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PREPARING TO USE BLACKBOARD

What do I need to access Blackboard?

All you need to access Blackboard is:

- a computer system that meets the **recommended system requirements**
- an Internet connection
- a **supported web browser** configured as required
- the URL of BGSU's web portal, MyBGSU, which is <http://my.bgsu.edu> OR login to Blackboard directly at <https://elearning.bgsu.edu>
- a BGSU e-mail account

Anyone who has a BGSU e-mail account will automatically be issued an **account on Blackboard** (eLearning). By accessing the MyBGSU web portal or the Blackboard (eLearning) portal, you can get a personalized view of Blackboard courses and organizations you are participating in.

How do I get an account on Blackboard?

To get an account on Blackboard, you must have a BGSU e-mail account. If you do not have a BGSU e-mail account, see the **BGSU e-mail pages** for instructions. Your e-mail account will be created in approximately one hour. You will be able to access MyBGSU with your BGSU e-mail account as soon as your account is created. The time when your eLearning (Blackboard) account is available will depend on the time your BGSU e-mail account was created. For details, click [here](#).

You will use your user ID and password for your BGSU e-mail, your MyBGSU and your Blackboard account. If you have any questions or problems, contact the Technology Support Center (TSC) at 419-372-0999 or e-mail tsc@bgsu.edu.

What should I do if I have had my BGSU e-mail account for more than 24 hours but still cannot access Blackboard?

If you have had your BGSU e-mail account for more than 24 hours but still cannot access Blackboard (eLearning), you should contact the **Technology Support Center** in person at 110 Hayes Hall or by phone at 419-372-0999.

Who should I contact if I have forgotten my username or password for MyBGSU or BGSU e-mail?

If you have forgotten your BGSU e-mail password, you can either call the **Technology Support Center** at 419-372-0999 or stop by the office in Hayes 110. Check their **web site** for their office hours.

If I don't have an account on Blackboard, can I login as a guest?

Temporary guest accounts on MyBGSU and Blackboard can be created for one semester by contacting **Judy Donald** in Continuing and Extended Education. Individuals who do not have an account, but wish to make a deposit to a BG1 Card account should use the URL https://elearning.bgsu.edu/webapps/bgsu_admin/guest_deposit.jsp to access the Blackboard Community System.

What enhancements are included on Blackboard as part of the upgrade to Blackboard 8?

See **Blackboard 8.0 - New Features and Enhancements**.

What are the recommended system requirements for Blackboard?

Blackboard uses the latest Web technologies to provide a rich interactive Web experience. Because

Platforms: Windows XP and Mac OS X.

Memory: Even a very small amount of memory will suffice, but if courses contain streaming audio and video, the memory requirement would be increased. ITS recommends 512Mb (Windows XP) and 1 Gb (Mac OS X).

Disk Space: Disk space requirements depends on the instructor's use of Blackboard. Some multimedia files distributed through Blackboard are quite large. Students should probably estimate a need of 500Mb of disk space for each distance class taken through Blackboard. Other classes may need up to 256Mb per occurrence.

Modem/LAN card: For users connecting to your Bb server via an internet service provider, Bb recommends at least a 56 k modem, DSL or cable modem preferred. Users can use any* LAN card, 10 Megabit, 100 Megabit. Users can use wireless modems, however, connectivity via wireless modems right now tends to be slow, so users could experience problems with them. Wireless LAN cards, on the other hand, whether 1 Mb/s, 10 Mb/s or 11 Mb/s should be fine.

* Caveat -- in most cases, off campus DSL or Cable modem connections to the Bb server will work fine, but during peak usage periods, this type of connection can be extremely slow. The University has a very fast on-campus network, but the connection to the rest of the Internet can be slowed down during times of heavy usage.

What browser should I choose when using Blackboard?

Blackboard 8 uses the latest Web technologies to provide a rich interactive Web experience. These applications do not function well, if at all, in older browsers. For Blackboard 8, your browser also needs to be Java 2 enabled which is done when you install the supported version of Java Runtime Environment (JRE) for Windows or Macintosh Runtime for Java (MRJ). Therefore, it is likely that you will need a software tune-up. When doing that, upgrade your browser first; then uninstall any older version of Java before installing the supported version.

The table below includes the supported browsers and Java 2 applications for the operating systems specified.

	Windows XP	Mac OS X
Internet Explorer	7.0	NR
Mozilla Firefox	2.0	2.0
Safari	NA	2.0 (Mac OS 10.4) 3.0 (Mac OS 10.5)
Java 2	Java Runtime Environment (JRE) 5.0	Mac OS X System Dependant

Legend:

NR = Not Recommended

NA = Not Applicable

'+' = or newer

Note: Older versions of operating systems and browsers have not been tested by Blackboard, but are expected to work properly. For best performance, the Technology Support Center recommends the platforms listed here.

All browsers need to have Cookies, JavaScript and Java 2 enabled. Click on the link in the chart above to find instructions for the platform and browser you are using.

Cookies and JavaScript are required for Authentication and while using Blackboard 8.

Java 2 is required for Blackboard's Collaboration Tools (Virtual Classroom and Lightweight Chat) plus the Visual Text Box Editor.

Where can I download the suggested plug-ins?

Plug-ins are software programs that extend the capabilities of your browser so it can handle certain types of content that you might encounter. You should install current versions of the plug-ins listed on the [Blackboard Plugins](#) page. Those listed are for viewing content an instructor may place on a

not needed.

The only group of plug-in's not mentioned on the Blackboard Plug-ins page that you may need for your course documents are viewers for Microsoft Office applications like PowerPoint or Excel. These are only needed if you do not have Microsoft Office installed. Look [here](#) for the free viewers if you need them.

So that Blackboard's Collaboration Tools will work, you also need to install the Java 2 plug-in. See details under the [Supported Browsers for Blackboard 8](#).

What browser features need to be enabled to access and use Blackboard?

To login to Blackboard, cookies need to be enabled and JavaScript needs to be enabled.

Cookies, JavaScript and Java 2 need to be enabled when using Blackboard. Java 2 is enabled by default when it is installed. Click on the links in the [supported browser table](#) for instructions on enabling cookies and JavaScript for the platform and browser you use.

Why am I not receiving e-mail sent from Blackboard?

If you are not using your BGSU e-mail account, you should forward your BGSU e-mail to the account you actually use or you will not receive e-mail sent from Blackboard. This is because e-mail sent from Blackboard is automatically rerouted to your BGSU e-mail account.

Click [here](#) for instructions on forwarding your BGSU Exchange e-mail.

Why is it important that I log off Blackboard when I am finished?

Because access to your view of the portal gives the viewer access to confidential information about you (e.g. your schedule, bursar bill, etc.) and the ability to perform functions within the portal in your name (e.g. send e-mail, remove modules, etc.), it is **very important** that you get in the habit of logging off Blackboard when you are finished. To do that, you just click the **logout icon** at the top of the page. We suggest that you also **Quit** your browser. Just closing the web browser's window is not enough. The browser may still be active in the background and the next user accessing it may be automatically logged on to your Blackboard account.