

Everything Parents Need to Know About Using Google Classroom

Parents across the globe have recently been thrown into the innovative world of online learning. If you're getting stressed about the new home-school transition, you're not alone. Whether your child's school recently adopted Google Classroom as a solution for distance learning or you just haven't familiarized yourself with the digital learning platform yet, don't worry.

The good news is that even the most technologically challenged parents catch on quickly to the ins and outs of Google Classroom. What first appears as a scary world of distance learning will soon be a breath of fresh air. You'll learn to help your child stay organized and find success thanks to this innovative online solution for face-to-face educational instruction.

"Online resources can enrich and enhance the education provided to students," said Anna Cutaia, Ed.D., the superintendent of Milford Public Schools in Connecticut. "While this is not a substitution for face-to-face teaching, this is an opportunity for families to maintain and sustain the progress that each child has made and will continue to make throughout the school year."

What Exactly Is Google Classroom?

Initially, many parents think that Google Classroom is a virtual classroom where students log on to find their teacher and classmates waiting to start the day. However, the primary purpose of Google Classroom is to streamline the process of sharing files between teachers and students. Students access the online material when it is convenient for them.

Google Classroom is a free web service, developed by Google for schools, that aims to simplify creating, distributing, and grading assignments in a paperless way. Students and teachers also have the opportunity to communicate via online chatting/posts or through video calling through other apps in the Google suite.

Students can be invited to join a class through a private code, or imported by their teacher, using email addresses. Each class creates a separate folder in the respective user's Drive, where the student can submit work to be graded by a teacher. Mobile apps, available for iOS and Android devices, let users take photos and attach to assignments, share files from other apps, and access information offline. Teachers can monitor the progress for each student, and after being graded, teachers can return work along with comments.

When students log on, they see a snapshot view of upcoming homework assignments, teacher announcements, student questions, and other important class information. Students can submit their work directly through Google Classroom, and teachers can provide feedback, assign grades, and return the work. All your child's work stays organized and conveniently stored on Google Drive.

How Does My Kid Access Their Classroom?

The process for setting up your child's account is pretty simple. Your child's teacher does most of the work. They will set up the classroom and provide a join code that is unique to your child. Teachers can also invite students by email. Once access has been granted, your child can get into their classroom anytime by going to classroom.google.com.

For older students who have different teachers for different subjects, multiple classrooms will appear. From their dashboard, they can choose the class they want to view. Once they enter a classroom, students find three tabs at the top of the page.

- The **Stream tab** can be compared to an interactive workbook. It's an outline of the course and an announcement page with a full overview of homework, assignments, and any other posts the teacher adds.
- The **Classwork tab** stores all your child's assignments. Here, they'll see each assignment that's been added by their teacher. When they click on a task, they'll get the due date, details, resources needed, and status of the assignment. Students also can turn in their work here once it's completed. They can add files or create slideshows and images to be submitted.
- The **People tab** shows all the teachers and students in the classroom. It's also a place where students can communicate directly with one another or their teacher.

Can My Kid Use a Mobile Device or Tablet to Access Google Classroom?

Absolutely. Like all the other Google apps available, your student can access the full functionality of Google Classroom from virtually any device. Just be sure to add the other essential Google apps needed for success to their devices, like Google Calendar, Google Docs, and Google Drive.