

Show Comms via Discord - User Guide

Contents:

Installation and usage instructions for Show Comms via Discord.

Summary:

Discord is a feature-rich communication application originally built for the gaming community but now is migrating into the main stream. It is very well-suited for digital production communications by integrating voice and video in a low delay, OS agnostic environment. Included here are the step-by-step installation instructions, usage guide and best practices suitable for all users on the Discord comms servers as currently setup in the PRG production workflow.

Discord has desktop, iOS, Android and Web applications. This guide will primarily cover the desktop application and its workflow in the PRG ecosystem. If you wish to use a mobile device a separate training session is highly recommended. The functionality is largely the same but there are some differences in how you navigate some options. You cannot view video on the Web app and thus that connection method is not recommended for use within PRG's workflow.

System Requirements:

Mac or PC running OS X or Windows 10, respectively.

Internal microphone and speakers at minimum, wired or Bluetooth earbuds with microphone are highly recommended.

Step-by-Step

PRG recommends completing Steps 1-4 prior to your show's tech day. Steps 5-8 will be done with your PRG assigned EIC on your show's tech day.

Step 1: Download and install the Discord app. It is free to install and use.

<https://discord.com/new>

Step 2: Register an account and log in.

Start Discord. If you don't already use Discord, click Register located below the Login button. Use an e-mail address that you have access to; you might need to confirm your identity.

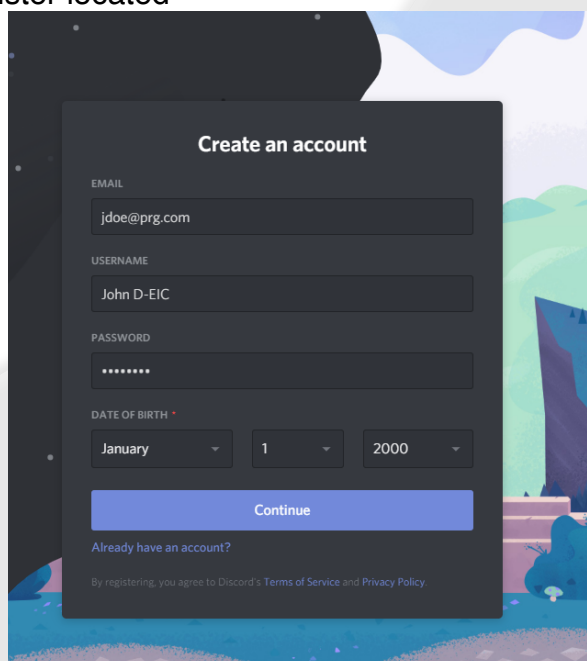
To help the EIC/Admin assign permissions in the next steps, please use this format for your user name:

First Name Last Initial-Job/Role
example: **John D-Producer**

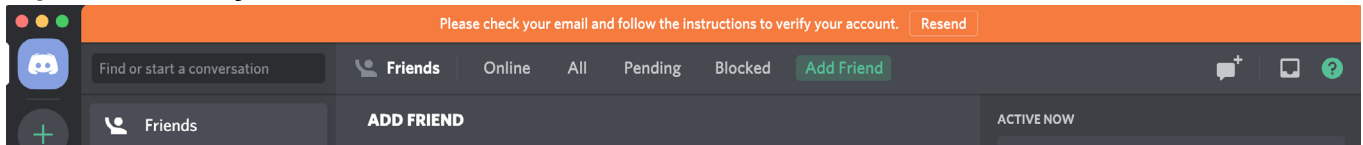
Common roles include: TD, Producer, Presenter, Stage Manager (SM), Prompter, GFX Op, etc. The precise role isn't important, it is just a short description of your show duties for everybody on com to quickly identify who they may need to contact. The PRG lead tech role will be labeled as EIC (Engineer-in-charge).

Click Continue.

Need an account? [Register](#)

