

Student's Guide to Moodle

This guide describes how to log in, find courses, locate and edit user profiles, locate and post to discussion forums, and where to find additional help.

How to log in to Moodle

1. Go to <https://moodle.csun.edu>
2. Click the "Login" link in the top bar.
3. Use your CSUN log in and password.

You should see a list of your courses in the "My courses" box on the left. The box will not show up if you are not enrolled in any courses.

How to Find your Courses

If you are enrolled in any Moodle courses already, they should appear in the "My Courses" box on the left side of the Moodle main page when you log in. If you aren't enrolled and should be, you can talk to your professor or call the Help Desk.

Your profile

Your profile is your identity on Moodle. All CSUN Moodle users can see it, including your instructors.

To edit your profile

To access your profile, click on your name next to the "Logout" link at the top of the screen, or anywhere else that your name appears as a link. Then click the "Edit profile" tab.

Several settings that are accessible from your profile can be customized. Some of the more useful ones are:

- **Email format:** Emails sent from Moodle can be sent in "Plain text format" or "Pretty HTML format". HTML format will include images and the Moodle color scheme in emails, but messages will be slightly larger in size.
- **Email digest type:** You may choose to receive all emails from Moodle in one daily message.
- **Forum auto-subscribe:** If you select the "Yes..." value you will be subscribed to any forum to which you post a message.
- **Forum tracking:** If set to "Yes...", unread forum messages will be highlighted so you can easily see which messages are new.

If you would like to include a user icon with your profile use the Browse button next to the "New Picture" field to locate a picture. Please use either GIF or JPG format and keep the picture small (about 100x100 pixels max with a filesize less than 500 KB). Again, remember that this profile is accessible to all members of CSUN—your professors and everyone else will be able to see this icon. The same caution is applicable to any personal description you might include.

Forums

The forum feature of Moodle is basically an online discussion board. Its main purpose is to provide a structured way for students to exchange comments with each other and the instructor in a public forum. But Moodle forums also serve an additional purpose. Whenever you post a comment in Moodle, your message will be posted in the forum

and at the same time will be sent as an email message to the instructor and your fellow students. This means that you will be able to keep up with recent forum posts without having to log into the system. There's no need to save these messages in your inbox since they will be saved for you in the forum area of the course. In addition, if you should happen to delete or otherwise misplace an email message from your course, you will be able to locate a copy of it in your course's forum area.

If your professor has put a forum in your course, the link on the main page will look like this:

 [Forum Name]

To post a new thread in a forum

1. Click the forum's link then click the "Add a new discussion topic" button at the top of the list of threads.
2. Give the thread a title in the Subject heading.
3. Type your post in the Message section.
4. Check your post for errors then click the "Post to forum" button at the bottom. You will have 30 minutes to edit your post after posting.

Be sure to change the Subscription setting to reflect your preference—if you want to receive emails of every post to the forum, set it to "Send me email copies of posts to this forum." If not, set it to "I don't want email copies of posts to this forum." Some faculty may have set their forums to force you to be subscribed or to not allow you to be subscribed, in which cases this option will not appear.

To reply to a thread

Click on the name of the thread in the forum, and click the "Reply" link at the bottom right of the post to which you want to reply. The fields are the same as they are for making a new thread.

You can change whether you're subscribed to a given forum at any time by clicking on the name of the forum, then clicking the "Subscribe/Unsubscribe me from this forum" link in the top right of the window (under the CSUN Moodle logo bar).

Sending and receiving messages

In order to send messages via Moodle to other classmates, under the heading *people* click on "participants" and then simply click on the name of the person to whom you would like to send your message. Finally, click on the button that says "send message." Please note, if both of you are logged into Moodle at the same time then it will act like an instant message service.

Blocks

In the left and right columns of your course home page are special content objects called **blocks**. These can be turned on and off and also moved around by your instructor, but in most cases you will see the following blocks somewhere on either the left or right side of your course home page:

1. **People**. Contains an item called Participants, which is a list of the students in your class.
2. **Activities**. A list of links to various special features of this course, including any assignments, forums, quizzes, and other elements created by your instructor. There is a useful link here called **Resources**, which points to an easy-to-use single-page index to all the objects in the course.

3. **Administration.** This is the place where you can view your gradebook, change your password, and modify your personal profile. Take a look in particular at the **Edit profile** section in this block, which gives you an opportunity to modify some of the features of the course. This section also provides a tool for uploading a photo of yourself, which then appears next to your personal messages posted on the system.
4. **My courses.** This block is the same one you see when you log in, and provides quick links to move to other areas of the Moodle site.
5. **Latest news.** Recent postings to the forums are listed here.
6. **Recent activity.** This display shows you any recent modifications made by the instructor to the course since the last time you logged in.

Note that by clicking the "minus sign" icon at the top of each block closes it to reduce screen clutter. You can open it at any time by clicking the "plus sign" icon.

