An Introductory Guide to Student Technology: Chromebooks, Google, and Schoology

Abraham Lee

Table of Contents

School Technology - Introduction

From the beginning of the 21st century to today, technology has become so much more advanced than it ever has been. This advancement has led to the appearance of computers everywhere: in our homes, in businesses, and especially in schools. As an educational tool, computers have become an essential asset. Statistically, according to the US Energy Information Administration, over 90 percent of schools in the United States have computers. Considering this fact, it is even more significant to realize the importance of being technologically savvy as a student. Because there are so many tools available to help you in school on electronic devices, it is worth noting some of the key features of using school technology and familiarizing yourself in a tech-friendly classroom environment.

This guide will discuss the most relevant aspects of school technology for the students of Eagle Rock High School. The types of technology used in each school can vary. Considering how different schools use different systems for their students, this guide will focus on the main tools used at Eagle Rock High School:

- Chromebooks

- Google Services

- Schoology

Chromebooks

What are Chromebooks?

Chromebooks are a type of web-based electronic device that have all of the basic functions of a computer. However, compared to the conventional PC computer, Chromebooks are:

- More affordable.

  While the average MacBook or Windows computer will cost over $1000, most Chromebooks cost less than $200 each.

- More portable.

  Unlike traditional computer-lab style desktop computers, Chromebooks, which are foldable laptops, can be transported around the campus from from classroom to classroom, much like a textbook.

- Cloud-based.

  The data stored on a Chromebook is stored online, and can be accessed from any other Chromebook device with the appropriate login, making it possible and convenient to complete assignments anywhere.

- Less bulky and high-maintenance.

  The light and internet-based design of the Chromebook makes it less susceptible to computer viruses, with its own built-in antivirus. Additionally, Chromebooks also update quickly and often, patching their own security issues or bugs. They are also less costly to repair, should they become damaged. On the Eagle Rock campus, there are around 3,000 devices, so this is very important.

Tips for using a Chromebook

Listen to instructions.

Some times, your teachers may ask you to navigate to certain sites or programs. In this case, it's important to *listen to their directions*. You may be unfamiliar with the system your instructor is directing you towards, so in order for you and your teachers to work together, you need to follow their directions carefully.

Stay on Task.

Because a Chromebook is so accessible and allows entry into the world's largest collection of information, it is important to be aware of your tasks before you log in. There are lots of distractions, too. Avoid spending your productive time on games and videos unrelated to your subject material, especially in class. On school or library networks, unproductive or harmful sites are blocked, thanks to the national Children's Internet Protection Act (CIPA).

★
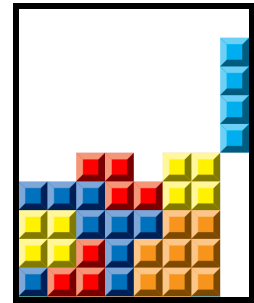
A good piece of advice to keep in mind is to create a list of tasks that need to be accomplished during your session on the Chromebook.

Be respectful.

When you communicate with your peers on an electronic device, be respectful. If you would not say something face-to-face to a person, don't say it online. Another part
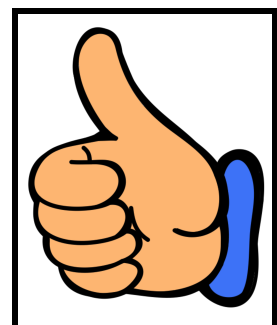
of respect is honesty. **Don't plagiarize.** If you copy someone else's work without giving them credit, you may get in a lot of trouble.

## Keep your Chromebook safe!

1. **Handle with care.** Don't swing around the Chromebook. As much as possible, try to hold it in both hands when carrying it, and don't carry more than three Chromebooks at once. Don't stack books, boxes, or anything heavy on top of the Chromebook.

2. **Don't put it in danger.** Food or open containers of liquid around the device are at risk of spilling on the device. In that case, a device can become completely ruined. Keep substances that can ruin your device at a safe distance away.
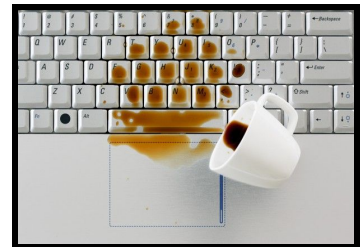
3. **Don't harass it.** Although Chromebooks are durable and repairable, it's a hassle to fix them. Scratching the screen or keyboard, picking off keys, ripping off the rubber feet, and marking it up are all big no-nos.

★
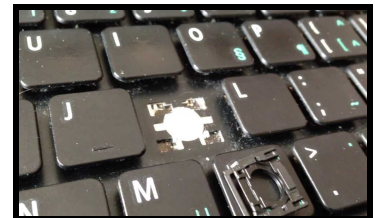
Treat school devices like they are your own; if you would not do it to your personal computer, refrain from doing it to any other device.

How can you use Chromebooks? - Google Services

As long as there is an Internet connection, a Chromebook will give you access to the many available resources and tools on the web to help you work as a successful student. Here are some of the most useful ones:

Google Drive

Google Drive is a very versatile Google-based online tool used to create, edit, and share files. It is also possible to store files on Google Drive. Some of the functions of Google Drive are:

- **Google Docs**: An alternative to Word, you can create documents such as essays, poems, or lists with customized typefaces, fonts, and formatting on Google Docs.

