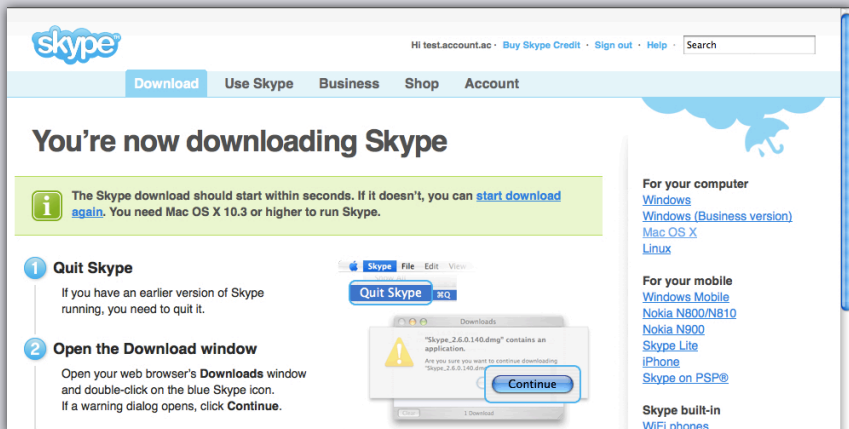
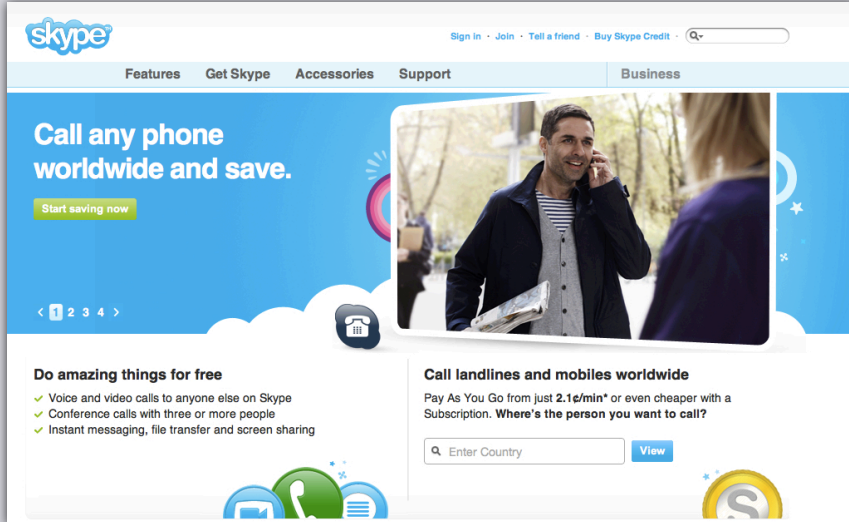


The Digital Diet

A small byte of





What Is Skype?

Skype is an Internet-based telephone and videoconferencing tool. This is a very effective and widely used service with many features that allows multi-person voice conferencing, as well as one-to-one videoconferencing.

Skype is what's known as VoIP (Video or Voice-over Internet Protocol) technology. Its basic video call service is free between Skype members and, for a nominal charge, a user can also purchase "Skype credit" to make direct phone calls through the interface to a cell phone or landline.

Google offers a few alternatives to Skype; Gmail chat and the Google Wave environment, which also has multiperson videoconferencing. Other alternatives are iChat for Mac, and Sightspeed at www.sightspeed.com.

Visit www.skype.com to get started making your own video calls.

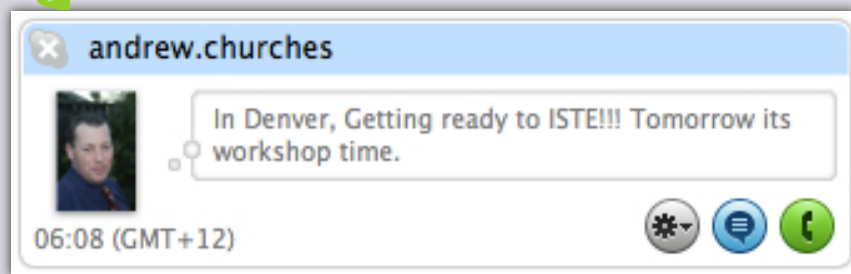
Getting Started

You do everything from the Skype homepage at www.skype.com. However, before you install Skype, you need a few things first. In addition to your broadband connection, you will also need a microphone and speakers if not already integrated into your computer. You will also need a webcam device for making video calls.

Choose "Get Skype" from the top of the screen, and download the software on your computer. You can also watch a tutorial first to get an idea of how Skype works.

