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Slack Review 2025: Features, Pros And Cons

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Starting Price

Free; \$7.25 per user per month (billed annually)

Real-Time Collaboration

Whiteboard, documents

Unique Features

Partner-specific Slack, generative AI, built-in audio and video calls

Our Verdict

Slack is a communication and collaboration app that offers thousands of integrations to easily connect software you already use to its platform, making it a viable hub for any type of business. It's easy to use, offers a free plan and includes features to help increase productivity and visibility across all teams (or silo information when needed).

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Pros

- Free plan available
- 2,500-plus integrations
- Automated workflows on all paid plans
- Multiple built-in communication options
- Easy-to-use interface
- Customizable for each user
- Advanced search function

Cons

- Expensive plans
- Message history gets buried
- Limited users in huddles

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What Is Slack?

Slack is a productivity app that offers businesses a centralized place for brainstorming, discussion and collaboration. It offers a long list of integrations with many business apps you likely already use, which further increases its functionality. The multiple options Slack offers for communication make it easy to have a call, video meeting, one-on-one chat or group discussion.

Additionally, Slack is instantly intuitive with an interface that's simple to understand from the start. Simply create topic- or project-based channels and invite relevant users to those channels to participate. File sharing is easy in those channels or through direct messages. And you can customize everything from emojis to notifications.

What Sets Slack Apart

The biggest benefit of Slack is that it keeps all communication in perpetuity (to a degree), whether it's in a one-on-one conversation, a group discussion or even chat that happens during a huddle

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On top of the communication and collaboration tools Slack provides for your teammates, it also offers solutions for outside contributors. You can set up partner-specific Slack bases so you can keep all communication with each client separate from your business (and still include all the stakeholders). There are many levels of security including HIPAA compliance for top-tier plan users.

Slack is a popular choice among businesses for communication and in the interest of full disclosure, we at Forbes Advisor use it ourselves. It's a valuable tool that keeps everyone in sync. And although it isn't an all-in-one solution for productivity (we connect a lot of other apps to Slack), it is one of the best collaboration apps around and easily made our list of the top 10.

Pros

As a business messaging app, Slack excels at making communication between colleagues, teams and outside clients or vendors easier than ever. You have access to so many different ways to connect that you're sure to find what works best for you. Channels work a bit like chat rooms and help keep topics separated and organized.

Slack offers Canvases, which are like whiteboards that you can use to collaborate with colleagues or clients to brainstorm ideas, create lists or share documents and files. Plus, Slack is easy to use and easy to customize. You can join the channels that are relevant to you, silence notifications in channels you casually follow and even create custom emojis for your workspace.

Cons

Slack gets expensive, especially compared to similar collaborative software. There is a free plan, but it's a bit limiting for businesses that need to access historical messages and documents beyond 90 days. Also, conversations tend to get buried in your left sidebar as you start new DMs with colleagues. The advanced search feature is helpful to find what you need, but if you forget who you spoke with about a specific topic, you may have trouble finding the conversation later.

Slack Core Features

The beating heart of Slack is communication whether it's by messaging, huddles or in project-focused channels. Closely related features include collaboration and integrations. Slack serves more as a communication hub with connectors to all the tools you use to get work done.

Communication

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indefinitely; free plan users can search history for up to 90 days before it starts to disappear.

Additionally, Slack includes a huddle feature that lets you connect through voice or video with anyone in your Slack. This helps cut down on the need for email or other communication apps, such as Zoom or Microsoft Teams. There are users who report the quality of audio and video are lackluster, but in our experience it was smooth and we had no issues with either. It is worth noting that audio and video conferencing is only good for up to 50 people.

Documents

Most Slack users are familiar with how easy it is to share documents and other files through Slack. You can simply drag and drop a file from your desktop into a direct message or channel to share with others. Alternatively, you can integrate a tool such as Google Workspace, which makes it even easier to share and collaborate on files. With that said, there is no native document collaboration feature in Slack.

Software Integrations

Slack is known for integrating with multiple types of software, which extends its functionality. There are more than 2,600 apps that work with Slack including analytics, marketing, human resources, project management and communication apps. So, if you prefer using Zoom for video conferencing and you want to easily share documents through Google or Dropbox, for example, you can.

Whiteboard

One of the newest features in Slack is Canvas. This works similarly to most whiteboards in that you can collaborate with others to brainstorm ideas. You can create content with others, share images, videos and documents, add checklists and reorganize as needed. Canvases can work in direct messages, channels and on their own. They're sharable, so you can send a link of a canvas to another Slack user and they can edit and contribute unless you lock edits.

The only difference between Slack's Canvas and standard digital whiteboards is that you can't draw or add sticky notes. Plus, version history is short: You get seven days of version history on the free plan; 30 days on the Pro plan; 90 days of history on the Business+ plan; and unlimited history on the Enterprise Grid plan.

