

Quick Start Guide: Student Guide to Using Wimba Classroom

Introduction:

Wimba Classroom is a web based video chat system that supports both live audio and live video communication that can be used to hold class discussions online, personal advising, or instructor virtual office hours. It is also used to deliver prerecorded video presentations from instructors or guest presenters.

Part 1: Accessing Wimba

Step 1: Login to Blackboard and navigate to your class.

Step 2: Select the "Communication" link on the navigation bar.

Step 3: Select the WIMBA CLASSROOM

Part 2: The Wimba Wizard

Wimba provides a setup wizard to assist you to prepare your computer for participating in a live Wimba session, or viewing a prerecorded presentation. The Wimba wizard will detect difficulties as part of the setup process. This portion of the guide provides step-by-step instructions for using the wizard, and provides explanations and solutions for some of the most common conflicts.

Step 1: Set up your equipment.

If you are using a head-set or a microphone, follow the manufacturer's specific instructions to install and setup your equipment, as this will vary from model to model.

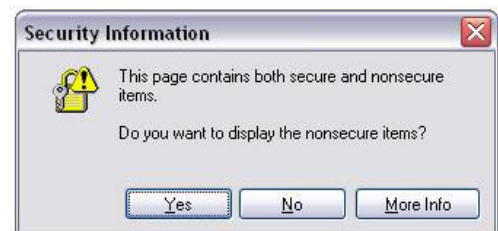


Helpful Tip: If you are using a headset that features traditional 3mm plugs (like those shown), note that they are color coded. You will find jacks (small round openings) on your computer that either correspond to these colors, or feature icons indicating a microphone and speakers. The green plug corresponds to the speaker jack; The pink/peach plug corresponds to the microphone jack.

Step 2: Open your browser (IE or Firefox) and navigate to the Wimba Classroom, as instructed by your Wimba administrator, meeting host, or course instructor.

Important Note: If you are using Internet Explorer and receive the following warning message, select "Yes."

The Wimba system is safe for browsing, and will not compromise your computer security. Failure to display all items on the page will prevent Wimba from working properly.



Step 3: Enter the Wimba Classroom and run the wizard.

If you are using Wimba Classroom for the first time, select the "Run Wizard" button.



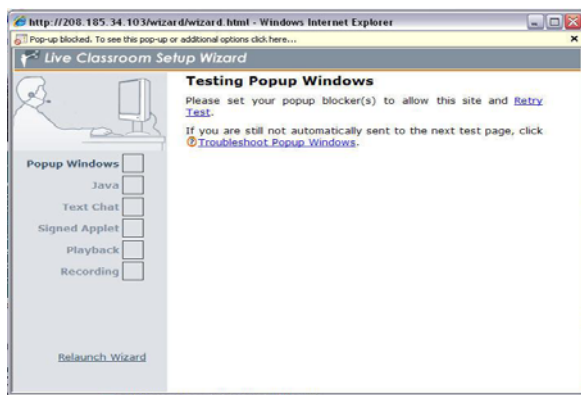


Wimba will guide you through a series of steps to ensure that your computer is properly equipped and configured for audio and/or video communication.

Select the "Start" button to proceed.

Wizard Test 1: Popup Blockers

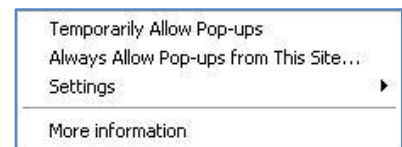
Wimba behaves within your browser as a popup. If you are also using a popup blocker, Wimba will not function properly.



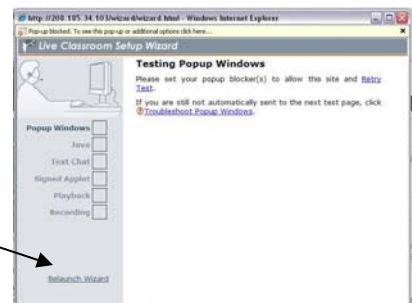
The yellow bar at the top of the window indicates that a popup blocker is running and is interfering With Wimba.