Then, install the software on your computer and set up your account. You will be asked to enter some basic information about yourself, and choose a Skype name and also a password. This is the ID name that other Skype users will need to track you down and make video calls to you. From here, you can use the Skype Test Call service to check your connection. You can also control and adjust your audio settings by selecting the Call options from the top menu on your screen.

You can also look for your friends on Skype using the Contact options command. You can enter either the person's Skype name, full name, or email address to conduct a search. Once you find them, click on Add Contact, and they are added to your call list.



Skype in the Classroom

Great Minds Skype Alike

Audioconferencing can be an exciting and effective digital tool for use in the classroom. By connecting a laptop to a projector and audio system, a teacher can arrange to have a guest speaker visit the entire class. No matter where they may be—across the city, or across the world—Skype will bring you together.

For guest speaker sessions to be effective, they must be planned and structured properly to be successful. Detailed coordination with the speaker is essential, as is research into the speaker's field of expertise in regards to the questions he/she will be asked. Decision on a schedule, topics covered, length and itinerary for the video call—these are just a few of the details to be considered in the project.

As a list of questions is comprised, review them with the class to ensure they are good questions, with a focus on being appropriately worded, valid to the topic, and open-ended enough to inspire thoughtful reflection and friendly debate.

Nobody Gets Left Behind

Videoconferencing capabilities provided by digital tools like Skype also have benefits for students who are unable to attend classes for a length of time.

In the case of a temporary relocation to a place away from school (ex: a student or group of students on a youth exchange program in a different country), both teacher and classmates can stay connected using Skype. The student(s) traveling can be kept up on what's going on back home, and the rest of the class can see some of what their friends are experiencing while they are away.

This also works when a student is absent due to a prolonged illness. When unable to attend a class for long periods, Skype's features give the absent student access to classroom lectures and brainstorming sessions as they happen.

It also enables the absentee to give input on collaborative projects just as if they were there. When the student is recovered and able to return to regular classes, no time is lost in bringing him/her up to speed.

How Do You Use Skype to Develop the 21st Century Fluencies?



Solution Fluency—Skype is useful in the 6D problem solving process as a medium for designing a solution, delivering the ideas geared toward successfully solving the issue, and also as a platform for reflection. Skype eliminates the absence of connection that can be felt through a simple phone call with its video capabilities.

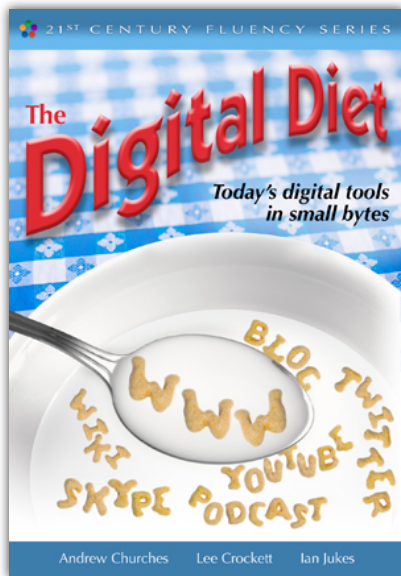
Information Fluency—In the search for information, Skype can connect students that are separated by distance while the collection of data develops. Through videoconferencing, students in groups can share ideas and findings, compare notes, and compile their information to discuss what is most relevant and useful as they weed out the good from the bad.

Collaboration Fluency—Students working on a project can easily collaborate and compare input using the power of Skype. If there are members of the group that are out in the field, for example, the students at class can close the distance using Skype and continue the collaboration process in real-time with their fellow students. Absent students can also join in on assignments from home or wherever else they may be.

Creativity Fluency—With Skype, students are able to connect and develop creativity by interacting openly with each other offering constructive opinions and input, or with creative guest speakers invited to share ideas and experiences on their specific areas of expertise with the class.

Media Fluency—Students get a sense of how well videoconferencing works as a tool of versatility when using Skype. They become familiar with its effectiveness as a potential medium for mass communication, presentation, and the dissemination of knowledge and news.

The Digital Citizen—As with any digital communication platform, students come to realize the importance of proper self-conduct. Interacting with others, especially guests invited to speak to them through Skype, teaches them traits of professionalism, courtesy, and preparedness.



the book

For more information or to buy a copy of the book

www.thedigitaldiet.com

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21st Century Fluency Project

This resource is the collaborative effort of a group of experienced educators and entrepreneurs who have united to share their experience and ideas and to create a project geared toward making learning relevant to life in our new digital age. Our purpose is to develop exceptional resources to assist in transforming learning to be relevant to life in the 21st century. At the core of this project are our [Curriculum Integration Kits](#)—engaging, challenge-based learning modules designed to cultivate the essential [21st century fluencies](#) within the context of the required curriculum. For more information please visit our web site www.21stcenturyfluency.com.