

## Overview

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger (AIM) service provides the easiest way to see your friends who are online and to communicate instantly with them. It allows you to add your buddies to your [Buddy List](#). Your buddies can be friends, family members, coworkers, and others who are AOL, CompuServe (CS2000), AOL Instant messenger (SM), or other Netscape AOL Instant Messenger users.

When your buddies sign on, they appear in your Buddy List window, and you can start exchanging messages with them or send files to them.

Using the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, you can:

- [Get the latest news](#).
- [Add buddies to your Buddy List](#).
- [Send instant messages](#) to your online buddies, and [liven up your instant message sessions by using fun icons](#) (cartoon characters, symbols, and pictures) to represent buddies.
- [Chat with a buddy or group](#) of your friends or family members in your own private chat room.
- Control who communicates with you through the buddy controls feature. You can [allow anyone to send you messages](#) or [block messages from specific people](#).
- Find your buddies [by e-mail address](#), [by name and e-mail address](#), or [by common interest](#). You can find screen names of those friends who already belong to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, AOL Instant Messenger (SM) service, AOL, or CS2000.
- [Transfer files](#).
- [Invite a friend to sign up for the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service](#) through the Sign On A Friend feature.
- [Create a personal profile](#) with information such as your e-mail address or a link to your Web page, or you can display your buddies' personal profiles.
- [Warn users](#) who send you annoying or offensive messages.
- Search the Internet.

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## Related Topics

[Steps to Get Started](#)

[Registering](#)

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[Signing on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Service](#)

[Running the New User Wizard](#)

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[How the Buddy List Works](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

[Sending a File to Your Buddy](#)

[Getting a File from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

## Steps to Get Started

To get started using your Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, perform the following steps:

- Ê [Register for a Netscape AOL Instant Messenger account](#), and select a screen name.
- Ë [Download and install the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software](#).
- Ì [Sign on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service](#).
- Í Start the [New User Wizard](#) to help you get started with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.
- Î [Add buddies to your Buddy List](#).
- Ï [Create a personal profile](#).
- Ð Refer to AIM Online Help and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) for help and answers to your questions that might already be addressed.

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## Related Topics

[Overview](#)

[Registering](#)

[Installing the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Software](#)

[Running the New User Wizard](#)

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[How the Buddy List Works](#)

## Registering

Before you can use the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, you need to register and select a screen name and password.

To register and select a screen name and password, perform the following steps:

- 1 Go to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger home page, [http://register.oscar.aol.com/73026\\_create](http://register.oscar.aol.com/73026_create).

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger web page appears on your screen, allowing you to register.

- 2 If you are not an AOL member, enter your screen name, password (twice for confirmation), and e-mail address in the appropriate fields.

**Note:** If you are an AOL member, your AOL screen name is reserved for you to use with AIM. To register it, click **AOL**, and follow screen instructions.

- 3 Click **Click Here** to initiate the registration process.

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## Related Topics

[What to Do After Registering](#)

[Choosing a Screen Name](#)

[Installing the AOL Instant Messenger \(SM\) Software](#)

[Registration FAQ](#)

## What to Do After Registering

After you register your screen name and password, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service sends you an e-mail, asking you to confirm your registration request.

After you receive the mail, perform the following steps:

- 1 Confirm your registration by entering *only* the word **OK** in the body of your confirmation e-mail.  
You must respond to the e-mail within 48 hours to complete your registration. If you don't respond within 48 hours, you are asked to register again.
- 2 Download a copy of the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software.
- 3 [Install the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software](#) , and sign on with the screen name and password you registered.

**Note:** Anyone who knows your password has access to your account; therefore, you should never reveal your password to anyone online. No one from AOL will ever ask you for your password while you are online.

- 4 Start the [New User Wizard](#) if you are using the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service for the first time and want a quick overview.

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## Related Topics

[Installing the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Software](#)

[Running the New User Wizard](#)

[Registration FAQ](#)

## Choosing a Screen Name

Your screen name is the name by which you are known to everyone who uses the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, America Online, and CS2000. Your screen name can be between 3 and 10 characters long, using letters, numbers, and spaces.

Once you select and register your screen name, you cannot change it to a new one. You can, however, [format your screen name](#) to change capitalization and spacing.

**Note:** If you are already an AOL member, your screen name is reserved for you. However, you still need to [register](#) to use the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

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### Related Topics

[Removing a Screen Name](#)

[Formatting a Screen Name](#)

[Using Multiple Screen Names](#)

[Screen Name FAQ](#)

## Removing a Screen Name

If you have a screen name that you don't want to use anymore, you can remove it from the Sign On screen. Note that your screen name is only removed from the Sign On screen, and it is not permanently deleted from the screen name database.

To remove a screen name from the Sign On screen, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the screen name that you want to delete.
- 2 Press the **Delete** key.

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### Related Topics

[Choosing a Screen Name](#)

[Formatting a Screen Name](#)

[Using Multiple Screen Names](#)

[Screen Name FAQ](#)

## Using Multiple Screen Names

You can register multiple screen names to use with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

To sign on with a new screen name you have registered, perform the following steps:

- 1 Display the Sign On screen.
- 2 Type your new screen name over the current screen name that is displayed in the **Screen Name** field.
- 3 Click **Sign On**.

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### Related Topics

[Choosing a Screen Name](#)

[Removing a Screen Name](#)

[Formatting a Screen Name](#)

[Screen Name FAQ](#)

## Installing the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Software

After you have downloaded the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, you must install it on your system before you can communicate with your online buddies.

To install the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software, perform the following steps:

- 1 Locate the AIM95 setup file that you downloaded to your system.
- 2 Double-click the AIM95 icon to start the installation process.

By default, the installer stores the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger in your Windows Program Files directory in the AIM95 folder. You can store the software in another location if you don't want to use the default location.

However, make a note of where you store the software in case you want to [uninstall AIM](#).

- 3 Follow the installation instructions on your screen.

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### Related Topics

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[How the Buddy List Works](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

[Uninstalling the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Service](#)



## **Uninstalling the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Software**

If you need to uninstall the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software, you can do it at any time.

To uninstall the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software, perform the following steps:

- 1 Locate your AIM95 folder.
- 2 Double-click the Uninstall AOL Instant Messenger icon.
- 3 Follow the screen instructions to uninstall AIM.

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### **Related Topic**

[Installing the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Service](#)

## Signing On to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Service

To sign on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, perform the following steps:

- 1 Display the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Sign On screen. (If the AIM icon appears in your system tray at the bottom of your screen, click it, and click **Connect to AIM**.)
- 2 Enter your screen name in the **Screen Name** field.
- 3 Type your password in the **Password** field.
- 4 Click **Sign On**, or press **Enter**.

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### Related Topics

[Running the New User Wizard](#)

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[How the Buddy List Works](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

## Connecting Through a Modem

If you want to connect to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service through a modem, you need to dial in to your Internet Service Provider (ISP) first. When you are connected to the Internet, you can sign on to the service.

### Resolving Connection Problems

If you experience problems connecting, run the automatic configuration program to find a host and port through which you can connect. You must have a live connection to the Internet to complete this procedure.

To resolve connection problems, perform the following steps:

- 1 Click **Setup** on the Sign On screen.

- 2 Click **Auto Configure**.

The Automatic Configuration program attempts to find a host and port through which you can sign on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

- 3 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

**Note:** If you want to preserve your Internet connection while you are signed on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, select the **Keep connection alive** check box. (Some ISPs automatically disconnect you if you have been inactive for a given period.) Every five minutes the program sends a signal to keep your connection alive, even though you may be idle.

### Automatically Connecting and Signing On

To make your connection to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service as quick and easy as possible, you can configure the program to start when Windows starts and then automatically sign on when you connect to the Internet through your ISP.

To connect and sign on automatically, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the Sign On screen, enter your screen name and password.

- 2 Click **Setup**.

- 3 Click the **General** tab.

- 4 Select the **Save password** check box.

- 5 Select the **Automatically sign on when AIM starts** check box.

- 6 Select the **Start AIM when Windows starts** check box.

- 7 In the **Internet Connection** box, click **Modem**.

- 8 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

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### Related Topics

[Overview](#)

[Steps to Get Started](#)

[Service Connection FAQ](#)

## Connecting Through a Local Area Network

If you want to connect to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service through a local area network (LAN) (for example, at work or school), you need to have a live connection to the Internet before you sign on to the service.

### Resolving Connection Problems

If you experience problems connecting, run the automatic configuration program to find a host and port through which you can connect. You must have a live connection to the Internet to complete this procedure.

If your local area network is behind a firewall, you must use a proxy server to connect to the service. Contact your network administrator to help you determine the configuration settings to enter.

To check and set connection options, perform the following steps:

- 1 Click **Setup** on the Sign On screen.
- 2 Enter the settings your network administrator supplies.
- 3 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

**Note:** If you want to preserve your Internet connection while you are signed on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, select the **Keep connection alive** check box. (Some ISPs automatically disconnect you if you have been inactive for a given period.) Every five minutes the program sends a signal to keep your connection alive, even though you may be idle.

### Automatically Connecting and Signing On

To make your connection to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service as quick and easy as possible, you can configure the program to start when Windows starts and then automatically sign on when you connect to the Internet through your ISP.

To connect and sign on automatically, perform the following steps:

- 1 Enter your screen name and password on the Sign On screen.
- 2 Click **Setup**.
- 3 Click the **General** tab.
- 4 Select the **Save password** check box.
- 5 Select the **Automatically sign on when AIM starts** check box.
- 6 Select the **Start AIM when Windows starts** check box.
- 7 In the Internet Connection box, click **Modem**.
- 8 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

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## Related Topics

[Overview](#)

[Steps to Get Started](#)

[Service Connection FAQ](#)

## Running the New User Wizard

The New User Wizard provides you with a quick overview of the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service to help you get started. It guides you through the basic steps to add or find a buddy and create a personal profile with information that you would like to share with others.

To run the New User Wizard, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **New User Wizard**.

The Welcome window appears on your screen. The screen instructions step you through the wizard to help you get started with AIM.

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### Related Topics

[Overview](#)

[Steps to Get Started](#)

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[How the Buddy List Works](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

## Inviting a Friend to Register for an AIM Account

Expand your circle of friends in your Buddy List by inviting others to become Netscape AOL Instant Messenger members. Remember, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger account is free!

To invite a friend to register with AIM, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the People menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **Sign On A Friend**.
- 3 Enter your friend's e-mail address.
- 4 If you want to include a personal greeting in the invitation, type it in the text area.
- 5 Click **Next**.
- 6 When you are finished inviting your friends, click **Finish**.

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### Related Topics

[Overview](#)

[Steps to Get Started](#)

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[What do Do After Registering](#)

[Registration FAQ](#)

## Exiting Netscape AOL Instant Messenger

Exiting the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger application signs you off, closes the application, and removes the AIM icon from your system tray.

To exit the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger application, perform the following steps:

- 1 Click the AIM icon in the system tray at the bottom of your screen.
- 2 Click **Exit**.

**Note:** You can also exit the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger application by pressing **Ctrl+Shift+F4** when the Sign On screen or Buddy List window is in the foreground.

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### Related Topic

[Signing Off Netscape AOL Instant Messenger](#)

## Signing Off Netscape AOL Instant Messenger

Signing off the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger application, logs you off, closes the application, and leaves the AIM icon in your system tray. Keeping the AIM icon in the system tray lets you access and sign on to the service very quickly.

To sign off AIM, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the Buddy List window, click **File**.
- 2 Click **Close**.

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### Related Topic

[Exiting Netscape AOL Instant Messenger](#)



## About the News Ticker

You can use the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service to get up-to-the-minute news with the News Ticker. The News Ticker displays the top five news headlines for Top News, Business, Entertainment, and Sports categories. Clicking on a headline in the News Ticker window launches your browser to the MyNews Web site to display the news story.

AIM displays all news categories in the News Ticker window by default. If you do not want all news categories to display, you can set AIM to display only those that interest you. If you do not want to display any news, you can [turn off the ticker](#) entirely.

You can also perform these functions:

- [Display your news headlines in bold.](#)
- [Change the speed at which the news headlines scroll across the News Ticker window.](#)
- [Expand the News Ticker window](#) to display a list of news headlines, instead of letting them scroll across the window.

You can move the News Ticker window to any location you want on your screen.

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## Related Topics

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

[Displaying Only Selected News Headlines](#)

[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

## Changing the News Ticker Display Speed

You can change the rate at which the News Ticker headlines scroll on your screen to slow, medium, or fast. Medium is the default News Ticker display speed.