To disable the popup blocker, select the yellow bar with your mouse, and select "Always allow popups from this site" from the dropdown menu. The popup blocker will continue to protect you from other websites, but allow Wimba to function.

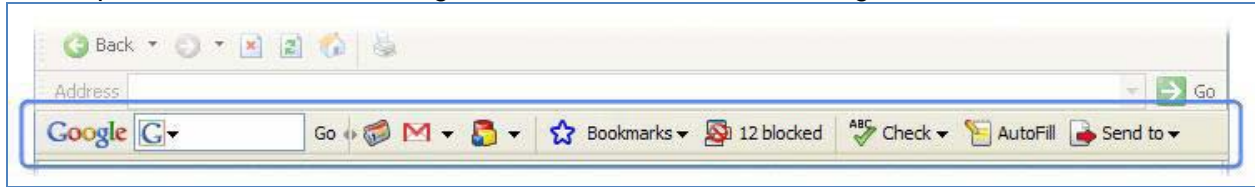


After you have disabled the popup blocker, select the "Relaunch Wizard" link to restart the wizard.

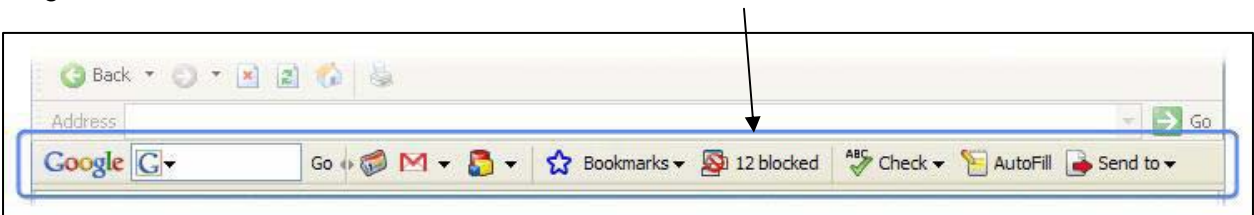


Google Toolbar

Google Toolbar is a popular browser add-on, used by many people. It is designed to add additional features to your browser. It can even come bundled with other software installations, so it is possible to install the Google Toolbar without even realizing it.



If you see this toolbar at the top of your browser window, you are running Google Toolbar. Google Toolbar includes a popup blocker that interferes with Wimba, and installation of the Google Toolbar is not recommended for Wimba users.



If you already have Google Toolbar installed, use the following procedures for removing it.

Uninstall from the Toolbar Options menu:

- Click the down arrow next to the wrench icon on your Google Toolbar. If you don't see a wrench icon, then you likely have an older version installed. Instead, click the Settings button on the right side of the Toolbar.
- Choose Uninstall, or Help > Uninstall.
- Optional: Add comments about your experience with the Toolbar.
- Click Uninstall the Google Toolbar.

Uninstall from the Control Panel:

- Click the Windows Start menu in the lower left corner of your screen.
- Select Control Panel and Double-click
- Add or Remove Programs.
- Select Google Toolbar for IE.
- Click the Remove button

Wizard Test 2: Java

Java is a computer programming language. Many helpful programs that you find online such as chat messengers, online games and mortgage calculators, to name a few are written using Java. These applications, written in the Java programming language and accessible from your browser, are called "applets". Some of the features of Wimba require Java. Java is produced by the Sun Microsystems company.



This is the screen you will see while the Java test is running. If this portion of the wizard fails, you will need to visit the Sun Microsystems Java website to download and install Java.

To install Java: Go to <http://www.java.com>

Select the "Java Download" button.

