Tools and Technology

Selecting the Right Tool

You may not know what tools and technology to use if you're new to online teaching. There can be an overwhelming number of options to choose from. The following resources might help you choose which digital tools to use in your online classroom.

As you're considering different technology tools, ask yourself these questions:

- How will the tool engage your students?
- How can the tool empower your students to be good digital citizens?
- In what ways will your students' privacy be protected when using the technology?

Resources

Website: ISTE Standards for Students
These standards, maintained by the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), were designed to empower students through the use of technology. Keep these standards in mind when selecting ed-tech tools.
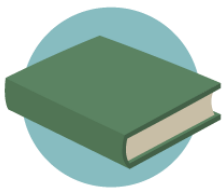
Website: EdTech Reviews and Resources
This site has recommendations and reviews of different educational technology tools you might use in your online classroom.

Website: Resources to Help You Choose the Digital Tools Your Classroom Needs
This site recommends four resources that educators can use to rate, review, recommend, and discuss digital and ed-tech tools. These resources can help you decide which options are best for you, and also allow you to contribute to communities of knowledge.

Reading: Teaching in a Digital Age: Teaching and Media Selection
This reading, from the book *Teaching in a Digital Age*, will help you with online lesson design and what to think about when picking tools for your online classroom.

Website: Canvas Instructor Guide – Table of Contents
Canvas is a free learning management system that teachers can use to deliver and facilitate lessons online. Browse the table of contents to find topics or information on how to get started working with Canvas.

Website: Google for Education Teacher Center: Welcome to the Classroom
If you're using Google for remote learning, this welcome page has video tutorials on how to get started. Through videos, you'll learn how to create classes and assignments, how to add students and materials, and much more.

Tools for Collaboration

Online education is often viewed as a barrier to collaboration. After all, geographic distance makes it hard for students to work together, and if you don't have the right technology in place, your options for collaboration will also be limited. It's easy to avoid collaboration by structuring a course around individual projects and asynchronous communication, but this overlooks a fundamental part of the learning process. For learning to be meaningful, it needs to include a variety of ways for you to collaborate with students and for them to collaborate with each other. Explore these resources to find methods of incorporating meaningful collaboration in your online lessons.

As you look at these resources, think about the following questions:

- What are some barriers to online collaboration, and how can we overcome them?
- What are some of the benefits unique to online collaboration that might not happen as easily in the traditional classroom?
- What are some questions you should ask yourself when selecting an online collaboration tool?
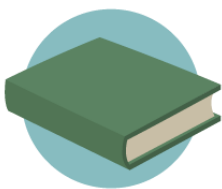
Resources

Website: [Cooperative and Collaborative Learning: Student Partnership in Online Classrooms](#)
This article from *Education Week* discusses the differences between cooperative and collaborative learning and the factors that can improve the collaborative learning experience.

Website: [Best Student-Collaboration Tools](#)
This website provides a list of popular collaboration tools you can potentially use in your online classroom. It provides reviews, grade-use recommendations, and any cost that may be associated with the use of each tool.

Reading: [4 Tips for Teachers Shifting to Teaching Online](#)
This resource provides pointers for establishing an online course. The fourth point specifically explores the idea of using "touchpoints"—in other words, personalized interactions—to create an engaging, collaborative space in your online classroom.