To change the News Ticker display speed, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences**.
- 3 Click the **Ticker** tab.
- 4 Select the ticker speed from the **Display speed** field.
- 5 Click **OK**.

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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

[Displaying Only Selected News Headlines](#)

[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

## Displaying the News Ticker

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service displays the News Ticker by default when you first sign on. If you have closed the News Ticker window, you can easily redisplay it.

To display the News Ticker, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the Favorites menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **News Ticker**.

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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

[Displaying Only Selected News Headlines](#)

[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

## Displaying Headlines in Bold

You can display your news headlines in bold or in plain text. The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service displays the headlines in bold by default.

To display the headlines in bold, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences**.
- 3 Click the **Ticker** tab.
- 4 Select **Display headlines in bold**.
- 5 Click **OK**.

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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Only Selected News Headlines](#)

[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

## Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying When You Sign On

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service displays the News Ticker by default when you sign on.

To stop the ticker from displaying at sign-on, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences**.
- 3 Click the **Ticker** tab.
- 4 Deselect **Display Ticker at Signon**.
- 5 Click **OK**.

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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

[Displaying Only Selected News Headlines](#)

[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

## Displaying Only Selected News Categories

The News Ticker window displays the top news headlines for Top News, Business, Entertainment, and Sports by default. You can remove any of these categories, leaving only those that interest you.

To display only selected news categories, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences**.
- 3 Click the **Ticker** tab.
- 4 Deselect the news categories in the **Categories** field that you do not want the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service to display in the News Ticker window.
- 5 Click **OK**.

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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

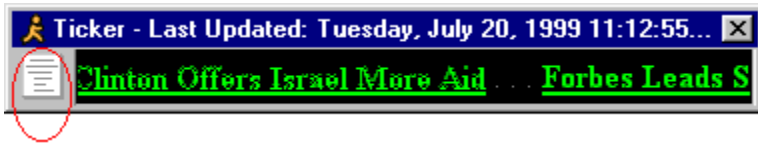
[Expanding the News Ticker Window](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

## Expanding the News Ticker Window

You can expand the News Ticker window to display a list of news headlines, instead of having it scroll across the ticker window.

To expand the News Ticker window, when it is displayed on your screen, double-click the small box in the upper-left corner of the window. (See example below.)



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### Related Topics

[About the News Ticker](#)

[Displaying the News Ticker](#)

[Changing the News Ticker Display Speed](#)

[Displaying Headlines in Bold](#)

[Stopping the News Ticker from Displaying](#)

Check your desired options.



Check your desired options.

Closes this dialog and saves any changes you have made.

Closes this dialog without saving any changes you have made.

Saves your changes but does not close the dialog.

Select your preferred option.

Select your preferred option.

Select your preferred option.

Click this button to make your choice.



Click this button to make your choice.

Click this button to make your choice.

Click this button to make your choice.

Check your desired options.

Check your desired options.

Allow all users to see you in their Buddy List windows and send you messages.

Prevent all users, except those you specify in the Allow List, from seeing you in their Buddy List windows and sending you messages.

Prevent all users from seeing you in their Buddy List windows and sending you messages.



Allow all users, except those you specify in your Block List, to see you in their Buddy List windows and send you messages.

This list box is active if you have selected Allow only the users below. To add a Screen Name, click Add Name, type in the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click Remove.

This list box is active if you have selected Block the users below. To add a Screen Name, click Add Name, type in the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click Remove.

Prevent all users, except those on your Buddy List, from seeing you in their Buddy List windows and sending you messages.

Add a user to the Allow List.

Remove the selected user from the Allow List.

Add a user to the Block List.

Remove the selected user from the Block List.



Allow other users to see how long you have had an AOL Instant Messenger account.

Allow other users to see whether you are idle.

Specify which users can and cannot contact you with Instant Messages.

Determine whether or not other users can view information on how long you have been idle and how long you have had an AOL Instant Messenger account.

This list box is active if you have selected Allow only the users below. To add a Screen Name, click Add Name, type in the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click Remove.

This list box is active if you have selected Block the users below. To add a Screen Name, click Add Name, type in the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click Remove.

Specify which information can be obtained through the Find a Buddy feature by users who know your e-mail address.

Allow users who know your e-mail address to obtain your screen name through the Find a Buddy feature.



Allow users who know your e-mail address to learn only that you have an account (but not to learn your screen name) through the Find a Buddy feature.

Allow users who know your e-mail address to learn nothing about you through the Find a Buddy feature.

Specify the pathname of an alternate web browser.

Select an alternate Web browser.

Open each additional Web document in a new window, instead of re-using an open window.

Use your default web browser when you click on Web links.

If you select this option and specify the pathname of an alternate web browser, AOL Instant Messenger will use the browser you specify.

Use the default e-mail program specified in your registry when you click on mailto links.



Use the e-mail program included with your Web browser.

If you select this option and specify the pathname of an alternate e-mail program, AOL Instant Messenger will use the e-mail program you specify.

Specify the pathname of an alternate e-mail program.

Select an alternate e-mail program.

Enter the command line arguments that your e-mail program requires to address a message. Use the argument %1 to specify where to put the e-mail address. For example, mailto:%1.

Specify which Web browser AOL Instant Messenger uses when you click on a link to a Web document, and whether additional Web documents should be opened in new windows.

Specify which e-mail program AOL Instant Messenger uses when you click on a mail link.

Select this option to conduct a Web search.



Choose a font from the list.

Choose a point size from the list.

Select this option to dim the display of your buddies after they have been idle for the specified number of minutes.

Enter your input in this field.

Select this option to flash the Buddy List window for five seconds when your buddies sign on or off.

Click this button to make your choice.

Choose an item from the list.

Click this button to make your choice.



Click this button to make your choice.

Click this button to make your choice.

Click this button to make your choice.

Check your desired options.

Click this button to make your choice.

Closes this dialog without saving any changes you have made.

Supply information about yourself that you would like others to be able to access. (For example, your name, hobbies, etc.)

Supply information about yourself that you would like others to be able to access. (For example, your name, hobbies, etc.)



If you select this option and enter a message, the message will be automatically sent to those who send you a message after your computer is idle for more than ten minutes.

Enter your idle message.

If you select this option and activate your away message, the message will be automatically sent to those who send you a message. Your away message will also appear in the Personal Profile section of the Buddy Info window when someone requests information about you.

If you select this option and activate your away message, the message will appear only in the Personal Profile section of the Buddy Info window. An automatic response will not be sent.

Select an away message for use or removal.

Add the new message you have entered to your Away messages list.

Remove the selected message from your Away messages list.

Display the selected away message.



Enter new away messages. After you have entered a new message, click the Add Message button.

Specify and enable your idle message.

Specify and control your away messages.

Save your password between sessions, so you don't have to enter it each time you sign on. Note that saving your password is less secure, since another person could easily sign on using your screen name.

Automatically connect to the AOL Instant Messenger service each time you launch the program. This option is only available if you have selected the Save password option.

Select a default font style and size for the Instant Message window.

Select a default background color for the Instant Message window.

Select this option if you want the Enter key to insert a line break. Deselect this option if you want the Enter key to send your message.



Select this option if you want the Tab key to insert a tab. Deselect this option if you want the Tab key to toggle among fields in the Instant Message window.

Select this option if you want the messages you send and receive to be marked with the time they are sent.

Customize the default font and window color used in your Instant Message window.

Automatically start AIM when Windows starts. Once started, AIM will wait until it detects an Internet connection. When it does, it will log on automatically.

Select this button if you connect to the Internet by a modem (dialup) connection.

Select this button if you connect to the Internet by a local area network connection.

Customize the default font and window color used in your Instant Message window.

Customize the appearance and behavior of your Instant Message window.



Customize your sign on preferences and specify the type of Internet connection you use.

Select this option if you do not want graphical smilies to appear in your Instant Message window.

Select this option if you want to be able to choose whether to accept messages from people not on your Buddy List.  
Deselect this option if you want all messages to appear as soon as they are received.

Play a sound when one of your buddies signs on.

Choose a sound from the list.

Select a sound file to play when buddies sign on.

Hear the sound you have chosen to play when buddies sign on.

Play a sound when one of your buddies signs off.



Choose a sound from the list.

Select a sound file to play when buddies sign off.

Hear the sound you have chosen to play when buddies sign off.

Play a sound the first time you receive a message from a particular buddy, but not on subsequent messages from that buddy.

Choose a sound from the list.

Select a sound file to play the first time you receive a message from a particular buddy, but not on subsequent messages from that buddy.

Hear the sound you have chosen to play the first time you receive a message from a particular buddy, but not on subsequent messages from that buddy.

Play a sound every time you receive a message.



Choose a sound from the list.

Select a sound file to play every time you receive a message.

Hear the sound you have chosen to play every time you receive a message from a particular buddy.

Play a sound every time you send a message.

Choose a sound from the list.

Select a sound file to play every time you send a message.

Hear the sound you have chosen to play every time you send a message.

Control sounds that play when buddies sign on or off.



The settings in this box control sounds that play when you send or receive instant messages.

Specify the server address and port number to be used on the AOL Instant Messenger™ server. Under normal circumstances, you do not need to change these settings. If you should change them accidentally, you can restore the default settings by clicking the Reset button.

This field contains the default Internet address of the AOL Instant Messenger™ server. Under normal circumstances, you do not need to change this field. If you should change it accidentally, you can restore the default setting by clicking the Reset button.

This field contains the default server port number to be used on the AOL Instant Messenger™ server. Under normal circumstances, you do not need to change this setting. If you should change it accidentally, you can restore the default setting by clicking the Reset button.

If necessary, specify proxy server information for using AOL Instant Messenger through a Local Area Network firewall (for example at your workplace). Your network administrator may need to configure these settings.

Activate the proxy server controls.

Supply the name of the proxy server.

Supply the port number to be used on the proxy server.



Select this option if your proxy server uses SOCKS 4 protocol.

Select this option if your proxy server uses SOCKS 5 protocol.

Select this option if your proxy server uses HTTPS protocol.

Supply the authentication username required by the proxy.

Supply the authentication password required by the proxy.

Use the proxy server to act as a name server for hosts that are behind the firewall.

If you click this button, the AOL Instant Messenger™ software will attempt to configure itself to work in your computer's network environment. Try Auto Configure if you are having difficulty connecting with AOL Instant Messenger™ Service.

If you click this button, the AOL Instant Messenger™ software will restore the default Server Host and Port values.



Preserve your Internet connection during idle periods. (Some Internet Service Providers automatically disconnect users who have been inactive for a given period.)

## Creating a Personal Profile

To create a personal profile, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu on the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Profile**.  
AIM displays a message, reminding you that all AIM members can see information included in your personal profile. If you don't want to be reminded of this in the future, click the **Do not tell me this again** checkbox.
3. Click **OK**.  
If you want others to be able to find you, using your name and address, click **Allow People to Search for Me**, and enter your name and address in the appropriate fields.
4. Click **Next**.  
If you want to chat with others of specific interests, click **I am available for chat**. Indicate your interest by clicking **Choose Interest** and selecting your interest from the list. You can specify up to five interests.
5. Click **Next**.
6. Type any additional information that you want others to know about you. Information that you enter is displayed when others click **More Info**.
7. Click **Finish** when you are finished creating your personal profile.

---

### Related Topics

[Editing Your Profile](#)

[Creating A Hyperlink in Your Profile](#)

[Displaying Information About Someone Else](#)

## Editing Your Profile

You can change your profile whenever you are signed on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service. Your profile can also include up to five interests (or hobbies) by which you want others to be able to find you on the Internet.

To edit your profile, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, click **My Profile**.
- 2 Edit the appropriate fields that you want to update.
- 3 Click **Next**.
- 4 Change the interests you want by selecting **Choose Interest**, then selecting a different area of interest.  
If you have not specified that you are available for chat and want to chat with your buddies, click **I am available for chat**. If you don't want to specify your interests so that other users can find you and send messages to you, leave this field unchecked.
- 5 Click **Next**.
- 6 Edit the information that you want to change.  
You can use the toolbar to change text and background color or font sizes; to make text bold, italic, or underlined. You can use the link button on the toolbar to create hyperlinks to your e-mail address and web sites.
- 7 Click **Finish** when you are finished updating your profile.

**Note:** You do not need to fill out this information in order to use the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

---

### Related Topics

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[Creating A Hyperlink in Your Profile](#)

[Displaying Information About Someone Else](#)

## Creating a Hyperlink in Your Profile

You can include hyperlinks in your personal profile (for example, you can link users to your personal web page).