Advanced Search Function

Searching for old conversations or shared files in Slack is as easy as using any search bar, but Slack lets you get granular. You can add multiple keywords and then narrow your search by choosing a

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excellent, but it may take time to learn how to search efficiently.

Slack Pricing and Plans

Slack offers a forever-free plan that includes most of the core features of Slack. The starting cost of Slack is \$7.25 per user per month (billed annually). One step up is Business+ at \$12.50 per user per month (billed annually). For more security and unlimited workspaces, you can choose Enterprise Grid, which has no published pricing and requires you to contact sales for a custom quote.

	Free	Pro	Business+	Enterprise Grid
Starting Monthly Price (Billed Annually)	\$0	\$7.25 per user	\$12.50 per user	Custom Quote
Versioning/Message History	90 days	✓	✓	✓
Communication	Chat, audio, video	Chat, audio, video	Chat, audio, video	Chat, audio, video
Whiteboard	✓	✓	✓	✓
Guest Access	X	✓	✓	✓
File Sharing	✓	✓	✓	✓
Integrations	10	Unlimited	Unlimited	Unlimited
Support	Standard	24/7	24/7 with four-hour response window	24/7 priority support with four-hour response window

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of people you can invite to your Slack. Keep in mind that message and file history disappears after 90 days. Also, you cannot create guest access for external collaborators on the free plan, but you can work with them one-on-one. Huddles are also one-on-one only. You miss out on customization and the workflow builder. Slack only allows free plan users to connect up to 10 apps.

Pro

With the Pro plan, you can use Slack with almost zero limits. You'll have full message and file history, you can set up huddles with multiple people and you can use Slack's Connect feature, which allows you to invite external users to your workspace with guest access. It's at this level that you'll get access to 24/7 support from Slack and an analytics dashboard so you can see how your team uses Slack. Pricing for this plan is \$7.25 per user per month (billed annually).

Business+

For more security and control over how your company uses Slack, consider upgrading to the Business+ plan. It costs \$12.50 per user per month (billed annually). The biggest difference between this plan and Pro is that you get more security options. For example, you can set up single sign-on (SSO) for users and you can choose where your data lives. You also get a guaranteed four-hour response time from support.

Enterprise Grid

If you're looking for Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) compliance, you'll need to choose the Enterprise Grid plan. There are additional security features and zero limits on message or Canvas history. You also get priority support with a promise of a response within four hours. You must contact sales for a custom quote for pricing.

Slack Setup and Customization

Setting up Slack is as simple as any other app. Just add your email to get a code to start an account and create your own workspace. Slack takes you through a short walk-through of how to create a channel and post your first message. After that, we suggest you go through the settings and administration menu to customize your workspace. It's here that you can manage users, set permissions, require authentication and view analytics.

Each user gets to set their own preferences such as light or dark theme, different colors, what shows on their sidebar and how messages are displayed. Slack also offers accessibility options so you can get sound notifications of a new message or have emoji reactions read aloud.

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If you've ever used a messaging app before, you're likely to find Slack intuitive to use. Starting a conversation in a direct message or a channel is simple. For new users joining an existing Slack, it might be a bit overwhelming at the beginning. We have more than 400 channels in our Slack, so it can be difficult to know which channels to join or how to search for relevant channels.

Also, without a tour of the platform, you may miss important settings and features. For example, the workflow builder is available to all users, but it's a bit buried in the tools section. Some Slack users we spoke with didn't even know it was an option in Slack.

Slack Security

Depending on which Slack plan you choose, you can have one of the most secure communication platforms around. Slack offers all plan users basic security features. Data encryption is standard, so anything you send or store in Slack's cloud-based environment is protected. There's also two-factor authentication (2FA) for all plans.

You can beef up security by choosing a paid plan such as through authentication with Google, SSO and enterprise key management. There's also support for specific compliances such as HIPAA, Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) and Europe's General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).

Slack Customer Service and Support

To contact Slack's customer support, you must go through the app or the website. The standard avenue for support is by email and it's available 24/7. Slack offers live chat assistance to its paid members. Live chat support agents are available from 2 a.m. to 5 p.m. PT.

Customer support from Slack is more responsive than we expected given its guarantees to high-tier plan users. We emailed support and got a response back in less than 20 minutes. The answer was thorough and our agent was friendly.

Additional Features

Though Slack is primarily a communication tool, it offers a few other features that help increase productivity and visibility that aren't readily available in other similar applications. With Slack, you can use some of its features to turn it into a task management app or an internal documentation tool.

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pronunciation, contact information, a photo and your role at the company. Admins can set the information for profiles to include pronouns, manager information and keep information up to date with System for Cross-domain Identity Management (SCIM), which is a common feature in HR software. Additionally, you can create a full org chart that also acts as a directory, which helps users easily find the people in the company they need to contact.

Workflow Automation

Finding workflow builders in the best project management software is easy, but not all productivity and communication apps offer the feature. Slack does. We easily built workflows to send private messages in specific channels, to respond automatically to messages we received and to send helpful information to new users who just joined specific channels to help them get up to speed.

