change the prompt "Link to Call:" to your pre-made meeting link, and update the Prompt Message if necessary.

Having your Zoom talk in Gather gives attendees a space to mingle before and after the talk.

Here is an example video of what this looks like.

Games

We have a number of integrations with our favorite games, like:

- Poker
- Tetris Battle
- Set

Anyone who walks up to a game table can play with whoever else is also at the table.

Video Content through TV Objects

Our video objects let you embed videos from other platforms, like:

- Youtube
- Vimeo
- Youtube live (live streaming)
- Twitch (live streaming)

The Youtube and Twitch live stream objects are also another way to do large talks or performances in Gather.
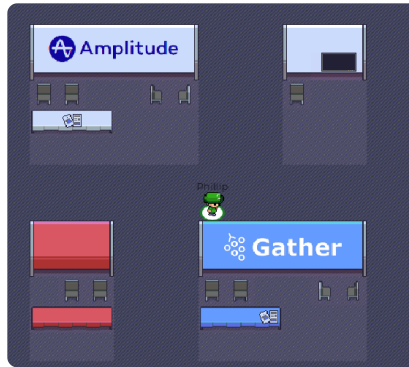
We also support "synced" TV's, that are set to start playing at the same time for everyone.
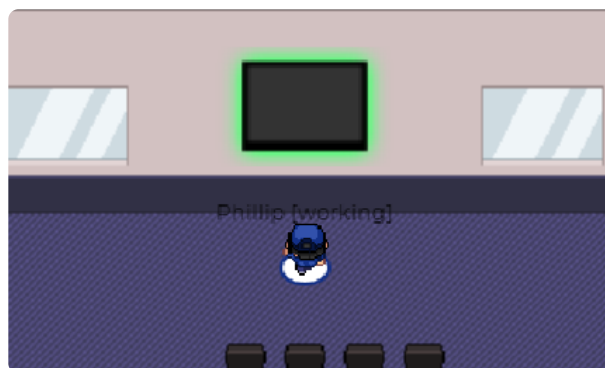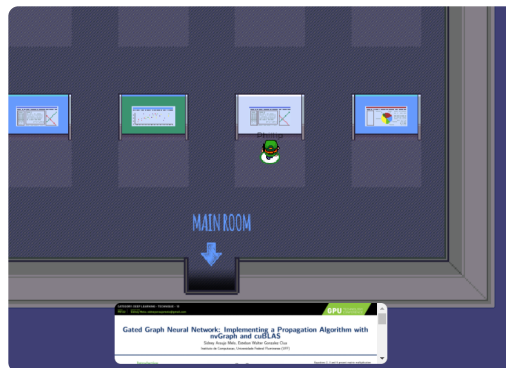

Here is an example of what a video object looks like.

Sponsor Booths

Put sponsor booths with customized logos throughout your space. Using iframes or our custom modal, companies can put whatever content they want on the booth.

Posters

Put posters throughout your space. Must be uploaded as a .png file.

Here is a video of what interacting with a poster looks like.

Can also be used to put general signage throughout the map.

Moderation controls

Email Guest Lists

For additional security over a simple password, the owner of a space can also specify an email guestlist, of which only users on that guestlist are let in.

The owner can set it through their dashboard at gather.town/dashboard

Someone who's not allowed in the space will get this prompt:

Banning and Blocking

Anyone can "block" another person, by either clicking on the "block" icon on their video, or by clicking their name in the participants list and clicking "block."
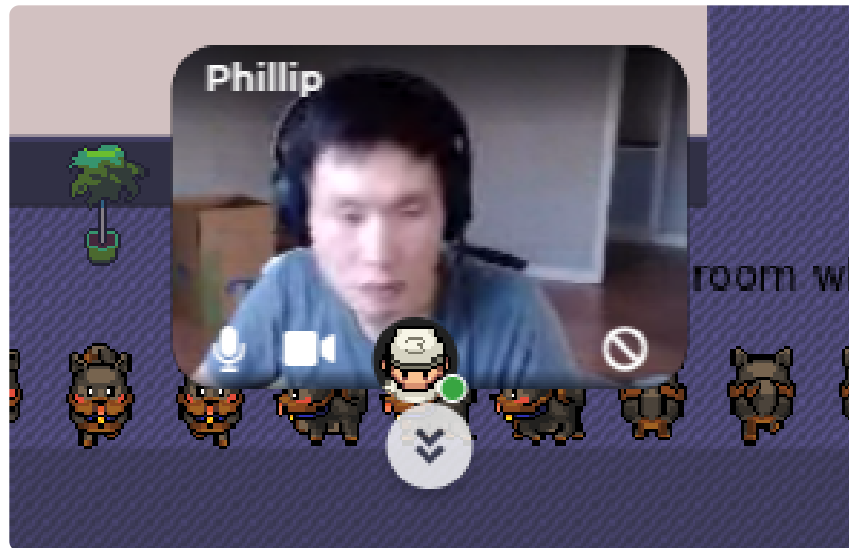