To create a hyperlink in your personal profile, perform the following steps:

- 1 Type and select the text you want to turn into a hyperlink.
- 2 Click **link** on the toolbar.  
The Edit Hyperlink dialog opens.
- 3 Specify the URL (Internet location) of the site you want the link to point to.  
You can also specify an e-mail address as the URL. For example, `mailto:john.doe@aol.com`.
- 4 Click **OK** to apply your changes and close the dialog.

**Tip:** You can also click link with no text selected. If you do this, you need to enter the link text into the Edit Hyperlink dialog. The link appears at the insertion point location.

---

### Related Topics

[Creating a Personal Profile](#)

[Editing Your Profile](#)

[Displaying Information About Someone Else](#)

## Displaying Information About Someone Else

Every user of the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service can provide personal information that is available to other users. This information includes, for example, name, e-mail address, favorite quotation, or link to a web page. This information is only available when the user is signed on.

To display information about someone else, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **Online** tab of the Buddy List window, select the buddy whose information you want to see.  
The name of the buddy appears highlighted.
- 2 Click the right mouse button and choose **Get Member Info** from the popup menu.  
The Buddy Info screen is displayed.
- 3 Click **Close** when you have finished reviewing the information.

**Note:** You can view information only about other Netscape AOL Instant Messenger users. You cannot view the profiles of AOL members.

---

### Related Topics

[Editing Your Profile](#)

[Creating A Hyperlink in Your Profile](#)

[Displaying Information About Someone Else](#)

## How the Buddy List Works

When you sign on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service, your Buddy List window appears. There are two tabs in your Buddy List window: **List Setup** and **Online**.

The **List Setup** tab allows you to [add your buddies' screen names](#) to your Buddy List and [create groups](#) for them. For example, you can create groups for specific interests such as Tennis Pals, Photographers, Classmates, and so forth, then add your buddies to them. The **List Setup** tab also allows you to manage your Buddy List by letting you delete buddies and groups or rearrange them.

The **Online** tab lists your buddies who you have added to your Buddy List who are signed on. Once they are signed on, you can exchange instant messages with them.

Initially, three empty groups appear on these tabs: Buddies, Family, and Co-Workers. Add your buddies to any of these groups or create additional groups. If you don't know your buddies' screen names (from either America Online or the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service), you can find a buddy [by e-mail address](#), [by name and address](#), or [by common interest](#).

In the **List Setup** tab:

- § Each group appears as a folder.
- § The buddies in each group appear as branches from the folder. You must expand the group to see buddies in that group.
- § You cannot see which of your buddies is online when you display the List Setup tab. Click the Online tab to see which buddies are online.

In the **Online** tab:

- § Groups in the Buddy List window are initially shown expanded, displaying all your buddies in each group. You can toggle the display mode between expanded and collapsed by clicking the small triangle to the left of each group name.
- § Each group has a number in parentheses to the right of the group name to indicate how many people in the group are online out of the total number of buddies in the group. For example, (3/9) means that three of the nine buddies in the group are currently online.
- § Buddy names in bold indicate the buddies who signed on most recently. Buddy names in gray and italic indicate the buddies who just signed off. You can move the cursor over your buddy's screen name to display information such as the name of the online service that your buddy is using, warnings, and online time.

**Tip:** To toggle between the **Online** and **List Setup** tabs, press **CTRL+TAB**.

---

## Related Topics

[Adding a Buddy to Your Buddy List](#)

[Adding a Group to Your Buddy List](#)

[Rearranging Your Buddies](#)

[Renaming a Buddy or Group](#)

[Finding a Buddy by E-mail Address](#)

[Finding a Buddy by Common Interest](#)

[Finding a Buddy by Name and Address](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Finding a Buddy by E-mail Address

To find a buddy by e-mail address, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **People** menu, point to **Find a Buddy**, and then click **By E-mail Address**.
- 2 Type your buddy's e-mail address.
- 3 Click **Next**.

---

### Related Topics

[Finding a Buddy by Common Interest](#)

[Finding a Buddy by Name and Address](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Finding a Buddy by Name and Address

To find a buddy by name and address, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **People** menu, point to **Find a Buddy**, and then click **By Name and Address**.
- 2 Type the information about your buddy in the fields.
- 3 Click **Next**.

---

### Related Topics

[Finding a Buddy by E-mail Address](#)

[Finding a Buddy by Common Interest](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)



## Finding a Buddy by Common Interest

You can search the Internet to find buddies with common interests. For example, if you are interested in photography, you can search for others who are also interested in photography and send instant messages to them.

To find a buddy with a common interest, perform the following steps:

1 On the **People** menu, point to **Find a Buddy**, then select **By Common Interest**.

2 Click **Choose Interest**.

The service displays a list of interests from which you must select.

3 Select an interest.

4 Click **Next** to display a list of users who share your interest.

5 Select a user from the Lookup Reply List window.

To display more information about the user, click **More Info**.

To send an instant message, click **IM**.

6 Click **Finish** when you are done.

---

### Related Topics

[Finding a Buddy by E-mail Address](#)

[Finding a Buddy by Name and Address](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Adding a Buddy to Your Buddy List

You can add buddies (friends, family members, and coworkers who are AOL, CS2000, AOL Instant Messenger (SM), or other registered Netscape AOL Instant Messenger users) to your Buddy List. Whenever your buddies sign on, you can see them in your Buddy List and send them messages instantly.

To add a buddy to your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 In the Buddy List window, click the **List Setup** tab.
- 2 Click the folder to which you want to add your buddy.
- 3 Click the **Add Buddy** icon:



A branch appears with the default name **\*New Buddy\***.

- 4 Type the screen name of the buddy you want to add, and press Enter.

Remember to enter just the buddy's screen name, not your buddy's full E-mail address. For example, *johndoe*, rather than *johndoe@aol.com*.

### Notes:

- § If you don't know your buddy's screen name (from either America Online or the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service), you can find a buddy [by e-mail address](#), [by name and address](#), or [by common interest](#).
- § You can invite friends who have not yet signed up to join the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service. On the **People** menu, click **Sign On A Friend** and follow the instructions.

---

### Related Topics

[Adding a Group to Your Buddy List](#)

[Rearranging Your Buddies](#)

[Renaming a Buddy or Group](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Adding a Group to Your Buddy List

To add a group to your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 In the Buddy List window, click the **List Setup** tab.
- 2 Click the **Add Group** icon:



A folder appears with the default name **\*New Group\***.

- 3 Type a new name for the group, and press **Enter**.

---

### Related Topics

[Adding a Buddy to Your Buddy List](#)

[Rearranging Your Buddies](#)

[Renaming a Buddy or Group](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Rearranging Your Buddies

To rearrange your buddies in your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 In the Buddy List window, select the buddy or group you want to move.
- 2 Drag and drop the entry to a different location in your Buddy List.

---

### Related Topics

[Adding a Buddy to Your Buddy List](#)

[Adding a Group to Your Buddy List](#)

[Renaming a Buddy or Group](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)

## Renaming a Buddy or Group

To rename a buddy or group in your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 In the Buddy List window, click the **List Setup** tab.
- 2 Select the buddy or group you want to rename.  
The name of the buddy or group appears highlighted.
- 3 Click the right mouse button and choose **Edit** from the popup menu.
- 4 Enter the new name for the buddy or group, and press Enter.

---

### Related Topics

[Adding a Buddy to Your Buddy List](#)

[Adding a Group to Your Buddy List](#)

[Rearranging Your Buddies](#)

[Buddy List FAQ](#)



## About Buddy Icons

Have fun with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service by livening up your instant message sessions with buddy icons. Buddy icons are images such as cartoon characters, symbols, pictures, and other graphical images you can use to represent buddies in your Buddy List. The buddy icons appear in the lower-left corner of your Instant Message windows when you send messages to your buddies who are online, and the icons remain in the windows until you end your conversation.

The graphics file that you want to use for your buddy icon must be installed on your computer. If you don't have images installed, you can choose them from the Internet while you are using AIM, install them, and then select them to be used as your buddy icons.

You can use .BMP, .GIF, .ICO, and .XBM file formats for your graphical images. There is no limit to the height and width of the images you use, but you do have disk space limitations. Your image must not use more than 7,168 bytes of disk space. If you are creating your own icons in a paint program, you should use a size of 48x48 pixels.

**Note:** You can download some graphical images from the Internet for free, while some manufacturers require that you purchase their images.

---

### Related Topics

[Choosing a Buddy Icon](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Buddy Icon Preferences](#)

## Choosing a Buddy Icon

You can choose icons to represent buddies in your Buddy List. When you send instant messages to your buddies, the icons appear in the lower-left corner of your Instant Message windows.

You can choose a different icon to represent each buddy and group. When you use a buddy icon for a group, you can also use a different buddy icon for each buddy in the group. In this case, when you send an instant message, AIM uses the icon you chose for your buddy, instead of the icon chosen for the group. For more information about buddy icons, see [About Buddy Icons](#).

To choose a buddy icon for one of your buddies in your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu on the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences** to display the Preferences window.
- 3 Click the **Buddy Icon** tab.
- 4 Click your buddy's screen name to which you want to add the icon.  
To choose an icon to be used for all buddies within a group, select the group name, instead of a buddy's name.
- 5 Choose **Browse PC** to go to the location of the image file, and select the image that you want to use for your buddy.

If you don't have images installed on your computer, you can select them from sites that are listed in the **Buddy Icons Center** area in the preferences window.

Note that you can download some graphical images from the Internet for free, while some manufacturers require that you purchase their images.

- 6 Click **Apply**.
- 7 Click **OK** when you are finished adding icons to your buddies' screen names.

---

### Related Topics

[About Buddy Icons](#)

[Choosing a Buddy Icon](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)



## Sending Icons to Your Buddies

You can send icons (cartoon characters, symbols, pictures, and other graphical images) to your buddies to display in their Instant Message windows when you send instant messages to them. Your buddies can either accept or reject your image file.

For example, if you select Mickey Mouse or Minnie Mouse as your buddy icon and send an instant message to your buddy, the image shows up in the lower-left corner of your Instant Message window if your buddy accepts it. The image also remains in the window until you end your conversation.

**Note:** You can send icons only to buddies who have your screen name on their Buddy Lists.

To choose a buddy icon for one of your buddies in your Buddy List, perform the following steps:

- 1 Select the File menu on the Buddy List window.
- 2 Click **My Options**, and click **Edit Preferences** to display the Preferences window.
- 3 Click the **Buddy Icon** tab.
- 4 Click **My Buddy Icon** in the **Images to use for buddies** field.
- 5 Choose **Browse PC** to go to the location of the image file, and select the image file that you want to send to your buddy.

If you don't have images installed on your computer, you can select them from sites that are listed in the **Buddy Icons Center** area of your preferences window.

Note that you can download some graphical images from the Internet for free, while some manufacturers require that you purchase their images.

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service allows your buddy to either accept or reject your image file.

- 6 Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About Buddy Icons](#)

[Choosing a Buddy Icon](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

## About Instant Messages

You can communicate instantly with your buddies (friends, family, coworkers, and others), who are signed on to AOL, CS2000, or AIM. Add your buddies to your [Buddy List](#), send messages to them, and watch as messages pop up on your screen – instantly!

You can also have fun with AIM by livening up your instant message sessions with [buddy icons](#). Buddy icons are images such as cartoon characters, symbols, pictures, and other graphical images you can use to represent buddies in your Buddy List. The buddy icons appear in the lower-left corner of your Instant Message windows when you send messages to your buddies who are online, and the icons remain in the windows until you end your conversation.

Using the Instant Message feature, you can:

- [Share your favorite Web site with your buddies, by including links in your messages.](#)
- [Create an Emoticon \(or smiley\) in an instant message.](#)
- [Change the default appearance of your messages such as adding color and changing font and size.](#)
- [Time-stamp your messages.](#)
- [Save your instant message sessions.](#)

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## Related Topics

[Choosing a Buddy Icon](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in an Instant Message](#)

[Create an Emoticon in an Instant Message](#)

[Changing Key Bindings for Messages](#)

[Changing the Default Appearance of Messages](#)

[Viewing the Timestamp in Messages](#)

[Saving Instant Messages](#)

## Sending an Instant Message

To send an instant message to your buddy, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **Online** tab of the Buddy List window, select your buddy's screen name.
- 2 Click the **Instant Message** icon:



The Instant Message window opens.

- 3 Type your message in the text message area, and click **Send**.

