The Edmodo Quick Start Guide

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Table of Contents

A Preface

First Thing First: Get a District or School Domain

Edmodo is so easy that a teacher will be tempted to dive right in and create a class. However, be advised that a school or district that takes the time and effort to create an Edmodo subdomain (i.e. spart7.edmodo.com) will benefit by doing so. The system will be more secure, better organized, and collaboration, communication and sharing will be easier and more convenient. And Edmodo makes very quick work of the process. To learn more, just go to Edmodo.com and click 'Schools & Districts' at the bottom.

The Deal About Edmodo

Edmodo is a social media platform often described as a Facebook for schools. It is that and much more.

Edmodo attracts teachers and students with a social element that resembles Facebook, but there's even greater value in the educational apps under the hood.

Edmodo (designed by educators) enables exceptionally secure cloud-based collaboration. A teacher, school, or district easily can manage a system that provides the best features of the cloud while practically eliminating the anxiety that we associate with students on the internet.

It is easier to monitor student interaction on Edmodo than in your school's hallways and common areas. No one gets into your Edmodo space without an invitation, and students can't use it to connect with strangers. You are more likely to see a trespasser on your campus than you are to be bothered by an undesirable presence on Edmodo.

Consider these selling points:

- Edmodo works well – it is intelligently designed and engineered
- You get cloud capabilities and convenience with airtight security
- A brilliantly simple user interface – little or no formal training required
- A robust suite of applications designed specifically for the classroom
- Edmodo is free – and free of adverts
- No start up cost, no subscription fees, no hardware to purchase
- No maintenance or technical support needed
- Edmodo is unlikely to be blocked by your school filter

Edmodo does not have the scale, scope, and breadth of Google Apps for Education, nor is it as comprehensive a course management system as Moodle, but it's a faster and easier path to some of the same features and benefits.

Teacher Sign Up

New Teacher Sign Up

1. Browse to http://spart7.edmodo.com
2. Click 'I'm a Teacher'
3. Teacher Sign Up Form
   a. School code: <Enter your school code here>
   b. Username: Strongly recommend using your district username
      i. if your username is taken add your middle initial or other modifications
   c. Password: Strongly recommend using your Outlook password

Heads Up! Once your sign-up form is submitted you never have to click 'I'm a Teacher' again at the Edmodo portal – just login and go!

Create a Class

Most teachers will create a 'Group' for each class.

1. In the Groups block on the left sidebar, click 'New'
   a. Enter/select the group information – make it descriptive to include your name, subject, & class period
2. When the Group is created, the system will generate a Group Code – that is what you will issue to students for enrollment
   a. You can always find that code by clicking the Group link on the left sidebar
3. Suggestion: Create a welcome message for the Group that includes a writing prompt students can reply to
4. Suggestion: Establish the expectation that the message system will be used in a serious manner with complete sentences and proper grammar

Enroll/Manage Your Students

If students have an Edmodo account, enrolling them in your Edmodo classes (Groups) is simple:

1. Give students the group code for their class
2. Instruct students to login to Edmodo, click 'Join' on the left sidebar, and enter your class group code when prompted
3. Any message, assignment, or activity you create for the group will be seen by all students in that group

Student Registration

Student Registration Instructions

This instruction set is for first-time registrations only. It is designed to be issued to students for their use. It assumes the teacher created a class and will provide the necessary 'group code'.

1. Web site = http://spart7.edmodo.com (no 'www' required)
2. Click 'I'm a Student'[1]
3. Enter registration information carefully and accurately

   This sample registration shows how a fictitious student named Bill Sikes born February 15th, 1999 would complete the Edmodo registration form…

   a. Group Code = <provided by teacher>
   b. Username = <your first initial+last name+year of birth> Example: bsikes1999[2]
   c. Password[3] = <your eight-digit date of birth> Example: 02151999[4]
   d. Email = <leave blank>
   e. First Name = <exactly as it appears on your ID card>
   f. Last Name = <exactly as it appears on your ID card>

4. Click 'Submit'

Another example – A student named Uriah Heep born June 2nd, 1999 would have this Edmodo account info:
Username = uheep1999
Password = 06021999

More notes about student accounts:
- The conventions described above may not be best for your students – modify as needed
- Some teachers might prefer to create the student accounts and then issue each student their username/password
   - Advantage: You don't burn time getting kids registered, and you know each kid's username/password right out of the gate
   - Disadvantage: Kids won't get practice/experience at establishing an identity and an account on a web site
- Recommendation: Train students to commit their username & password to memory!

