Team Channels

Teams are made up of channels, which are the conversations you have with your teammates. Each channel is dedicated to a specific topic, department, or project.

By default, any team owner or team member can create a private channel and add members. Your admin can change this permission and limit private channel creation to certain roles.

A standard channel is open for all members and anything posted is searchable by others. If you need a smaller audience for a specific project, you can create a private channel for your team.

**Standard channels**

- They’re open for all members and anything posted is searchable by others.
- By default, all members of a team can create standard channels unless the Team owner has set restrictions.

**Private channels**

- They’re for discussions that shouldn’t be open to all members, so you must be invited to join one to view it within a team.
- By default, any team owner or team member can create a private channel and add members.
- Currently, private channels support connectors and tabs (except Stream, Planner, and Forms). Microsoft is working on full apps support for private channels, including messaging extensions and bots.

**Note:** Files that you share in a channel (viewable on the Files tab) are stored in SharePoint. Private channel files are *only viewable by the members of the channel* and are stored in a separate SharePoint from the rest of the team’s files.

When you need to create or edit a channel, use the steps below.

**Create a standard channel**

To create a standard channel, start in the team list. Find the team name and click More options *** > Add channel. You can also click Manage team, and add a channel in the Channels tab.
You can create up to 200 channels over the life of a team. That number includes channels you create and later delete.

**Create a Private Channel**

If you want a focused place to discuss sensitive information such as budgets, resourcing, strategic positioning and so on, create a private channel for your team. Only owners or members of the private channel can access it.

- Each private channel has its own settings, including the ability to add and remove members, add tabs, and @mentioning for the entire channel. These settings are independent of the parent team settings.
- When a private channel is created, it inherits settings from the parent team, after which its settings can be changed independently of the parent team settings.
- Each team can have a maximum of 30 private channels and each private channel can have a maximum of 250 members. The 30 private channel limit is in addition to the 200 standard channel limit per team.

**To create a private channel for a team:**

1. Go to the team you want to create the private channel for and choose More options *** > Add channel.
2. Enter a name and description for your channel.
3. Under Privacy, select the down arrow on the right, and then select Private – Accessible only to a specific group of people within the team.
4. Select **Add**. This adds a private channel to the team.

A lock icon indicates a private channel. Only members of private channels can see and participate in private channels that they are added to.

**Add members to a private channel**

The person who creates a private channel is the private channel owner and only the private channel owner can directly add or remove people from it. As a private channel owner, you can add or remove members, and edit private channel settings. Each person that you add must first be a member of the team.

To add members of your team to a private channel:

1. Next to the private channel name, select **More options** ⋮ ⋮ > **Add members**.

2. Use the **Members** and **Settings** tabs to add or remove members and assign roles. Your private channel can have multiple owners and up to 250 members.

3. When you’re ready, select **Done**. Members can now post messages in the private channel.
Manage Private Channel Creation

As a team owner, you can turn on or turn off the ability for members to create channels. To see and change this option, go to the Settings tab for the team.

Edit, delete, hide, or leave a channel

Select More options next to the channel name. Then, use the menu to edit, delete, hide, or leave the channel as desired.

Note: Team owners get to decide which team members can delete channels.

Keep in mind that once you delete a channel, you also lose its entire conversation history. However, the OneNote sections associated with that channel will still show up on your team's SharePoint site.

What happens when a team member leaves or is removed from a team?

If a team member leaves or is removed from a team, that user will also leave or be removed from all private channels in the team. If the user is added back to the team, they must be added back to the private channels in the team.

What happens when a private channel owner is removed from a private channel?

A private channel owner can't be removed through the Teams client if they are the last owner of one or more private channels.

If a private channel owner leaves your organization or if they are removed from the Microsoft 365 group associated with the team, a member of the private channel is automatically promoted to be the private channel owner.

What can team owners and team members see in a private channel?
Team owners can see the names of all private channels in their team and can also delete any private channel in the team. (A deleted private channel can be restored within 30 days after it's deleted). Team owners can't see the files in a private channel or the conversations and member list of a private channel unless they are members of that private channel.