**Tip:** You can use the toolbar to change text or background colors, change text size, or emphasize text with bold, italic, or underlining.

---

### Related Topics

[About Instant Messages](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Changing Key Bindings for Messages](#)

[Changing the Default Appearance of Messages](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in an Instant Message](#)

[Saving Instant Messages](#)

[Viewing the Timestamp in Messages](#)

## Creating a Hyperlink in an Instant Message

To create a hyperlink in an instant message, perform the following steps:

- 1 In an Instant Message window, type and select the text you want to turn into a hyperlink.
- 2 Click **link** on the toolbar.  
The Edit Hyperlink window opens.
- 3 Specify the URL (Internet location) of the site you want the link to point to.  
You can also specify an e-mail address as the URL. For example, `mailto:john.doe@aol.com`.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

### Tips:

- § You can also click **link** with no text selected. If you do this, you need to enter the link text into the dialog box. The link appears at the insertion point location.
- § If you enter an URL as text (for example, `http://www.aol.com` or `mailto:john.doe@aol.com`), the text automatically converts to a hyperlink when you send the message.

---

### Related Topics

[About Instant Messages](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Changing Key Bindings for Messages](#)

[Changing the Default Appearance of Messages](#)





[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Saving Instant Messages](#)

[Viewing the Timestamp in Messages](#)

## Creating an Emoticon in an Instant Message

You can add the following commonly used emoticons (or graphical smileys) to your messages by typing the corresponding characters:

Type	To Create
:~)	
:-)	
;-)	
:)	

### Notes:

- § You can also create emoticons by holding down the right mouse button in a message and selecting the Insert option from the menu.
- § To control whether these emoticons appear in your Instant Message window and on your right mouse button menu, see [Turning Emoticons On or Off](#).

---

### Related Topics

[About Instant Messages](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Changing Key Bindings for Messages](#)

[Changing the Default Appearance of Messages](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Saving Instant Messages](#)

[Viewing the Timestamp in Messages](#)

## Saving Instant Messages

To save instant messages to a file, perform the following steps:

- 1 In an Instant Message window, choose **Save** from the File menu.

The Save Text to File window opens.

- 2 Enter a name for the file in the **File name** field.

- 3 In the **Save as type** field, select **Text Only** if you want to save just the text of the messages.

If you want to save the text and be able to follow any hyperlinks in the messages, select **AOL Rich Text Format**. This creates an HTML file you can view with your web browser.

- 4 Click **Save** to save the messages that appear in the upper pane of the Instant Message window.

---

## Related Topics

[About Instant Messages](#)

[Sending Icons to Your Buddies](#)

[Changing Key Bindings for Messages](#)

[Changing the Default Appearance of Messages](#)

[Sending an Instant Message](#)

[Viewing the Timestamp in Messages](#)

## About Chat

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger Chat feature lets you exchange messages with several of your buddies in your own private chat rooms. You can join popular chat rooms such as Health Chat, Entertainment Chat, Romance Chat, Computing Chat, and a host of others that interest you.

Using Chat, you can also:

- [Invite buddies to a chat room.](#)
- [Create hyperlinks in your chat message.](#)
- [Create emoticons in your chat message.](#)
- [Save chat messages to a file to read offline or to just keep in your files.](#)

**Note:** Only Netscape AOL Instant Messenger users can chat in Buddy Chat rooms.

---

## Related Topics

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

[Sending a Chat Message](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message](#)

[Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message](#)

[Saving Chat Messages](#)

## Inviting a Buddy to Chat

To invite a buddy to chat, perform the following steps:

1 In the Buddy List window, click the **Online** tab.

2 Select the screen names of the buddies you want to invite to the chat room.

To select multiple screen names, hold down the Ctrl key as you select each name. You can also select an entire group of buddies.

3 Click the **Buddy Chat** icon:



The Buddy Chat Invitation window opens.

If you want to send the invitation to additional buddies, type their screen names in the **Screen names to invite** field.

4 Click **Send** to send the invitation.

**Tip:** You can invite a buddy to join a chat in progress. In the Chat Room window, select **People** on the menu bar and click **Invite a Buddy** to send an invitation.

**Note:** Only AIM users can receive Buddy Chat invitations. To see what service your buddy is using, click the **Online** tab in the Buddy List window, and move the cursor over your buddy's screen name. A small window appears with the service type.

---

## Related Topics

[About Chat](#)

[Sending a Chat Message](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message](#)

[Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message](#)

[Saving Chat Messages](#)



## Sending a Chat Message

To send a chat message, perform the following steps:

- 1 Type the message that you want to send in the text area box of the Chat Room window.

You can send chat messages with hyperlinks and emoticons or format them using different styles such as **bold**, *italic*, or underlining. Using **color** or a different font can also help emphasize messages you send.

- 2 Click **Send**.

When you are finished with your chat conversation, you can save it to a file.

### Tips:

- § To stop receiving messages from someone in the chat room, select the person's screen name in the field that lists everyone in the chat room and click **Ignore**. An X appears next to the selected screen name. Click **Ignore** again to toggle the ignore feature off.
- § You can use the toolbar to change text color or emphasize text with bold, italic, or underlining.

---

### Related Topics

[About Chat](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message](#)

[Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message](#)

[Saving Chat Messages](#)

## Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message

To create a hyperlink in a chat message, perform the following steps:

- 1 In a Chat Room window, type and select the text you want to turn into a hyperlink.
- 2 Click **link** on the toolbar.  
The Edit Hyperlink window opens.
- 3 Specify the URL (Internet location) of the site you want the link to point to.  
You can also specify an e-mail address as the URL. For example, `mailto:john.doe@aol.com`.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

### Tips:

- § You can also click **link** with no text selected. If you do this, you need to enter the link text into the dialog box.  
The link appears at the insertion point location.
- § If you enter an URL as text (for example, `http://www.aol.com` or `mailto:john.doe@aol.com`), the text automatically converts to a hyperlink when you send the message.

---

### Related Topics

[About Chat](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)





[Sending a Chat Message](#)

[Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message](#)

[Saving Chat Messages](#)

## Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message

You can add the following commonly used emoticons (or graphical smileys) to your messages by typing the corresponding characters.

Type	To Create
:~)	
:-(	
;-)	
:)	

### Notes:

- § You can also create emoticons by holding down the right mouse button in a message and clicking **Insert**, then clicking the symbol you want to insert.
- § To control whether these symbols appear in your Chat Room window and on your right mouse button menu, see [Turning Emoticons On or Off](#).

---

### Related Topics

- [About Chat](#)
- [Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)
- [Sending a Chat Message](#)
- [Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message](#)
- [Saving Chat Messages](#)

## Saving Chat Messages

To save chat messages to a file, perform the following steps:

- 1 In a Chat Room window, choose **Save** from the File menu.

The Save Text to File window opens.

- 2 Enter a name for the file in the **File name** field.

- 3 In the **Save as type** field, select **Text Only** if you want to save just the text of the messages.

If you want to save the text and be able to follow any hyperlinks in the messages, select **AOL Rich Text Format**. This will create an HTML file you can view with your web browser.

- 4 Click **Save** to save the messages that appear in the upper pane of the Chat Room window.

---

## Related Topics

[About Chat](#)

[Inviting a Buddy to Chat](#)

[Sending a Chat Message](#)

[Creating a Hyperlink in a Chat Message](#)

[Creating an Emoticon in a Chat Message](#)

## How Away and Idle Messages Work

If you need to step away from your computer but do not want to sign off, you can instruct Netscape AOL Instant Messenger to use the [Away message](#) and the [Idle message](#) to let other users know you are temporarily not available.

For planned absences, you can turn on your Away message to let others know when you will be back. Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays this message when anyone requests information about you and automatically replies with your Away message to anyone who sends you a message while you are away.

For unplanned absences, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger turns on your Idle message after 10 minutes of inactivity. Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays this message when anyone requests information about you and automatically replies with your Idle message to anyone who sends you a message while you are away.

---

### Related Topics

[Away Preferences](#)

[Defining a New Away Message](#)

[Deleting an Away Message](#)

### Away Message Definition

A message you create for Netscape AOL Instant Messenger to use when you are away from your computer.

**Idle Message Definition**

A message you create for Netscape AOL Instant Messenger to use when your account is idle.

## Defining a New Away Message

To define (or create) a new Away message, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Away** tab.
- 3 Select the **Auto respond and insert in personal profile** option.  
If you do not want Netscape AOL Instant Messenger to reply automatically to messages you receive when you are away, select the **Insert in personal profile only** option.
- 4 Type the new Away message in the text field below these options.
- 5 Click **Add Message**.
- 6 Click **OK** to save your change and close the dialog box.

---

## Related Topics

[Away Preferences](#)

[Deleting an Away Message](#)

[How Away and Idle Messages Work](#)



## Turning an Away Message On and Off

To turn an Away message on or off, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **Away Message**, and then click the Away message you want to use.  
The Away message appears on your screen.
- 2 To turn off your Away message, click **I'm Back**.

---

### Related Topics

[Away Preferences](#)

[Defining a New Away Message](#)

[Deleting an Away Message](#)

[How Away and Idle Messages Work](#)

## Deleting an Away Message

To delete an Away message, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Away** tab.
- 3 Select the Away message you want to delete.
- 4 Click **Remove**.
- 5 Click **OK** to save your change and close the dialog box.

---

## Related Topics

[Away Preferences](#)

[Defining a New Away Message](#)

[How Away and Idle Messages Work](#)

## Defining an Idle Message

To define (or created) an Idle message, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Away** tab.
- 3 Select the **Auto respond with message** option.
- 3 In the text area next to this checkbox, type the message you want to send to anyone who sends you a message while your computer is idle.
- 4 Click **OK** to save your change and close the dialog box.

If you do not use your computer for 10 minutes, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger automatically sends your Idle message to anyone who sends you a message. To resume your service, press any key or click a mouse button.

---

## Related Topics

[Away Preferences](#)

[Defining a New Away Message](#)

[How Away and Idle Messages Work](#)

## How Buddy Controls Work

You can prevent (or block) any Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service user (or all users) from sending you messages. This feature is useful if you find someone's messages offensive or if you simply don't want to receive messages for a while. You can also specify only those users you want to be able to send you messages.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking a Specific User from Sending You Messages](#)

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)

## Blocking Specific Users from Sending You Messages

To block a specific user from sending you messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Controls** tab.
- 3 Select **Block the users below**.
- 4 Click **Add Name**.
- 5 Type the name of the user you want to add in the Block List.
- 6 Click **OK** to save your change and close the dialog box.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)

## Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages

To block everyone from sending you messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Controls** tab.
- 3 Select **Block all users**.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking a Specific User from Sending You Messages](#)

## Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages

To allow only buddies to send you messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Controls** tab.
- 3 Select **Allow only the users below**.
- 4 Click **Add Name**.
- 5 Type the name of the user you want to add in the Allow List.
- 6 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking a Specific User from Sending You Messages](#)

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)

## Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages

To allow everyone to send you messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Controls** tab.
- 3 Select **Allow all users to contact me**.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking a Specific User from Sending You Messages](#)

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)



## How Warnings Work

No one patrols the Internet to make sure people remain polite or decent. If someone else using the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service sends you annoying or offensive messages, you have two ways to respond. You can issue a warning to the person or you can block the person.

When you issue a warning to another Netscape AOL Instant Messenger user, the recipient's warning level increases and that user's ability to send and receive messages decreases. With enough warnings, the user can be prevented from exchanging any messages with anyone and may even be signed off. However, warnings are not permanent; the warning level decreases over time. If a user is warned off the service, the user can return after a "cooling off" period.

You can see someone's warning level if you let the cursor hover over the person's screen name in your Buddy List window.

Alternatively, you can permanently block one or more people from sending you messages. See [Blocking Specific Users from Sending You Messages](#) for more information.

---

### Related Topics

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)

[Warning a User](#)

[Warning FAQ](#)

## Warning a User

To warn a user who has sent you an offensive message, click **Warn** in the Instant Message window in which you received the message.

**Warn** imposes a warning on the sender, hampering that person's ability to send and receive messages. With frequent warnings, the user will not be able to exchange any messages with anyone. Only after a "cooling off" period can that user send and receive messages again.

You can choose to impose the warning anonymously. Anonymous warnings are less severe and the user you are warning may not know who issued the warning.

### Notes:

- § You can issue only one warning for each message someone sends you.
- § If a user warns you, consider ending the conversation. Every additional message you send enables that user to warn you again.

