

General Info - Blackboard Collaborate Launcher

Date Published: June 24, 2014

Product: Java and Blackboard Collaborate Launcher

Document Type: User Documentation

Document Details:

This FAQ answers general questions about the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher.

What is the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

The Blackboard Collaborate Launcher is a utility that provides a convenient and reliable way for Windows and Mac users running OS X 10.8.4 and later to join Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing sessions.

Why do we need to use the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

Several recent Java updates by Oracle have caused issues for Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing users, especially those running on Mac systems. Apple's protection for Java on the Mac is also becoming increasingly disruptive for Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing users with new default settings that prevent the application from launching seamlessly. The Blackboard Collaborate Launcher will help these users when connecting to Blackboard Collaborate sessions.

How does the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher work?

When using the Launcher, rather than sending a .jnlp file to launch the Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing client, the service will send a new .collab file when a user attempts to join a Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing session. The Blackboard Collaborate Launcher is a utility that knows how to unpack the .collab files and then run them using a known and stable version of Java (which is provided by the launcher itself).

Does everyone need to use the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher to get into a session?

No, at this time only users running on Windows machines or Macs running OS X 10.8.4 or later will use the launcher. It must be enabled by your school's administrator.

Do users need to have system Java installed on their machines to participate in Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing sessions?

No, because the launcher provides the Java needed to participate in Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing sessions, these users no longer need to install and maintain the system version of Java.

Will new versions of Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing require updates to the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

No, new releases of Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing will generally not require an update to the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher.

How will I receive Blackboard Collaborate Launcher Updates?

At this time, users will not receive automatic updates. You will need to open the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher.app file and select check for updates from within the Advanced tab. [For complete instructions please review our KBA on Blackboard Collaborate Launcher preferences.](#)

Does the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher require any particular Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing version for sessions?

No, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher is designed to work with web conferencing sessions scheduled in v10, v11, v12, v12.5 and V12.6+.

Does the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher work with sessions self-hosted on ELM servers?

Yes, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher is available with ELM 3.7

Which version of Java is included in the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

Java 7u21 is what is currently bundled with the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher 1.0.

Java 7u40 is what is currently bundled with the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher 1.1.

Can the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher be used to run other Java-based applications?

No, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher will work only with files delivered by and signed by Blackboard Collaborate.

Can the Java that is packaged with the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher be used as an attack vector for malicious Java-based malware?

No, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher has a security counter-measure built in to prevent it from being used by anything except Blackboard Collaborate applications. It will allow only the packaged Java to be used for files that are provided and signed by Blackboard Collaborate.

Do the Java applets in SAS used by administrators use the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

No, the SAS Java applets continue to use system Java. Anybody logging into SAS directly to use the system administration tools and utilities will still require system Java.

Will the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher be used for viewing Blackboard Collaborate recordings as well as live sessions?

Yes, the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher will be used for Windows and Mac OS X 10.8.4 and later users wishing to view recorded sessions in the native Collaborate recording format. The Blackboard Collaborate Launcher is not required to view recordings that have been converted to MP3/MP4 formats.

What happens if a user inadvertently deletes the Launcher utility from their system?

They will not be able to join Blackboard Collaborate web conferencing sessions using .collab files, until they download the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher utility again.

Why do I get Security Warnings with the Blackboard Collaborate Launcher?

The Blackboard Collaborate Launcher includes Java 7U21. The reason you are receiving these warnings is because we do not sign our .jnlp or .collab files. We do not because our .jnlp and .collab files are dynamically generated with login and server assignment information, which means that each one of our .jnlp and .collab files are unique.

Why am I getting the message "Unknown user {Name}"?

The reason you are receiving this Connection Failed message is because you are using an expired .collab file.

Note: Our .jnlp and .collab files are dynamically generated with login and server assignment information, which means that each one of our .jnlp and .collab files are unique and must be downloaded for each session.