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Teams: chat or channel? Which one to use

Teams has two main ways to talk to people, and choosing the right one keeps conversations tidy. In short, use a chat for private conversations and a channel for team topics that others may want to see.

Chats

A chat is a private conversation between you and one or more named people.

- Only the people in the chat can see it.
- It suits quick questions, one-to-one messages and small group discussions.
- To start one, click **Chat** on the left, then the **New chat** button (a pencil and paper icon), and type a name.
- Meeting chats also appear here.

Teams and channels

A team is a group of people, such as Sales or Office Admin. Inside it are channels, each for a subject, such as Rotas or Customer Queries.

- Everyone in a standard channel can read it, including people who join later.
- Files shared in the channel are stored with it, under the **Files** tab at the top of the channel.
- You can pin tabs for useful things, such as a Planner board.
- To post, click **Teams** on the left, pick a channel, and choose **New post** or the type-a-message box.

Good habits

- **Reply in the thread** rather than starting a new post. Click **Reply** under the message so everything stays together.
- **Use @mentions** to get someone's attention. Type @ followed by the name or **@channel** to alert a whole channel. Use that last one sparingly.
- **Keep private matters in chat**, such as HR, pay or anything sensitive. Do not put it in a channel.
- **Choose the right channel** and avoid posting the same thing in several.

Finding things

Use the search box at the top of Teams. You can also click the **Activity** icon on the left to see mentions and replies.

Private channels

A team owner can create private channels, visible only to selected people. If you need one, ask the team owner.

Common problems

- **I cannot see a team:** you may not have been added. Ask the team owner.

When to get more help

If you need a new team set up, or people are seeing things they should not, contact us.

Still stuck? Email admin@visiontech336.com and tell us what you can see on the screen. Menus and button names can differ slightly between versions and makes. If something does not match, stop and ask rather than guess. Please never send passwords or card details.