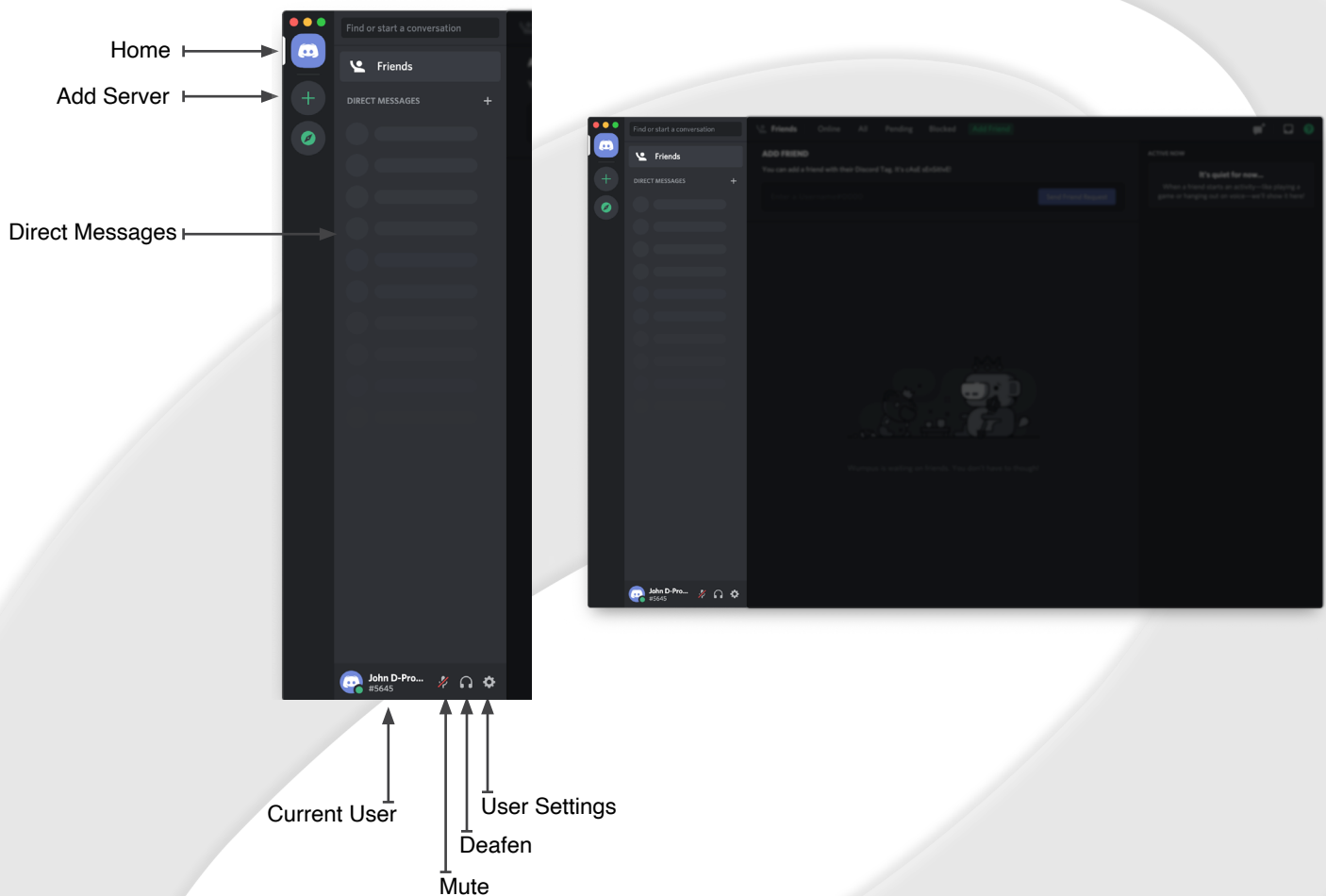


Step 3: Confirm your e-mail address, if asked.



You may need to clear the orange banner at the top of the Discord window. Check your e-mail for a message from Discord and follow the directions to confirm your e-mail. Once completed you should have a application window that looks similar to the image below.

