Communication in Second Life

Welcome to Second Life. In this tutorial, you will learn how to

- Text Chat (Local & Public) in Second Life
- Send Instant Message in Second Life
- Voice Chat in Second Life

Text Chat in Second Life

There are two types of text communications in Second Life: **Local Chat (public)** and **Instant Message or “IM” (private)**. We will explore both here.

Local Chat

To begin your chat with avatars close by you can type your message in the chat bar located at the bottom left of the viewer. Press Enter key to post the message to everyone locally. By default, text will appear for a few seconds and then fade away.

![Chat Bar]

You can click on the small arrow to the right of the chat bar to open the complete history of local chat (chat log).

Instant Message

If you want to communicate with another avatar or a group of avatars across any distance in Second Life privately, you can use instant message (IM). The avatar you want to communicate with can be anywhere in Second Life.

If the person you send IM to is offline, Second Life will relay your message to his/her e-mail. When he/she login next time the message will appear in Second Life.

To initiate an Instant Message (IM) with another avatar, you can use the following ways.
If the avatar is close by right click the avatar and click IM

If you use the Second Life search feature to find an individual

Click on that person’s name, view the avatar’s profile and you will find an IM option in the dialogue.

If you click on the People tab in your side bar and select a friend from the My Friends tab

Right click on your friend’s name and choose IM from the menu to initiate an IM session

If somebody initiates an IM with you, you will hear a sound notification and their initial comment will appear in an IM window located at the bottom right of your viewer.

When you receive an IM, a thumbnail portrait of the person will appear in the notification bar at the bottom right of your viewer. You can respond in an entry bar at the bottom of the window shown below. You can move the window anywhere on the screen by dragging the top of the window.

Voice Chat

Second Life recently added voice chat capability. Voice is now very popular for presentations for both education and business communities. In many cases the presenter uses voice chat and the attendees use text chat to ask questions or make comments. If all the participants want to use voice in a meeting they need to set up their computer appropriately. If you have not mastered the voice setup correctly it is possible for you to wreak havoc for other attendees. After following the setup instructions below, test with others before trying at a meeting.
What you will need:

Start by acquiring a **USB headset**. Then try the following steps to set up for in-world voice conversations.

1. Plug in your headset.
2. Launch the Second Life Viewer and Log in.
3. Teleport to a location where voice chat is supported. (SBMI island)
4. Open Me menu and choose Preferences. Click the Sound & Media Tab. Make sure Enable Voice chat is checked.
5. Click the Input/Output Devices button
6. Select your device for both input and output.
7. Adjust the My Volume slider if red bars are showing or if others tell you that you are distorted. (Distortion can also be caused by not having enough bandwidth.)
8. Close the Preference, and toggle your Voice on an off using the Speak button at the bottom.

If the above steps do not work, then quit the Viewer, open your Control panel for your operating system, select your USB headset as the default input/output device, and then repeat the above steps.

Often in meetings, you will find the audio level varies greatly for different speakers. You can move your mouse to the avatar and when you see the avatar’s name tag with a small i sign show up, click on the i sign and adjust the speaker’s voice volume using the slider.