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[1] Clicking 'I'm a Student' is a one-time thing. Once you are registered, you just log in directly.
[2] If the desired username is taken, add your middle initial: Example for Bill R. Sikes = **brsikes1999**
[3] This password convention is designed to be easily remembered – it is not very secure
[4] Be sure to add a leading zero to single-digit days and months. Example: August 5th, 1999 = 08051999

Student Account Management

Enrolling Students

- Students can enroll in your Edmodo class only by using the class group code you provide
- Any student with an Edmodo account just has to click 'Join' on their left sidebar and enter your group code to be enrolled in your class
- A new student can join your class by using your group code when they click 'I'm a Student' to create their Edmodo account

Communication & Sharing

- Everything you create in or upload to Edmodo is 'private' by default – you must choose recipient lists for messages and assignments, and you must share documents and other resources by creating library folders to 'Share' with designated individuals or groups
- You only 'see' students enrolled in your classes (groups) – you can not access information about students that are not enrolled in one of your classes
- Students see only the messages, assignments, or content you share with that group – messages sent to 1st period will not be seen by students in your 2nd period class
- You can send messages or assignments to all students in all classes by selecting all classes before sending the message
- Tip: Use the keyboard 'down arrow' to choose message recipients from a drop-down list

The Student Profile

- Here's how to access student information:
    1. Open a group page by clicking its title on your Edmodo left sidebar
    2. Click 'Manage' on the right sidebar of the group page
    3. Click once on the student tab to select the student, then access their information on the right sidebar that pops out
- Each student account has a 'Profile' page – **assigning students to complete that profile would be a terrific early Edmodo experience!**
- You can reset a student's password or verify their username if they are unable to login
- You can track your students' Edmodo activity by viewing their profile
- You can award student badges in their Edmodo profile!
- If a student is not participating responsibly, you can:
    - Set the student's access to 'Read only'
    - Reset the student's password to effectively lock him/her out of Edmodo
    - Expel the student from your Edmodo group by clicking 'Remove from Group'

Best Tools & Practices

Edmodo's Top Tools & Features

- Teachers and students can collaborate in a secure, closed environment – no private information exposed, and students must be invited by teachers to join
- A message board allows secure and open communication that can be monitored and controlled by the teacher
- Teachers can post assignments and assessments that are automatically graded
- A built-in survey tool can be used to check for understanding (no clickers required)
- Teachers and other school personnel can create professional groups, subject area communities, and other networks to extend professional development
- Teachers and students can store and share documents and files in a wide variety of formats in a cloud-based environment – no need for flash drives or LAN-based storage
- Teachers can maintain a personal content library and 'collect' electronic submissions
- Students can instantly access their files 24/7 through their cloud-based 'Backpack'
- Folder-sharing allows teachers to share all content for particular units of study with select groups or all students
- Schools and districts can maintain a common document library
- All school personnel, students, and parents can be connected through a closed, private community – no special permission needed as there is no public access possible
- Edmodo is great for: Project Based Learning! Writing Projects! Critiques! Guided Discussions! Book Clubs! Extracurricular! Language Practice! Grammar Practice! Event Planning! Team Teaching! Homebound Students! Tutor Connections! Post assignments from home if absent!