- **Google Slides**: An alternative to PowerPoint, you can create slides for a presentation with text, images, and your own border templates using Google Slides.

- **Google Sheets**: Google Sheets is used to make spreadsheets. This can come in handy for research, data collecting, or making rosters and lists.

All of the Google Drive files are <u>saved onto your account online, so you can access them anywhere, on any device.</u>

Gmail

Gmail is a Google-based emailing site. You can collaborate and communicate with classmates and teachers using your school-provided Gmail account. Additionally, your Google

account gives you access to most of the Google services available to students, which you can explore further.

Research

A vital skill in this day and age is finding useful, accurate, and relevant information. Today, this information can be found on the web. Using search engines such as Google, Google Scholar, and the LAUSD Digital Library, you can find research, statistics, articles, and more for your assignments.

★

Make sure your sources are reliable by checking the author or institution, or by cross-checking the claims of the source with other credible sources to make sure the information is accurate and consistent.

Schoology

What is Schoology?

Schoology is a "learning management system," according to its website. Schoology is an online platform through which teachers can organize, track, and manage their students, and students can keep in touch with their teachers, classes, and school priorities, even off of the campus. Your student account is managed through Schoology, and you can use it as a kind of nerve center for all of your student activities.

How can you use Schoology?

Teacher ⟷ Student communication

Teachers can post assignments, dates, and notifications to students, and students can respond to teachers on Schoology or in person.

You can check these in "Updates" in the left bar of your Schoology dashboard or the bell icon at the top menu, your Notifications.

Assignment submission

Students can complete assignments directly on Schoology, but another option is to complete an assignment off of Schoology, then to attach the completed assignment in a submission. Additionally, it is possible to add links, files, and resources from Schoology.

By navigating to the assignment on Schoology and clicking "Submit Assignment," you can access these options.

Grade Maintenance

As teachers upload scores, students can check their school grades for each course in real-time.

To check your grades, navigate to the top menu, and select "Grades."
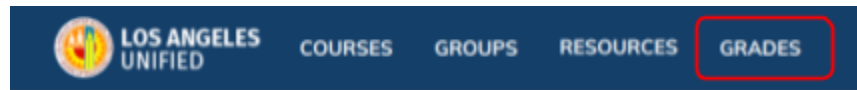
You can choose a course to look at your current grade in that class. Grades change based on when your teacher inputs scores for assignments or assessments.

Some Tips for using Schoology

Organizing your courses

It is simple to reorder the order in which your courses appear in Schoology:

-Navigate to "Course Dashboard" below the top menu.
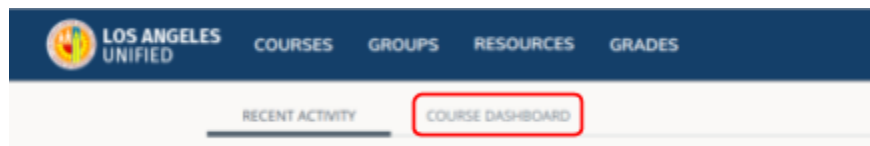
-You can then drag and drop your courses based on the order you want them displayed.

Using the Calendar

The calendar can be a useful tool to keep track of dates. To access it, find

the calendar icon on the top menu bar. You can add events if you

would like, and assignments and dates posted by your teachers are added automatically.

Using My Resources

My Resources is a useful way to store documents or other resources that you might want to store for the future. To access it:
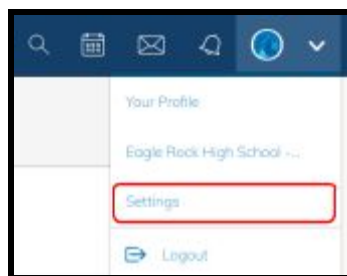
-Find "Resources" at the top menu.
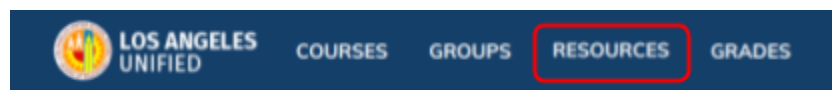
-You can add files to My Resources to view them at a later time. This is useful for important documents and reminders.

Notifications

It is possible to control what notifications you receive, both on your computer and on your mobile device. First, navigate to your settings by clicking on your profile at the top menu.

Then, select "Notifications" in your Account Settings.

You can then select what kind of notifications you want to receive, and how (eg email, phone notification).

For more tips, tutorials, and troubleshooting solutions, the perfect place to look is the [Schoology Support](#) site.

Conclusion

This guide is by no means an exhaustive list of all of the possibilities of technology in school. There are countless possibilities when it comes to using technology to further knowledge through education.

One idea to keep in mind is that using technology should not be the goal of learning, technology is a tool used to achieve a goal. Technology is ultimately a tool, and the most important part of a tool is the person using it.

It's up to the user of the technology to decide how he or she will use the tools available. This guide is an introduction to these tools, and the skills obtained through using them will hopefully guide a successful and effective learning experience.