---

### Related Topics

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)

[Warning FAQ](#)



## About File Transfers

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service File Transfer feature allows you to share files with your online buddies. Before you begin to transfer files, you should install antivirus software on your computer to protect your computer against computer viruses that can damage files on your system.

Using the File Transfer feature, you can:

- [Send files to your online buddies](#)  
You can either create a folder that you want to store files that you want to send to others, or use the default directory to store your files. This ensures that other users do not see any files on your system that you don't want them to access.
- [Get files from your buddies' computers](#)  
If you don't want to send files to your buddies, you can let them get files that they need directly from your computer. You don't have to worry about users seeing other files on your computer that you don't want them to access. Your buddies can only access files that are stored in the folder that you specify as a shared folder.
- Control who gets your files by [allowing anyone to get your files](#) or [only buddies who are listed in your Buddy List window](#)
- [Check files for computer viruses](#)
- [Specify the folder from which others can get your files](#)
- [Change your default download folder](#)
- [Track who gets files from your computer](#)

---

## Related Topics

[Accepting File Transfers Automatically](#)

[Displaying the Receive File Dialog Box](#)

## Sending a File to Your Buddy

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service lets you send files stored on any medium such as diskette, hard or zip drive, or network volume to your online buddies.

When you want to send a file, make sure you notify your buddy that you are sending it. Your buddy must be signed on and cannot be in an idle state. Once you send the file transfer request, your buddy can accept, reject, or ignore your file transfer request. Your buddy can also impose a warning on you, which can slow the rate at which you can perform activities in AIM.

**WARNING:** Your buddy can determine your Internet Protocol (IP) address when you send files. This is a potential security risk, so make sure you know and trust the person to whom you are sending a file.

To send a file to your online buddy, perform the following steps:

1. Select the People menu on the Buddy List window.
2. Click **Send File**.
3. Enter your buddy's screen name in the Send File dialog box.  
If you don't know your buddy's screen name (from either America Online or the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service), you can find it by searching for your buddy [by e-mail address](#), [by name and address](#), or [by common interest](#).
4. Click **OK**.
5. Click **Browse** to locate and enter the file that you want to send in the **File or Directory to send** field.  
Note that by default, AIM goes to your **filelib** folder, which was created for you when you downloaded the AIM software; however, you can change the default folder to any folder that you want to store files that you want to send to others.
6. Enter a file description.  
This field is optional, but it can provide brief information about the content of the file for your buddy.
7. Click **Send**.  
The File Transfer Status window appears, indicating that AIM is waiting for your buddy to accept the file. After your buddy accepts your file, the window disappears from your screen.  
If you don't want the File Transfer Status window to appear each time you send a file, you can set your file transfer preference to [stop it from appearing](#). To cancel the file transfer, click **Cancel**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

## Blocking All Incoming File Transfers

You can block all incoming file transfers if you don't want to download any files to your system.

If you don't have antivirus software installed on your system, you should block all incoming file transfers until you install protection software. You should always make sure you know and trust the person who wants to send files to you.

To block all incoming file transfers, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu on the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Block all incoming invitations**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Allowing Only Your Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Stopping Others from Getting Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Checking Files for Viruses

Antivirus software detects and removes viruses in programs and files on disks, in compressed files, and in any file that you download from the Internet. When you first install AIM, it tries to automatically detect your antivirus software. If it can't find your protection software, you must install antivirus software on your system and point AIM to its location.

To let AIM automatically check files that you download, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu on the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the Virus Checker tab.
4. Make sure **Check files for virus after transfer** is selected.  
If you want to use a different antivirus program than the one AIM is pointing to, click **Browse** to locate and enter the software in the **Virus checker executable path** field.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Displaying the Receive File Dialog Box](#)

[Virus Checker Preferences](#)

## Displaying the Receive File Dialog Box

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service can notify and warn you each time someone tries to send you a file. This warning also lets you know that you should have antivirus software installed on your system before you receive files from anyone.

To display the Receive File dialog box, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu on your Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Always display the Receive File Dialog**.
5. Click **OK**.

If you don't want the service to notify or warn you each time someone tries to send you a file, you can set your file transfer preference to [accept files automatically](#) .

---

### Related Topic

[About File Transfers](#)



## Accepting File Transfers Automatically

You can set up the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service to automatically accept file transfers from everyone or accept files only from users listed in your Buddy List.

To accept file transfers automatically, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.  
To automatically accept files from only users listed in your Buddy List, click **Automatically accept files from users on my buddy List**.  
To automatically accept files from anyone who sends you a file, click **Automatically accept files from everyone**.
4. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Displaying the Receive File Dialog Box](#)

[Checking Files for Viruses](#)

[Changing Your Default Download Folder](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service allows you and your buddies to share files with each other. If you don't want to send files to your buddies, you can let them get files that they need directly from your computer. You can also get files from their computers. You and your buddies can download any software, text, and graphics files from each other's computer that you want others to access.

You don't have to worry about users seeing other files on your system; they can only access files that are in the directory that you specify as a shared area. You can also control who can get your files by allowing anyone to get your files or only buddies that are listed in your Buddy List.

To get a file from your buddy's computer, perform the following steps:

1. Select the People menu on the Buddy List window.
2. Click **Get File**.
3. Enter your buddy's screen name in the Get File dialog box.
4. Click **OK**.

The system displays a list of all the files that are in your buddy's shared folder.

5. Select the file that you want to download to your system.

To select multiple files, hold the **Ctrl** key down as you select the files that you want to download. After selecting your files, the service runs your antivirus program and downloads the file to your AIM download folder by default. You can [change the default download folder](#) if you want to use a different one for storing files.

After your antivirus software finishes, exit the program (if it doesn't close automatically) to return to AIM.

**Note:** If you want your buddies to get files from your system, you can store files that you want to share with others in the AIM default folder, **filelib**, or you can [specify a different location to store files](#) you want to share with others.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Checking Files for Viruses](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Displaying File Transfer Status](#)

[Changing Your Default Download Folder](#)

[Stopping Others From Getting Your Files](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Stopping Others from Getting Your Files

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service enables you to stop unauthorized users from getting files from your system.

To stop others from getting your files, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Select **Allow no users to get my files**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Displaying File Transfer Status](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files

By default, no one can get files from your system.

To allow everyone to get your files from your shared folder, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Allow everyone to get my files**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

## Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files

If you don't want everyone accessing and getting files from your shared folder, you can set your file transfer preference to allow only the users who are listed in your Buddy List to get your files.

To allow only the users listed in your Buddy List to get your files, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Allow only users on my Buddy List to get my files**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Displaying File Transfer Status

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service displays the status of each of your file transfers (for example, sending or getting files). If you don't want the status dialog box to appear on your screen, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Never display Status dialog**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Changing Your Default Download Folder

The Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service stores all files that you download from your buddy's computer in your AIM download directory by default. You can change the default if you want to use a different folder.

To change your default download folder, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Enter the complete path of the folder that you want to use as your default folder in the **Directory to put files I receive** field.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Changing Your Default Shared Folder](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Changing Your Default Shared Folder

When your buddies try to get files from your system, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service locates your **filelib** folder in your AIM directory by default. If you want others to get files stored on your system from a different folder, you must specify the new location.

To change your default shared folder, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Enter the complete path of the folder that you want to use as your default shared folder in the **Directory from where others can get my files or I send files** field.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Changing Your Default Download Folder](#)

[Stopping Others from Getting Your Files](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)



## Tracking Who Gets Your Files

You can keep a record of everyone who gets files from your system. Each time someone downloads a file from your system, AIM records the file name (along with the date and time the file was downloaded) and user's name in the **logfile.txt** file. The **logfile.txt** file is stored in your **windows\aim95\username** directory.

To track who gets your files, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.  
The Preferences window appears on your screen.
3. Click the File Transfer tab.
4. Click **Keep a record in logfile.txt of who has gotten files**.
5. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[About File Transfers](#)

[Allowing Everyone to Get Your Files](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Get Your Files](#)

[Blocking All Incoming File Transfers](#)

[Getting Files from Your Buddy's Computer](#)

[Changing Your Default Download Folder](#)

[Stopping Others from Getting Your Files](#)

[Tracking Who Gets Your Files](#)

[File Transfer Preferences](#)

## Changing Your Password

You can change your password whenever you are signed on to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service. You can make any change you want to your password as long as your password contains between 4 and 16 characters.

To change your password, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Change Password**.  
The Change Password window appears.
- 2 Type your current password in the appropriate field and then type and re-type a new password in the appropriate fields.
- 3 Click **OK**.

**Note:** Anyone who knows your password has access to your account. Therefore, you should never reveal your password to anyone online. No one from America Online will ever ask you for your password while you are online.

## Formatting Your Screen Name

If you are dissatisfied with the capitalization and spacing in your screen name, you can change (or format) it while you are signed on. Any other changes constitute a new screen name, and you must register it at the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger web site.

To format your screen name, perform the following steps:

1. On the File menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Format Screen Name**.
2. Change your screen name in the appropriate field.

The only changes you can make to your screen name are the addition or deletion of spaces or the capitalization of letters. For example, if your screen name is johndoe, you can change it to Johndoe or John Doe. You cannot change it to Jane Doe.

3. Click **OK**.

---

### Related Topics

[Choosing a Screen Name](#)

[Removing a Screen Name](#)

[Working with Multiple Screen Names](#)

## Updating Your E-mail Address

One way that others can find you and add you to their Buddy List window is through your e-mail address. If your e-mail address changes (for example, if you change jobs or switch from one Internet Service Provider to another), you should update your e-mail address to allow others to find you by your screen name.

To update your e-mail address, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Update E-mail Address**.
- 2 Enter your new e-mail address in the dialog box.
- 3 Click **OK**.

## Changing Sounds that Play When You Send or Receive Messages

To change sounds that play when you send or receive messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Sounds** tab.
- 3 Select an option in the IM Sounds group.
- 4 Click **Browse** for the option you selected.  
The Browse for Sound dialog opens.
- 5 Select the sound you want to use and click **Open**.
- 6 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

### Tips:

- § To test a sound, click **Preview**.
- § To turn a sound off, deselect the check box for that sound.

---

### Related Topics

[Changing Sounds that Play When Buddies Sign On or Off](#)  
[Sound FAQ](#)

## Changing Sounds that Play when Buddies Sign On and Off

To change sounds that play when your buddies sign on or off, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Sounds** tab.
- 3 Select an option in the Buddy Sounds group.
- 4 Click **Browse** for the option you selected.  
The Browse for Sound dialog opens.
- 5 Click the sound you want to use and click **Open**.
- 6 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

### Tips:

- § To test a sound, click **Preview**.
- § To turn a sound off, deselect the check box for that sound.

---

### Related Topics

[Changing Sounds that Play When You Send or Receive Messages](#)  
[Sound FAQ](#)

## Setting Visual Alerts in Your Buddy List Window

You can set visual alerts to let you know when your buddies sign on or off or when they become idle.

To set visual alerts, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Buddy** tab.
- 3 To make your Buddy List window blink for five seconds each time a buddy signs on or off, select the **Flash Buddy List window when buddies sign on or off** option.
- 4 To dim the display of buddies who are idle, select the **Dim buddies after they have been idle for \_\_ minutes** option and enter the number of minutes buddies must be idle. The default is 20 minutes.
- 5 Click **OK** to save the changes.

## Changing the Font in Your Buddy List Window

You can change the default font used to display groups and buddies in your Buddy List window.

To change fonts, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Buddy** tab.
- 3 Select the font name and font size you want to use to display your groups and buddies in your Buddy List window.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.



## Displaying or Hiding Information About Yourself

You can determine whether or not other users can see how long you have had a Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service account or how long you have been idle. Other users can see this information by holding their cursor over your screen name in their Buddy List windows. You can also determine whether or not other users who know your e-mail address can use the Find a Buddy feature to learn your screen name or whether you have an account.

To display or hide information about yourself, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **Controls** tab.
- 3 Select the options you prefer in the **Allow other users to see** and the **Allow users who know my e-mail address to find** groups.
- 4 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

## Changing Key Bindings for Messages

You can change the behavior of the Enter and Tab keys in the Instant Message window.

To change key bindings for messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.

- 2 Click the **General** tab.

If you want the Enter key to insert a line break, select the **Enter key inserts Return** option. (Deselect this option if you want the Enter key to send your message.)

If you want the Tab key to insert a tab, select the **Tab key inserts Tab** option. (Deselect this option if you want the Tab key to toggle among fields in the Instant Message window.)