Recommended Practices

- For consistency and easier management, enforce student account conventions (usernames, passwords, etc.)
- Establish a requirement that students ALWAYS use proper grammar, punctuation, usage, spelling, and language. Complete sentences!
- Once a class is enrolled, LOCK the class group code to prevent unwanted or unauthorized registrations
- Use a digital camera to create and upload student photos as avatars (Carver mobile labs can use the built-in webcam on every laptop!)
- Preview these webinars for much more information: http://help.edmodo.com/webinars/

File & Resource Sharing

Ways to Share Files & Resources on Edmodo

File and resource sharing is one of Edmodo's most powerful and useful features. Here are some highlights:

- Teachers can upload just about any type of file to their 'Library' – there is no space limit at this time, however, individual files may not be larger than 100Mb
- Students can upload just about any type of file to their 'Backpack' – again, there is no space limit at this time, but individual files may not be larger than 100Mb
- The teacher library and the student backpack are cloud-based file storage – files can be uploaded and downloaded anytime from anywhere
- Teachers and students can use folders to organize their file storage system
- Teachers can share their library folders with groups or individuals as desired
- Teachers and students can save links to web sites – teachers can share sets of links with different classes
- Embeddable objects such as a Prezi, a YouTube video, and a Google form can be shared in Edmodo
- Files, links and images can be attached to messages and assignments in Edmodo
- Files that are sent to you in Edmodo are automatically stored in your teacher library (or student backpack)
- Files can not be saved to or opened from Edmodo directly (such as one can do with Dropbox) – files must first be downloaded to or uploaded from a local storage source such as a hard disk or flash drive
- A school could easily setup an Edmodo-based file sharing system to create a cloud-based 'Common Drive' that would be secure, private, yet instantly accessible any time from anywhere by any faculty member or staff

Assignments & Assessments

Edmodo has exceptional tools for classroom assignments and assessments. Highlights:

Assignments

- Setting an assignment is as simple as posting a message. Just click the 'Assignment' link at the top of your class page and follow the prompts
- You can add files, links, videos, and other attachments to your assignments
- The due date you give an assignment shows up all over the place – including the personal calendar of every student in the class
- You are automatically notified as students submit assignments, and a running total appears in your notifications panel
- The new annotation feature allows you to add comments, marks, and notes to a Word document submitted by a student – THINK PAPERLESS
- Edmodo has a built-in grading system – all grades are recorded, and students can see their grades anytime
- Edmodo has a perfect memory – all assignments are archived, and all work on all assignments is always available
- Edmodo can remind students to submit overdue assignments

Assessments

- Teachers can create quizzes with a built-in and rather sophisticated wizard system
- The quiz builder includes the usual objective question types like multiple choice, true/false, etc. as well as short answer and fill-in-the-blank
- Except for the short answer questions, quizzes are automatically scored and graded
- Students can be permitted to immediately see quiz results/grades
- Edmodo's built-in gradebook system will track and permanently record all quiz results for students
- Edmodo quizzes can be used for pre and post test of student knowledge – they can also be used for getting some quick formative data at the end of a lesson
- Edmodo quizzes used to test for student knowledge can be taken by students anytime – even as homework!

Edmodo: DIY Mastery

Additional resources and tips for teachers

- Log into Edmodo, and click 'Account > Help' to access the Edmodo Help Center where you will find
  - A comprehensive list of help topics & user guides
  - A webinar archive
  - A marvelous support community

- Check out and follow the Edmodo blog: blog.edmodo.com

- Experiment. Dabble. Use it - nothing beats hands on practice

- Create an 'alias' student account that you can use to
  - experience Edmodo from a student view
  - see how your notes, assignments, assessments, resources etc. will appear to students

- Join Edmodo communities to learn from other Edmodo educators in your subject area

- Learn from Edmodophile [Bianca Hewes](#) – she covers a lot of ground, and she does it well

- See this blog post about using [Edmodo for Project Based Learning](#)

- Is a student acting out in your Edmodo class? Cut off his water by changing his access to 'Read only' - that makes the kid silent and invisible but still permits him to access assignments, resources, etc. (And yes, wouldn't we like a similar tool for the real classroom?!)

- Use Edmodo's poll/survey tool to easily grab data from your students & classes

- You can use Edmodo for lots of things without 1:1 PC capability in your classroom – think 'kiosk'