There’s no code needed to create a workflow in Slack and any user type can create and use workflows, as long as they’re on a paid plan. The workflow builder works similarly to others you may have used such as Zapier. Choose the type of workflow you want to create, add the steps, users, channels or connected app and the action you want it to take. You can make it a recurring workflow or a one-time-only thing. And you can easily search for workflows in Slack to trigger one manually.

Partner Channels

One of the most useful features of Slack is the ability to create a separate Slack space for clients or partners. It’s easy to add members from your company to the partner channel for quick collaboration and communication. Slack Connect keeps everything siloed as you need it, but with the option to pull in stakeholders anytime.

We’re most familiar with this as it worked with a graphics company. We were able to work directly with a graphic designer to explain what we needed and he was able to share mockups with us quickly in our partner channel. When we decided we wanted animation, he simply invited an animator to our shared space for that collaboration. The new person was able to easily see our previous conversations about the graphic and then produce what we needed.

Slack Alternatives and How They Compare

	Slack	Microsoft Teams	Notion	Google Workspace

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(Billed Annually)				
Free Trial or Free Plan	✓	X	✓	✓
Real-Time Document Collaboration	X	✓	✓	✓
Version History	✓	✓	✓	✓
Content Hierarchy	X	X	✓	✓
Software Integrations	2,600-plus	2,000-plus	71	5,000-plus
Whiteboard	✓	✓	✓	X
Group Chat	✓	✓	X	✓
Read Reviews	–	–	Read Notion Review	–

Although pricing is similar across all of the Slack alternatives we featured in the chart above, there are big differences that may make one tool worth a higher cost than a more affordable one. Comparing Slack to other collaboration apps is difficult because all of them have a different focus.

Slack vs. Microsoft Teams

While Slack focuses on chat-based communication, Microsoft Teams puts more emphasis on calls and video. For the most part, the two collaboration apps offer the same functionality, but there's a big benefit in choosing Slack: It offers a free plan. With Microsoft Teams, you must be a Microsoft user and there is no free plan. With that said, if you are a Microsoft user, the cost for Teams is much more affordable at \$4 per user per month (billed annually); Slack is nearly twice the cost.

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more about document management and whiteboard collaboration. The good news is that both integrate with each other in case you can't choose between the two. However, if you need a tool for collaboration, Notion is likely the better choice; but if you're looking for a communication hub, Slack would be better.

Slack vs. Google Workspace

Slack and Google Workspace offer many of the same features such as collaboration and communication, but Google Workspace is a bit better with collaboration with Google Sheets and Google Docs. You can use it to meet with coworkers and clients through Google Meet, but Slack offers a more seamless way to communicate with specific channels for colleagues, projects, clients or partners.

Who Is Slack Best For?

Slack is an excellent communication and collaboration tool for anyone, whether you choose the free version or a more feature-packed paid plan. It connects to literally thousands of other apps to make it functional. Plus, the built-in workflow builder makes it easy to automate messages, checklists and file sends.

Our Expert Take

Using Slack is instantly intuitive. The messaging interface works similarly to other chat programs and it's simple to send a file, add an emoji to a post and find information from past conversations. The paid plans are absolutely worth it to access historical data, connect apps you already use and create automated workflows to increase productivity. Slack Connect is a great way to collaborate with external users and keep all files and information in one place. The only thing we don't love about Slack is that you can't quite use it for more than personal task management; we had to connect a project management app to our Slack to make it more functional.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- + **What is Slack best used for?**
- + **What's the difference between Slack and Teams?**
- + **Can employers monitor Slack messages?**

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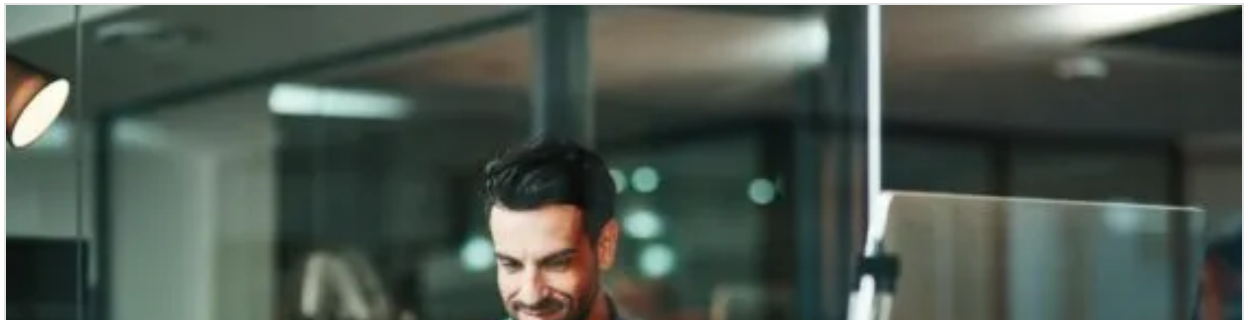
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