

# Skype

www.skype.com

*A powerful video and voice application*

## **what is it?**

Wikipedia describes Skype as "a software application that allows users to make telephone calls over the internet." But Skype offers much more than that. In addition to making telephone calls, users can use Skype to make video calls, to send instant messages, and to transfer files from one computer to another. But as Wikipedia illustrates, Skype is best known for its ability to let people make free calls from one computer to another—anywhere in the world. While most calls are free (depending on the service options you select) when they are made to other computers, calls can also be made to mobile devices or landlines for a fee.

## **educational use?**

Skype can be used as a means to connect users from around the world.. This free and easy to use application can connect colleagues, students, faculty, and researchers all within a web browser. So whether it's for office hours or to help students complete group work online, Skype is a great tool for any educator.

## **pros & cons?**

The best thing about Skype is the ability to make free phone calls (with or without video). Some drawbacks of Skype however are that it does not support emergency calls (i.e., 911), calls may be dropped from time to time (depending on your internet speed), and that some organizations might block the use of Skype on their network.

## **what's it cost?**

The cost of Skype varies depending on use. However, basic computer-to-computer phone calls can be made for free.

## **alternatives?**

While none of the following are truly complete alternatives to Skype, some options include Adobe Connect (<http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobatconnectpro/>), Google Chat (<http://www.google.com/talk/>), Jajah (<http://www.jajah.com/>), and iCall (<http://icall.com/>).

## **resources?**

Skype Video Tutorial

<http://forum.skype.com/index.php?showtopic=41492>

7 Things You Should Know About Skype

<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7032.pdf>