Content from the official Java site is trustworthy and secure. You can select "Install" to begin the process



Follow the onscreen instructions to complete the setup and installation process. It may take several minutes to complete the Java installation. **You may also need to exit your browser and restart the Wimba setup wizard as part of this process.**

Important Note: As part of the Java installation process, you may be offered the option of installing Google Toolbar. **DO NOT** install the Google Toolbar, as it includes a popup blocker that will conflict with Wimba.



Wizard Test 3: Signed Applet



The next screen of the wizard will provide important instructions. Read and follow these instructions carefully to continue the wizard. Then click "Next."

Wizard Test 4: Playback



The next portion of the wizard will test if your system is ready to receive and let you hear audio signals. The test may take a few minutes to fully load.

Notice the new toolbar that has appeared on screen. This is identical in appearance to features that are part of the Wimba Classroom. If you have speakers (or headphones) correctly

attached, you will hear a woman's voice talking. Once you hear her finish speaking, select "Next."

Wizard Test 5: Recording

The last portion of the wizard will test if your system is ready to send audio signals, so that you can send your voice for others to hear you talking. The test may take a few minutes to fully load.

If you have a microphone (or headset) correctly attached, you will hear some beeps, followed by silence. Click and hold down the "Talk" button with your mouse, while you practice saying something into your microphone. If you can hear your own voice, after a very brief delay, your microphone is working correctly.



NOTE: If you are not using a microphone, simply wait until the feature finishes loading, and then click the "Next" button.

Why is there a delay?

Your speech is translated by the computer from sound waves into a digital signal that is sent, via the Internet, to another location, and then back again. This whole process of translation and signal travel time creates a small delay. When you think about it, it really is quite amazing that your voice can travel thousands of miles in under a second! The greater the distance between those who are talking in a Wimba Classroom session, along with the rate at which any particular Internet connection can transfer data will result in a greater or lesser delay. Bear this in mind when speaking in the Wimba Classroom; Others may need a moment to finish hearing your message before they can begin a response.



When the recording test is finished, select the "Next" button

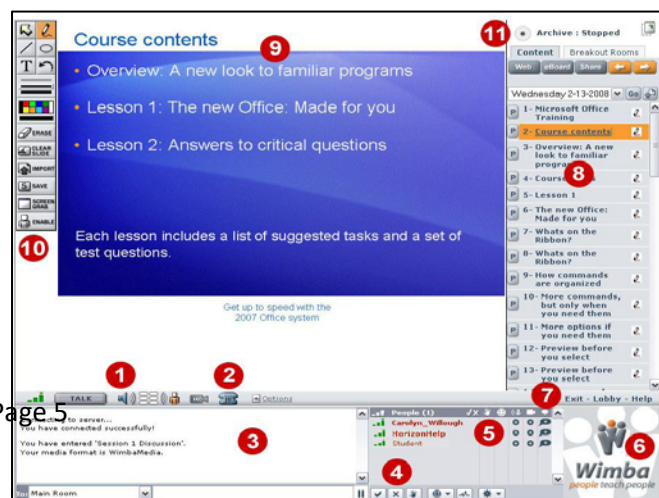


Note that all of the test items in the listing are checked successfully. Select the "Finished!" button to close the wizard and return to the Wimba entry screen.

Part 2: A Tour of the Wimba Classroom

General Features Guide:

1. Audio Controls – Select this icon to view audio menu options.



2. Phone Simulcast – Select this icon to view the phone number and access code for access to audio over phone line instead of using the Internet. (Note: Long distance telephone charges may apply).
3. Chat area – Use the text box at the bottom to type a message, and type the "Return" or "Enter" key on the keyboard to send a text message that others will see. Other participant messages will also appear here.
4. Yes/No/Hand Raise Buttons – If a participant selects one of these options, an indicator will appear by his/her name in the listing. This is very helpful for managing user questions and quick polling.
5. Participant Frame – Provides a listing of all other persons logged into the session.
6. Branding Frame – Contact your administrator to find out how you can modify the image that appears here.
7. Exit/Lobby/Help buttons – Click these to perform one of these functions.
8. Presenter's console – Only presenters (instructors) have access to these features; Students and general participants will not see these features.
9. Content Frame – This is the main "display" area of Wimba. Participants and students will see what is displayed in this area.
10. eBoard Tool bar - By default, participants and students cannot see this toolbar. Access to some of the tools can be shared by the instructor/presenter if students or participants wish to give temporary control to students.
11. Archive – Select the gray dot to record the session for later viewing. The dot will turn red when recording is "ON." Select the dot again to pause or end a recording. By default, only instructors and presenters will see this feature.