Blocking someone will stop any communication between you and the person you're blocking, including video, audio, and text chats.

Moderators additionally have the ability to "ban" someone from the space. This kicks them out and prevents them from ever coming back. Banning is done by IP address.
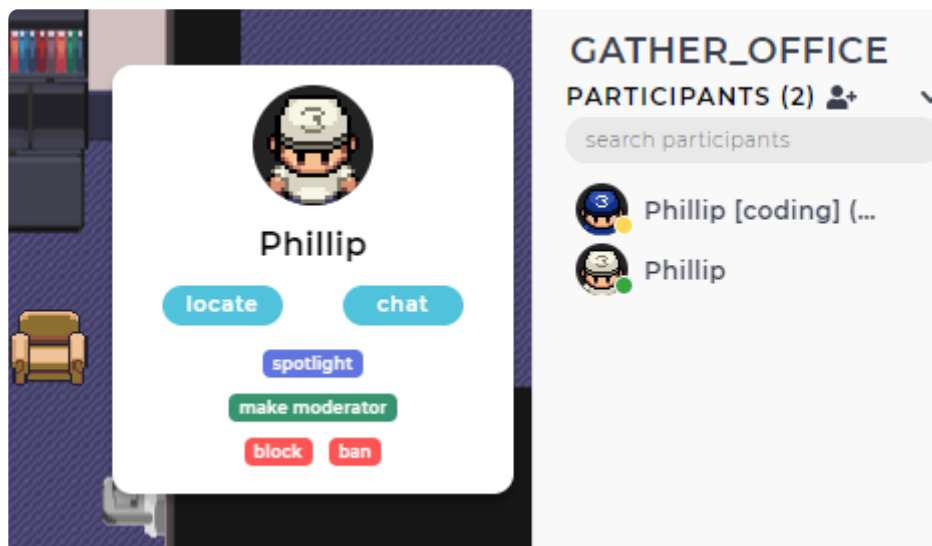
Global Announcement

Features like spotlight work throughout an entire room. However, if you want to make a global announcement across the entire space, you can use the pinned moderator message:
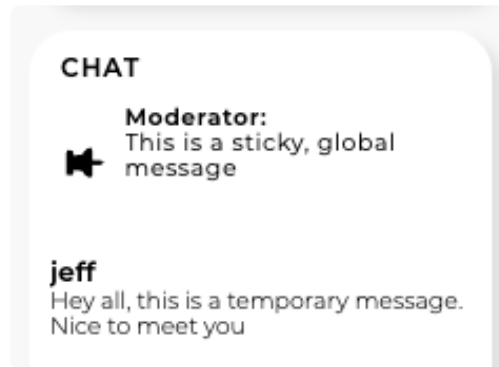
You can access this through the moderator settings (gear icon in bottom bar, "mod settings").

Force Mute

Moderators can mute everyone in the room at once. Find this in the moderator settings.

Calendar

In the moderator settings, you can add a calendar to your space. This will make it display on the right bar, and will show the name, location, and time of each event.

Custom maps

Custom Maps

Create spaces at gather.town/private, then edit them in the MapMaker. For a demo of how this all works, check out our MapMaker tutorial.

How to Extend Spaces
Go to gather.town/private, then select the space you want to extend. All of the rooms of that space template will transfer over to your new space.

Duplicating a room in a Space
Let's say a space has two rooms:

- Room A

- Room B

and you want to add a copy of Room B to the space that can be reached by room A. Click [load room] to Load Room B, then click [save room].

Instead of saving it with the same name it had before, give it another name (ex: "Room C"). Now you have to connect these rooms with Portals: make portals ("doorways") from Room A to Room C and from Room C to Room A.

Do this as much as you want to make all the rooms you desire!