- 3 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

## Turning Emoticons On or Off

You can control whether emoticons (or graphical smileys) appear in your Chat and Instant Message windows.

To turn emoticons on or off, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.

If you do not want to see the emoticons in your Chat and Instant Message windows, select the **Disable** option. The emoticon submenu is also removed from the Insert menu (accessed by clicking the right mouse button in a message).

If you want to see the emoticons in your Chat and Instant Message windows, deselect the **Disable** option.

- 3 Click **OK** to save the setting and close the dialog box.

## Changing the Default Appearance of Messages

You can customize the appearance of messages you compose by changing the default font, text color, or window color.

To change the default font used for messages:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.
- 3 Click **Font**.
- 4 Select the font settings you want to use and click **OK**.

The Font and Size settings affect only the display of messages on your screen. They do not change the font or size of messages you send.

- 5 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

To change the default window color used for messages:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.
- 3 Click **Window Color**.
- 4 Select the color you want to use and click **OK**.
- 5 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog box.

**Note:** If you want to change the size of text you send, use the toolbar to increase or decrease it.

## Viewing the Time Stamp in Messages

You can have the time included on all of your instant and chat messages.

To view time stamp messages, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.
- 3 Select the **Always view time stamp** option.
- 4 Click **OK** to save this setting and close the dialog box.

**Note:** You can choose **Time Stamp** from the View menu of any Chat or Instant Message window to toggle the time stamp on or off.

### **Why Load and Save Settings?**

Loading and saving your Netscape AOL Instant Messenger settings allows you to:

- § Save your settings so you can quickly set up your account and list of online buddies on another computer. For example, you can copy your settings from a desktop computer to a notebook computer.
- § Share your settings with others. For example, you can copy the settings you use to connect to the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger server through a firewall and e-mail the file to your coworkers.

#### **Notes:**

- § Not all versions of Netscape AOL Instant Messenger can load and save settings.
- § You cannot load or save settings from an America Online account.

## **Saving Settings**

You can save your Buddy List, current preferences, and other configuration settings to import them to another computer where you are going to install the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software.

To save your settings, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu click **Save Buddy List**.
- 2 Select the type of settings you want to save and click **Save**.
- 3 Enter a name for the file you want to save and click **Save**.

## Loading Settings

To load your settings, perform the following steps:

- 1 On the **File** menu click **Load Buddy List**.
- 2 Select the file containing the settings you want to load (or import) and click **Open**.
- 3 Select the type of settings you want to load.

If you are loading Buddy List Preferences, you can choose whether or not to add the groups to your existing list (Merge with my existing Buddy List). If you choose not to merge the settings, your existing list of online buddies will be replaced by the ones you are loading.

- 4 Click **Load**.



## Settings You Can Load and Save

There are six types of settings you can save and load to your copy of the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software:

### **Connection Preferences**

This setting corresponds to the settings on the Connection tab of the Preferences dialog: host server, port, and proxy information. In addition, this setting stores the setting of the **Auto-login** checkbox on the Sign On screen.

### **Personal Profile**

This setting corresponds to the information you enter on the My Info tab of the Preferences dialog box.

### **Controls Preferences**

This setting corresponds to the information on the Controls tab of the Preferences dialog box: your privacy setting, your allow list, your block list, and the settings that allow others to see your idle time or how long you have been a member.

### **Sound Preferences**

This setting corresponds to the settings on the Sounds tab of the Preferences dialog box. The **on** or **off** value of each option on the tab is imported or exported, but neither the sound files nor the pointers to them are saved.

### **Text Composition and Viewing Settings**

This setting corresponds to the default text properties of your Instant and Chat Message windows as you defined them on the General tab of the Preferences dialog.

### **Buddy List**

This setting corresponds to the buddies and groups in your Buddy List window. You can choose to export any or all of the groups. When you import buddy list preferences, you can choose to replace your groups with the ones you are importing or merge them into your existing groups. If you merge a group that has the same name as an existing group in your Buddy List window, the imported buddies are added to the existing group.

## **Sounds Preferences**

The Sounds Preferences dialog box allows you to set which sounds, if any, play when your buddies sign on or off and when you send or receive messages.

### **Play a sound when buddies sign on**

Select this option to play a sound whenever one of your buddies signs on.

### **Play a sound when buddies sign off**

Select this option to play a sound whenever one of your buddies signs off.

### **Play a sound when first message is received**

Select this option to play a sound the first time you receive a message from a particular buddy, but not on subsequent messages from that buddy.

### **Play a sound when receiving a message**

Select this option to play a sound every time you receive a message.

### **Play a sound when sending a message**

Select this option to play a sound every time you send a message.

## **Tip**

Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software includes a directory of default sound files. This SOUNDS directory is located in the same directory in which you installed the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software.

## General Preferences

### Save password

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger saves your password, so you won't have to type it for subsequent logins.

### Automatically sign on when AIM starts

If you select this option, you are signed on automatically whenever you launch the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service. This option is active only if you select the **Save password** option on the Sign On screen.

### Start AIM when Windows starts

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger starts automatically when Windows starts.

### Internet Connection: Modem

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger uses your modem. This option is active only if you select the **Start AIM when Windows starts** option.

### Internet Connection: Local area network

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger uses your local area network. This option is active only if you select the **Start AIM when Windows starts** option.

### Enter key inserts Return

Select this option if you want the Enter key to insert a line break. Deselect this option if you want the Enter key to send your message.

### Tab key inserts Tab

Select this option if you want the Tab key to insert a tab. Deselect this option if you want the Tab key to toggle between fields in the Instant Message window.

### Always view time stamp

Select this option if you want the messages you send and receive to be marked with the time they are sent.

When you are finished entering and formatting your information, click **OK** to apply your changes and close the dialog box.

### Disable graphical smileys

Select this option if you do not want emoticons (or graphical smileys) to appear in your Instant Message window. The emoticon submenu is also removed from the Insert menu (accessed by clicking the right mouse button in a message).

### Show 'Accept Message' dialog for messages from users not in Buddy List

Select this option if you want to choose whether to accept a message from someone not on your Buddy List. Whenever such a person attempts to start a conversation by sending you a message, a dialog appears asking if you want to accept the message.

If you deselect this option, messages from everyone appear as soon as you receive them.

### Font

Click this button to select a font style and size for the Instant Message window.

### Window Color

Click this button to select a background color for the Instant Message window.

### Text Magnification: 200%

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays the text in your Instant Message window magnified by 200 percent. Although the text is magnified in your Instant Message window, it is displayed normally, using the font selections you made, to the buddy who receives your message.

### Text Magnification: 133%

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays the text in your Instant Message window magnified by 133 percent. Although the text is magnified in your Instant Message window, it is displayed normally, using the font selections you made, to the buddy who receives your message.

### Text Magnification: 100%

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays the text in your Instant Message window magnified by 100 percent. Although the text is magnified in your Instant Message window, it is displayed normally, using the font selections you made, to the buddy who receives your message. 100 percent is the actual size of the text.

### Text Magnification: 75%

If you select this option, Netscape AOL Instant Messenger displays the text in your Instant Message window magnified by 75 percent. Although the text is magnified in your Instant Message window, it is displayed normally, using the font selections you made, to the buddy who receives your message.

## Connection Preferences

If you access the Internet through an Internet Service Provider, you most likely will not need to make any changes to the Server or proxy sections of the Connection Preferences tab. However, if you access the Internet through a Local Area Network firewall (for example, at your workplace), then your network administrator may need to configure the proxy section of the Connection Preferences tab.

### Server Host

This field contains the default Internet address of the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger server. Under normal circumstances, you do not need to change this field. If you should change it accidentally, click **Reset** to restore the default address.

### Server Port

This field contains the default server port number to be used on the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger server. Under normal circumstances, you do not need to change this field. If you should change it accidentally, click **Reset** to restore the default port number.

### Auto Configure

If you click this button, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software attempts to configure itself to work in your computer's network environment. Try Auto Configure if you are having difficulty connecting with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

### Reset

If you click this button, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software restores the default Server Host and Port values.

### Connect using proxy

If you click this button, the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software activates the proxy server controls.

### Proxy Server Host

Supply the name of the proxy server.

### Proxy Server Port

Supply the port number to be used on the proxy server.

### Protocol

Specify whether your proxy server uses the SOCKS 4, SOCKS 5, or HTTPS protocol.

### Authentication Username

Supply the authentication username required by the proxy.

### Authentication Password

Supply the authentication password required by the proxy.

### Use proxy to resolve hostnames

Select this option if you want the proxy to act as a name server for hosts that are behind the firewall.

### Keep connection alive

Select this option if you want Netscape AOL Instant Messenger to preserve your Internet connection during idle periods. (Some Internet Service Providers automatically disconnect users who have been inactive for a given period.)

## Controls Preferences

### **Allow all users to contact me**

Select this option to allow all users to see you in their Buddy List windows and send you messages.

### **Allow only users on my Buddy List**

Select this option to allow only users on your Buddy List to see you in their Buddy List windows and send you messages.

### **Allow only the users below**

Select this option to allow only users you specify to see you in their Buddy List windows and send you messages.

### **Block all users**

Select this option to prevent all users from seeing you in their Buddy List windows and sending you messages.

### **Block the users below**

Select this option to prevent the users you specify from seeing you in their Buddy List windows and from sending you messages.

### **Allow List**

This list box is active when you select Allow only the users below. To add a Screen Name, click **Add Name**, type the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click **Remove**.

### **Block List**

This list box is active when you select Block the users below. To add a Screen Name, click **Add Name**, type the Screen Name, and press Enter. To delete a Screen Name, select the Screen Name and click **Remove**.

### **Allow users to see how long I've been idle**

Select this option to enable other users to see whether you are idle when they hold the cursor over your screen name in their Buddy List window.

### **Allow users to see how long I've had an account**

Select this option to enable other users to see how long you have had a Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service account when they hold the cursor over your screen name in their Buddy List window.

### **Allow users who know my e-mail address to find my screen name**

Select this option to allow users who know your e-mail address to obtain your screen name through the Find a Buddy feature.

### **Allow users who know my e-mail address to find only that I have an account**

Select this option to allow users who know your e-mail address to learn only that you have an account (but not to learn your screen name) through the Find a Buddy feature.

### **Allow users who know my e-mail address to find nothing about me**

Select this option to allow users who know your e-mail address to learn nothing about you through the Find a Buddy feature.

## **Buddy Preferences**

The Buddy tab of the Preferences dialog box allows you to control the appearance of your list of online buddies.

### **Font**

From the dropdown menu, select a font for the Buddy List window.

### **Size**

From the dropdown menu, select a size for the font in the Buddy List window.

### **Dim buddies after they have been idle for \_\_ minutes**

Dims your buddies' screen names after they have been idle for the specified number of minutes. You must specify at least 10 minutes because the AOL Instant Messenger service (SM) may not be able to report your buddies' idle state until after 10 minutes.

### **Flash Buddy List window when buddies sign on or off**

Flashes the Buddy List window for five seconds when buddies sign on or off.

## **Away Preferences**

The Away Preferences dialog box allows you to define messages that appear to others while you are away from your computer or while your computer is idle.

### **Auto respond with message (when idle)**

If you select this option and enter a message, this message is automatically sent to those who send you a message when your computer is idle for more than ten minutes.

### **Auto respond and insert in personal profile (when away)**

If you select this option and activate your Away message, this message is automatically sent to those who send you a message. Your Away message also appears in the Personal Profile section of the Buddy Info window when someone requests information about you.

### **Insert in personal profile only (when away)**

If you select this option and activate your Away message, the message appears only in the Personal Profile section of the Buddy Info window when someone requests information about you.

### **Away messages**

Click **Add Message** and type a label and a new Away message in the text fields. After you have entered a new message, click **Save**.



## Buddy Chat Preferences

The **Buddy Chat** tab of the Preferences dialog box allows you to set controls for your chat room and sounds. You can also control whether or not you receive chat invitations.

Set your chat preferences with these options:

- **Chat Room Window**  
Select the **Flash window when message is received** option if you want the chat window to flash when someone sends you a chat message while you are working in another window.  
If you want the service to display an announcement when users enter and leave a chat room, select the **Show announcements when users enter and leave room** option.
- **Sounds**  
The Sounds Preferences dialog allows you to indicate which sound (if any) plays when your buddies receive your messages and when you send messages:  
**Play a sound when messages are received**  
Select this option to play a sound when chat participants receive your message.  
**Play a sound when sending a message**  
Select this option to play a sound each time you send a chat message.
- **Block all incoming chat invitations**  
Select this option if you don't want to receive any chat invitations.