Features in Detail

Media System:



1. Internet Connectivity Status Indicator – Three green bars indicates maximum connection quality. Bar color and number changes as connectivity deteriorates. One red bar means poorest quality access. Poor quality access may affect video or audio support. For users with low bandwidth connection access, the Phone Simulcast may offer better audio reception.
2. Talk Button– Click and hold this button (or, alternatively, hold down the "CTRL" key on the keyboard) to talk. Release the button to end your comment.



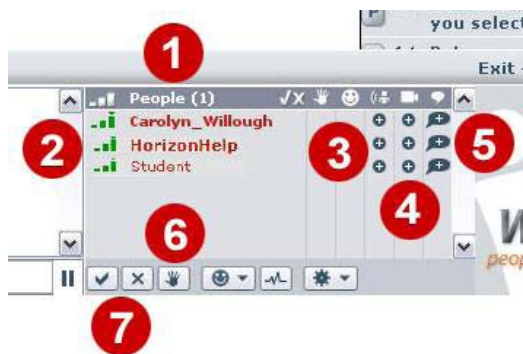
3. Speaker/Microphone Volume Controls – Select the speaker icon to view the volume controls for your speakers and your microphone. Volume levels are reflected by the colored audio bars, which will light up when audio is either received or transmitted.
4. Phone Simulcast - Select this icon to view the phone number and access code for audio via telephone (the best quality option for dialup Internet users). Long distance telephone charges may apply.
5. Options Menu – Provides a listing of other menu settings and options.
6. Lock Talk – Selecting the Options menu (see #5) displays the Media Options available for Wimba. Select "Lock Talk" to permanently set your microphone to "On" so that you can speak without holding down the Talk button or "CTRL" key. Toggle this feature "Off", by reselecting it, when you are finished speaking. **This feature is not recommended for use when many participants will be talking together in conversation.**

Chat Frame:

1. Recipient List – Use this dropdown menu to choose to whom the message will be visible. By default, this menu is set to "MAIN ROOM" and all users will receive messages that are typed into the message box.
2. Message box – type outgoing messages here.
3. Public Message – By default, all messages sent will be visible to all participants.
4. Private Message – Messages appear here (in gray) are only visible between a subset of participants. Use the Recipient List menu to send a Private Message.
5. Scroll Lock – By default, the chat window will autoscroll as new messages are sent, to display the most current message. Click the bars to disable autoscroll.



Participant Frame:



1. People List – Displays the screen names of all participants in the session, in an alphabetical list by first letter.
2. NetStats – Indicates the quality of Internet access for each person in the session. Three green bars indicate the best quality and one red bar indicates the poorest quality. The quality of Internet access will affect participants' ability to send and receive audio and video communications.

3. Talk indicator – A "plus" sign indicates the participant can use a microphone to send audio.
4. Video indicator – A "plus" sign indicates the participant can use a webcam to send video.
5. Chat indicator – A "plus" sign indicates the participant can use the chat frame to send text messages.
6. Hand raise button – When this button is selected, a number displays in the column corresponding to the participant's name, indicating that he/she is "raising a hand" to ask a question or make a comment. Numbers are listed in the order that hands are raised, so that questions/comments can be answered in sequential order.
7. Yes/No indicator – When either button is selected, a check or "X" appears in the columns following the person's name and indicates that the participant has answered "Yes" or "No" as prompted by the presenter.