**Tip:** Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software includes a directory of default sound files. This **SOUNDS** directory is located in the same directory in which you installed the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software.

## File Transfer Preferences

The File Transfer tab allows you to set your preferences to receive files and control who can get them. You can set options to control operations such as blocking all incoming invitations and receiving files from buddies automatically.

**WARNING:** Make sure you have installed antivirus software on your system before you receive files from anyone. Files that you download from the Internet could contain viruses that can damage files on your system or cause it to crash.

You can control your file transfer operations with the following options:

- **Block all incoming invitations**  
Set this option if you do not want to receive any file transfer invitations.
- **Always display the Receive File Dialog**  
Set this option if you want to confirm all file transfers before you download any files to your system. The dialog box shows who is sending you a file, the name of the file, and a description of the file.  
If you don't want the warning to display in future file transfers, click the **Don't ask me again** option in the Receive From warning window.
- **Automatically accept files from users on my Buddy List**  
Set this option if you want to receive files automatically from buddies listed in your Buddy List window. When you select this option, you are not warned about who is sending you files or warned about having antivirus software installed on your system.
- **Automatically accept files from everyone**  
Set this option if you want to automatically accept files from anyone without being warned of who is sending you the file.

You can set preferences with the following options to control what happens when users try to get files from your system:

- **Allow no users to get my files**  
Set this option to stop anyone from getting your files.
- **Allow only users on my Buddy List to get my files**  
Set this option to allow only users who are on your Buddy List to get your files.
- **Allow everyone to get my files**  
Set this option if you want everyone to get your files.
- **Never display status dialog**  
Set this option if you don't want a dialog box to appear that shows your file transfer status.
- **Keep a record in logfile.txt of who has gotten files**  
Set this option if you want to know who has downloaded files from your system. The **logfile.txt** file is stored in your **%windir%\aim95\username** directory.

## **Virus Checker Preferences**

The Virus Checker tab allows you to set preferences to receive files in your system and to indicate the antivirus software that you want to use for files that you send or receive.

You can set these options:

- **View Antivirus Warning dialog box**  
Set this option to let AIM remind you to check all files that you download from your buddies' systems.
- **Check files for virus after transfer**  
Set this option to allow the service to check all files automatically that you download from the Internet. Even if you know the person who is sending you files, you should check files with your antivirus software.

The **Virus checker executable path** indicates to the service what antivirus software to use when it downloads files or receives them from your buddies.

## Buddy Icon Preferences

The Buddy Icon tab allows you to set preferences for whether or not you want to receive buddy icons (images such as cartoon characters, symbols, small drawings, and other graphical images) from your buddies. AIM displays icons in the lower-left corner of your Instant Message window while you are having a conversation with your buddy if you accept a buddy icon from a buddy. (For more information about buddy icons, see [About Buddy Icons](#).)

You can set these options to control the Buddy Icon feature:

- **Never display Buddy Icons**

Set this option if you do not want to receive icons from your buddies. When you set this option, you also won't be able to see any buddy icons that you have chosen for other buddies.

- **Never accept Buddy Icons**

Set this option to prevent others from sending you their buddy icons. However, when you set this option, you are still able to see buddy icons that you have chosen for your other buddies

- **Accept from users on Buddy List**

Set this option if you want to accept buddy icons from only buddies on your Buddy List.

- **Display Buddy Icon Knock-Knock dialog**

Set this option if you want to be alerted when a buddy wants to send you a buddy icon. When enabled, AIM displays a dialog box when another user sends you a buddy icon. You can either accept or reject the buddy icon. When you disable this option, you automatically receive buddy icons from users without any warning.

**Note:** Setting the **Never display buddy icons** or **Never accept buddy icons** option overrides this option setting because you won't be receiving any buddy icons.

## News Ticker Preferences

The Ticker tab allows you to set your News Ticker preferences to change the way you display news. You can set these options:

- **Categories**

Allows you to select the news that you want AIM to display in the News Ticker window. By default, AIM displays top news in these categories: Top News, Business, Entertainment, and Sports. Deselect any news category you do not want AIM to display in your News Ticker window.

- **Display Ticker at Sign on**

Allows you to control whether or not AIM automatically displays the News Ticker after you sign on. Deselect this option if you do not want AIM to display the ticker.

- **Display Headlines in bold**

Allows you to control whether AIM displays the News Ticker headlines in plain text or bold. By default the news headlines are set to display in bold text. If you want your news headlines in plain text, deselect this option.

- **Refresh every**

Allows you to control how often AIM refreshes the News Ticker window. The default setting is 30 minutes.

- **Display speed**

Allows you to control the rate at which the news headlines scroll across the News Ticker window. You can select Slow, Medium, or Fast.

## If You Can't Sign On

Check for one of the following instances:

- § Is the password you entered valid? If not, check your case-sensitive password and try again.
- § Did your request to sign on get denied? If so, you have signed on too many times in a short period. Wait a few minutes and try again. Additional attempts to sign on now will extend the period you need to wait.
- § Are you currently connected to the Internet? If not, and you have been able to connect before, check the following:
  - Ø Is your Internet Service Provider (ISP) connection operating properly? If not, contact the company supplying your connection and be prepared to [change your connection configuration](#).
  - Ø Is your LAN connection operating properly? If not, contact your LAN network administrator and be prepared to [change your connection configuration](#).

You might not be able to sign on if:

- § Your Internet connection is only 16-bit. AIM needs a 32-bit connection. Contact your ISP if you are not sure.
- § There is a DNS problem with your ISP or network. Contact your ISP or system administrator, or try again later.
- § Your network is using a [firewall](#). If this is the case, contact your system administrator for information about setting up a proxy server. After you obtain this information, you must enter it in your [Connection preferences](#).
- § The AIM service is temporarily unavailable. Try to sign on again later.

If none of the above conditions is true, there is either a temporary problem somewhere in the network that is preventing the connection from completing or the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger server is down. In either case, you simply need to wait and try again later.

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## Related Topics

[Connecting Through a Local Area Network](#)

[Connecting Through a Modem](#)

[Connection Preferences](#)

### **To Change Your Connection Configuration**

- 1 Click **Setup** on the Sign On screen.
- 2 On the Connection tab, enter the settings supplied by either the company supplying your ISP connection or your LAN network administrator.
- 3 Click **OK** to save the settings and close the dialog.

### If You Can't See Anyone in Your Buddy List Window

- § Have you added any buddies to your Buddy List? If not, click the **List Setup** tab in the Buddy List window and click the **Add Buddy** icon:



- § Are you viewing the **Online** tab in the Buddy List window? If not, click the **Online** tab in the Buddy List window to display your online buddies.
- § Are any of your buddies signed on? If not, they won't appear in your Buddy List. On the **People** menu, click **Sign On A Friend** to invite a friend to register with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.
- § Is the **Block all users** option selected? If so, this prevents anyone from seeing you and also prevents you from seeing anyone in your Buddy List window. To deselect the **Block all users** option, on the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**. Click the **Controls** tab and deselect the option.
- § Are all of your buddies blocking you? If so, on the **People** menu, click **Sign On A Friend** to invite another friend to register with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.

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### Related Topics

[Allowing Everyone to Send You Messages](#)

[Allowing Only Buddies to Send You Messages](#)

[Blocking a Specific User from Sending You Messages](#)

[Blocking Everyone from Sending You Messages](#)



### **If You Can't Send Instant Messages**

- § Is your buddy blocking your instant message? If so, on the **People** menu, click **Sign On A Friend** to invite another friend to register with the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service.
- § Is your buddy signed on? If not, you need to wait and try again later when your buddy is signed on.
- § Did you exceed the [rate limit](#) for sending instant messages? If so, wait until the power bar under **Send** turns yellow or green.

## Rate Limit Definition

The rate limit is a technical constraint the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger service uses to encourage users to use the service in a reasonable manner. As your rate limit decreases, the rate at which you can send messages decreases. If the rate is low enough, you are unable to send any instant messages. Your current rate limit is displayed in the power bar under **Send**.

Two factors determine your rate limit:

- § The rate at which you send instant messages

- § Your warning level

If you try to send a lot of messages quickly, you decrease your rate limit. Each time you receive a warning, your warning level increases and your rate limit decreases.

You cannot reset your warning level or your rate limit. Gradually your warning level is reduced and your rate limit increases as it returns to a normal state.

**If Your Web Browser Doesn't Open Properly**

If your web browser doesn't open, check to make sure you did not remove your default web browser accidentally. If you did, you need to either register an existing browser as the default web browser with your operating system's Registry, or you need to install a new web browser.

**If Your E-mail Program Doesn't Open Properly**

If your e-mail program doesn't open, check to make sure you did not remove your default e-mail program accidentally. If you did, you need to either register an existing e-mail program as the default e-mail program with your operating system's Registry or you need to install a new e-mail program.

### **If You Want to Disable Automatic Launch**

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.
- 3 Deselect the **Start AIM when Windows starts** option.
- 4 Click **OK** to save this setting and close the dialog box.

### **If You Want to Disable Automatic Sign On**

- 1 On the **File** menu, point to **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.
- 2 Click the **General** tab.
- 3 Deselect the **Automatically sign on when AIM starts** option.
- 4 Click **OK** to save this setting and close the dialog box.

**Firewall**

A firewall is a computer system that is placed between networks to restrict traffic to and from an organization for security reasons.

## Registrations

### How do I confirm my registration after I've registered?

After you register, AIM sends you e-mail, allowing you to confirm your registration request. You must respond to this e-mail within 48 hours to complete your registration.

The confirmation e-mail provides instructions on how to respond.

### What if I accidentally typed the wrong e-mail address during registration?

You can easily update your e-mail address while signed on to AIM by performing the following steps:

1. On the File menu, select **My Options**.
2. Click **Update E-mail Address**.
3. Enter your correct e-mail address in the **New e-mail address** field.
4. Click **OK**.

### Why am I having problems registering?

Check for one of the following instances:

- Have you typed your e-mail address correctly in the proper format (for example, joeuser@domain.com)?
- If you are an America Online member, be sure that you entered the zip code listed in your America Online account information.
- Did you choose a password and enter it twice correctly?
- Did you choose a screen name that isn't already in use?

### Should the e-mail address that I specify during registration be valid?

Yes, you should always use a valid e-mail address when you register your AIM screen name. AIM uses the e-mail address that you supply during registration to mail your password to you in the event that you forget your password.



## Screen Name

### What can I do if the screen name I want is already taken?

If the screen name you want is already taken, try variations of that name, or select another. You can use up to 10 letters, numbers, and spaces for your screen name. For example, if the screen name you want is "Hearty", try using "Heart101" or "NYC Heart".

### Can I change my screen name?

No, you cannot change your screen name to a new one; however, you can change the capitalization and spacing of your screen name by performing the following steps:

1. On the File menu, click **My Options**, and select **Format Screen Name**.
2. Format the screen name.
3. Click **OK**.

### Can I delete one of my old AIM screen names?

No, you cannot delete old AIM screen names. However, you can prevent other users from finding one of your Screen Names by performing the following steps:

1. On the File menu, click **My Options**, and then click **Edit Preferences**.  
A window appears.
2. Click the Controls tab.
3. Click **Nothing about me**.

### How do I delete screen names from the Sign On screen?

Select the screen name on the Sign On screen, and press the **Delete** key.

### How do I delete screen names from the list in the Instant Message window or from the Info window?

Highlight the screen name, and press the **Delete** key. If the screen name is still not deleted, upgrade to the latest version of AIM.

### Do my screen names and Buddy List transfer to a new copy of AIM that I install on the same computer?

Yes, the latest version of AIM copies your Buddy List, screen names, and preferences to any other copies of AIM that you install on the same computer.

## Signing On

### When I sign on to AIM, why do I have to choose between my profile on the host and my profile on my PC?

This choice has one of two causes:

- The host has misplaced your profile, and it needs an updated copy from your computer.
- If you've signed on to AIM from a different computer, the host notices a difference between the profile on the new computer and the profile that was sent to the host from the other computer. The host is confirming which profile you would like to use.

### Why am I unable to sign on with all of my registered AIM screen names? With the same copy of AIM, I can sign on with only one of my two screen names.

Wait about an hour, and try signing on again with the screen name that is experiencing the problem.

### Why do I get the message, "No Internet connection detected" when I try to sign on to AIM using my AOL connection?

This problem occurs if you are using the 16-bit version of AOL, which is intended for use in Windows 3.1. All recent versions of AIM are 32-bit applications. In order to use a 32-bit Internet application such as AIM, you must have a 32-bit Internet connection as well.

To obtain the 32-bit version of AOL, sign on to AOL and go to Keyword: UPGRADE. It is a free download (not including any telephone company charges). To find out whether you have the 16-bit or 32-bit version of AOL, select About America Online from the Help menu. On the screen that appears, you see either "for Windows" or "for Windows 95/98." If it has just "for Windows," then you have the 16-bit version of AOL.

The problem also occurs if your AOL screen name is designated as a Child, Young Teen, or Mature Teen. With these types of AOL screen names, you are not able to use any Internet software through your AOL connection. To change the status of an AOL screen name, you must sign on with the master screen name, and go to Keyword: **ParentalControls**.

## Passwords

### Can I change my password once I'm signed on to AIM?

Yes, you can change your password while you are signed on to AIM. To change your password once after you have signed on, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu.
2. Click **My Options**, and select **Change Password**.
3. Change your password to one that you want.

### Why doesn't my password work any more?

Unlike AOL, your AIM password is case-sensitive. That means that correct capitalization is necessary. Make sure that the Caps Lock key is not on.

Also, if you share a screen name on both AIM and AOL, changing the password on AOL does not change it on AIM, and vice-versa.

You can have your password sent to your e-mail address by submitting your screen name at the following Web page:

<http://www.aol.com/aim/password.adp?>

### What should I do if I forget my password?

When you enter an incorrect password to sign on, AIM displays an error message, asking you if you forgot your password. In the error message window, click **Forgot Password**. After your browser opens to the Web site, enter your screen name, and click **Submit**.

Your password is sent to you through e-mail. However, if the e-mail address you provided during registration is invalid, the service cannot send you your password. In this case, you must register another screen name by choosing **<New User>** on the Sign On screen, and clicking **Sign On**.

## **Service Connections**

### **What should I do when I lose my connection to the server and AIM displays the message, “Internet Connection Lost – check connection?”**

This is probably just a temporary communication problem between your modem and your Internet Service Provider (ISP). Your ISP is able to keep its connection, but AIM gets disconnected. (In many cases, you won't see noticeable symptoms in your other Internet applications, such as your web browser, but AIM requires a constant uninterrupted connection.)

You should sign on to AIM again. If you are frequently disconnected, it may help to change the access number you use to connect to your ISP.

### **Why am I unable to connect to AIM through my company LAN? In the past, I made the connection with no problem.**

Your system administrator must update **login.oscar.aol.com** on the LAN DNS table.

## Buddy Lists

### Why can't I see my buddies in my Buddy List, even though they are online?

You might not be able to see buddies in your Buddy List for several reasons:

Make sure that the "Online" tab in the Buddy List window is the active tab.

- If the number in parentheses next to a group indicates that there are buddies online, make sure that the group is expanded. For example, if it says "Friends (5/10)" but no names are listed, then the group is not expanded. To expand the group, click the arrow on the left of the group name so that the arrow points downward.
- Make sure that your buddies are not blocking you and that you are not blocking your buddies. If you block buddies or they block you, you cannot see them.
- If the buddies you can't see are using AOL, then they have enabled an option that allows you to send them instant messages but doesn't let you see them on your Buddy List. This feature is only available to AOL users. Ask the AOL users to go the Privacy Preferences in their AOL Buddy List, and choose one of the **Allow** or **Block** options that does not cause you to be blocked.

### How do I transfer my Buddy List from one computer to another?

To transfer your Buddy List from one computer to another, perform the following steps:

1. Select the File menu from the Buddy List window.
2. Click **Save Buddy List**.
3. Save your Buddy List to a file, and transfer it to your other computer by using a disk or by attaching it to an e-mail.

To load the Buddy List file to your other computer, click the File menu, and select **Load Buddy List**.

### Why don't other users see me as being idle when I am signed on to AIM but not performing any AIM activities?

If you are using any application in your computer (or just pressing a key or moving your mouse slightly), AIM does not consider you to be idle. For example, if you are using a word-processing application while you are signed on, AIM does not consider you to be idle.

### Why does AIM ignore my option setting to dim buddies in my Buddy List after they've been idle for 5 minutes? Instead, AIM doesn't dim my buddies' screen names until they've been idle for at least 10 minutes.

Your buddy's Buddy List program might not be notifying the server that your buddy is idle until after 10 minutes. Each client may be different.

### What should I do when AIM incorrectly reports how long my buddies have been signed on?

Open your Control Panel and double-click the Date/Time icon. Check to make sure that the correct time zone, date, and time are set and that the Daylight Savings Time setting is correct.

## **Instant and Chat Messages**

**Why can't I send an instant message to one of my friends? AIM displays a message indicating that my friend is using unsupported software.**

The person is probably using an old version of the Macintosh AOL software. AOL's Macintosh users must use AOL 3.0 to send instant messages to AIM users. Ask the AOL user to upgrade to the latest version of AOL at Keyword: **UPGRADE**. The upgrade is free to the AOL user (not including any telephone company charges).

**Why can't I send an instant message to someone I've blocked in my Buddy List?**

That is an intentional feature of the AIM software.

**What can I do about someone I don't know who keeps sending me messages?**

If you don't want to receive messages from the user, you can:

- Add the user to your Block List under the Controls Preference.
- Warn the user by clicking **Warn** on the Instant Message window or Chat Invitation window from the user.

**Why does AIM display the message, "Sorry, chat is not available at this time," when I try to enter a chat room?**

Occasionally, our host system has a problem initializing chat rooms. Try entering a chat room again in hour or so.

## **Warnings**

### **When I mistakenly warn a buddy, can I undo the warning?**

You can't undo a warning, but a user's warning level is not permanent and is eventually reset to zero. Warnings are also not kept on any kind of permanent record.

### **What can I do when I find that I'm always being warned by a particular user?**

Don't send any messages to that user. You can only be warned by someone if you send that user a message.

### **Why is a user able to warn me after I've sent the user an instant message, even though I've blocked the user?**

If you send an instant message to another user and then blocked that user, the user can still warn you one or more times for messages that you've already sent. (Blocking the other user prevents both of you from seeing each other in your Buddy Lists, and it also prevents both of you from sending each other any more messages.)

### **Why does my buddy's warning level appear differently in the Instant Message window than in the Buddy List window?**

Warning levels shown in the Buddy List window are updated frequently, but when you have an Instant Message window open with another user, the warning level shown in that Instant Message window is only updated when the other user sends you more text.

### **Why is my buddy's warning level increasing even though I didn't issue him any warnings?**

Someone else is warning your buddy, and you are seeing your buddy's warning level increase as a result.

## Sounds

### Why don't my AIM sounds work?

You might need to check your sound settings to make sure that there is a sound file associated with each event and that the sound events are all enabled (or turned on).

To check your sound settings, perform the following steps:

1. On the File menu, click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.
2. Click the **Sounds** tab.
3. Make sure that there is a sound file associated with each event and that the sound events are all enabled.  
If no sound file is listed for one of the events, click **Browse**, and choose a sound in the Sounds directory in your AIM directory. If a sound file is listed but you don't get any sound when you click **Preview**, it is possible that the sound file is damaged. If checking your sound settings doesn't fix the problem, try reinstalling AIM as a last resort. If you don't have a sound card, choose **Beep**, so that AIM uses your internal speakers.



## Automatic Operations

### How do I stop AIM from starting automatically when I start my computer?

Go to General Preferences in AIM, and clear the **Start AIM when Windows starts** check box.

### How do I stop AIM from sending automatic responses to other users? When I have not been active for a while and someone sends me an instant message, my computer automatically responds to the other person with an "auto-response" message, even though I have not set my Away option.

To stop AIM from sending automatic responses, perform the following steps:

1. On the File menu, click **My Options**, and select **Edit Preferences**.
2. Click the **Away** tab.
3. Clear the **Auto respond with message** check box in the "When idle" section.
4. Click **OK**.

### How do I keep my Buddy List groups from expanding automatically every time I sign on?

You must modify a registry key using the Windows Registry Editor program.

**WARNING:** You can cause Windows to stop functioning if you make a mistake in the Registry Editor program. If you need assistance, find someone who is familiar with the program to help you. AOL is not responsible for any damage you do to your computer.

To modify the registry key, follow these steps:

1. Exit AIM.
2. From the Start menu, launch **regedit** from the Run dialog box.
3. Browse to the following registry key:  
HKEY\_CURRENT\_USER\Software\America Online\AOL Instant Messenger (TM)  
\CurrentVersion\Users\<Your\_Screen\_Name>\Buddy
4. Right-click **Buddy**.
5. Click **New**, and select **DWORD Value**.

A new item appears on the right side of the Registry Editor window. For the name of this new item, type:

**AutoExpandGroups**

6. Press the **Enter** key to save the "AutoExpandGroups" name, and then exit the Registry Editor.  
Now when you collapse any of your groups, they should still be collapsed when you sign on again.

## **AIM and AOL Users**

### **What features of AIM can I use with my AOL buddies?**

AIM users can see AOL users in their Buddy List windows and can send instant messages to them. However, AIM users cannot chat with their AOL buddies, view AOL users' profiles, or transfer files.

### **Why can't I send an instant message to an AOL user who is displayed in my Buddy List? When I try to do this, I receive a message that the person is not online.**

AOL users have a feature that lets them block all incoming instant messages but still be seen in Buddy Lists. It is possible that the AOL user has blocked all instant messages or blocked all instant messages from you.

### **Why do I get my instant messages in AOL instead of AIM when I'm online with both AOL and AIM?**

This feature is intentional. If you want to receive your instant messages only in AIM, you can use a different screen name for AIM from the one you are using with AOL.

### **Can I convert my AIM account to an AOL account?**

Yes. While you are registering your AOL account, make sure you select the following option to convert your AIM account to an AOL account: **You are an AOL Instant Messenger user and you want to create an AOL account.**

### **How do I use my current AOL screen name with AIM?**

As an AOL member, your screen name is reserved for you if you want to use it with AIM; however, you must still register the screen name with the AIM service before using it. To register your AOL screen name for an AIM account, go to the Web site, [http://register.oscar.aol.com/73026\\_reuse](http://register.oscar.aol.com/73026_reuse).

## E-mail

### Can I access my e-mail through AIM?

No, this feature is not available at this time.

### Why can't I update my e-mail address?

Reply to the confirmation e-mail that is sent to your *new* address. You must do this within 72 hours after choosing **Update E-mail Address** in AIM. Make sure you follow the directions in the e-mail exactly. You must put only the word "OK" in the body of your reply, and you must not modify the Subject line.

Do not reply to the e-mail that is sent to your *old* address. This piece of e-mail is only there to allow you to cancel the update. If you reply to this e-mail within 72 hours after choosing **Update E-mail Address** in AIM, your update won't take effect.

In all cases, the e-mail address update does not take effect for at least 72 hours after you choose **Update E-mail Address** in AIM. Even if you immediately respond to the confirmation e-mail that is sent to your new address, you must still wait 72 hours for the update to occur. The reason for this is that you still have 72 hours to cancel the update by replying to the e-mail that is sent to your *old* address.

## Others

### Can I use AIM with WebTV?

No, this feature is not available. For more information, refer to <http://www.aim.aol.com/tik/webtv.html>.

### What should I do when one of my AIM windows always opens off the screen?

When the window opens off the screen, perform the following steps:

1. Press **Alt+Spacebar** once to open the Control menu at the top-left of the window.
2. Press the **M** key once to select **Move**.
3. Use your arrow keys to move the window into the middle of the screen. You see only the outline being moved.
4. When the outline is in the location you want, press **Enter**.
5. Download the newest version so that your windows do not migrate off the screen.

### Why do I get strange error messages when I try to install AIM?

Your copy of the AIM Installer probably was not transferred completely when you downloaded it. Download the AIM Installer again.

### How do I include spaces in an "aim" URL?

Use the plus character (+) for each space. For example, "aim:GoChat?RoomName=My+Room".



## Before You Report a Bug

Before you report a software bug, check to make sure it has not already been reported and addressed. See the topic, Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ), and locate the topic area you want.

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### Related Topic

[Reporting Bugs](#)

## Reporting Bugs

To report bugs that occur while you are using the Netscape AOL Instant Messenger software, perform the following steps:

1. On the File menu, click **Help**, and select **Report a Bug**.  
AIM opens your browser and takes you to the Web site for reporting bugs.
2. Enter your name and e-mail address.
3. Enter a description of the problem that you are experiencing.

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### Related Topic

[Before You Report a Bug](#)