Discord Home Window Overview



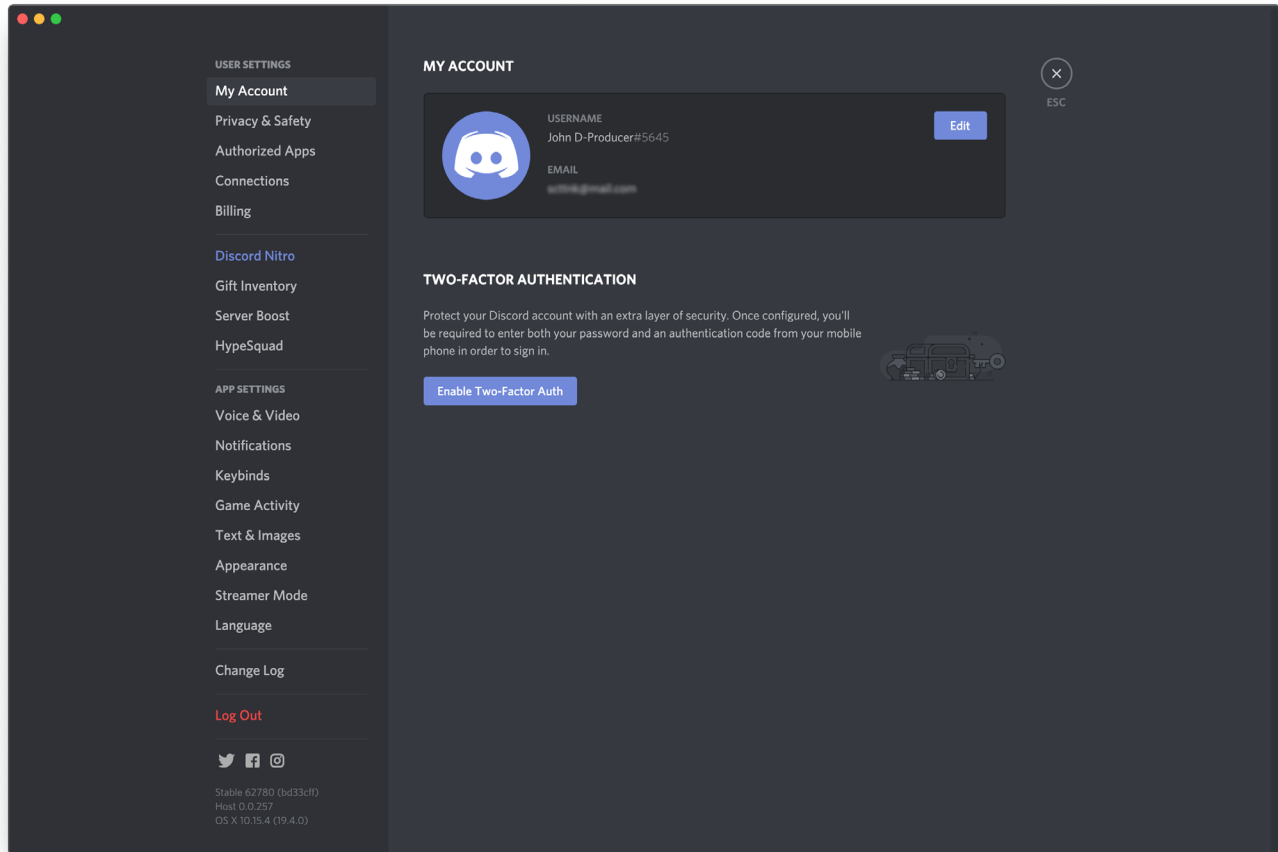
Familiarize yourself with the highlighted area above. Unless you intend on using Discord outside of a PRG production, you won't need to use the Friend functionality that takes up a lot of this window. Do note however, that any direct messages you send or that are sent to you will be read from this Home Window. In PRG's workflow, these messages are typically support messages from the EIC or any side conversations you're having with the other show crew.

The guide will go over specifics for each function, but for now, just familiarize yourself with the layout.



Step 4: Configure User Settings

Click on the gear near to your user name. The window should then turn into the following menu:



There are A LOT of settings to tinker with. This guide will only touch on the ones that will allow you effectively use Discord for a PRG production. Feel free to explore the others as your time allows. Not many will affect your user experience within a PRG production, but may if you decide to continue using Discord for other applications.

The three main areas to verify/configure are:

My Account
Voice & Video
Notifications

My Account

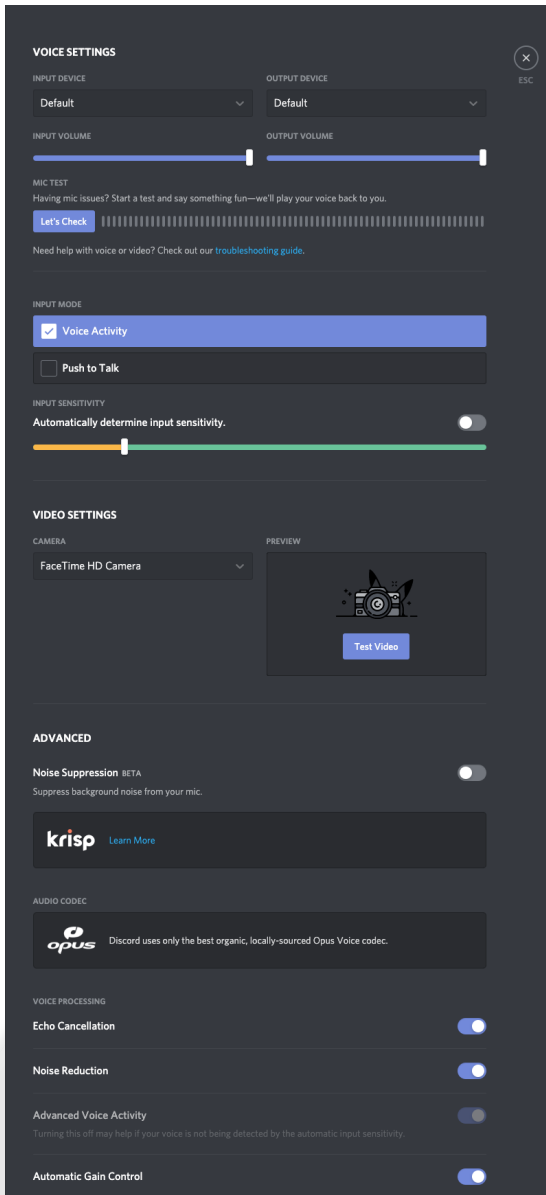
If not already selected, select My Account from the list on the left-hand side. Verify that your username follows the format described in Step 2, First Name Last Initial-Role. The number part is not important and is used by Discord. If you need to edit your user name, click on Edit, update the name, enter your password and click Save.

Here you can also change you profile picture, if desired. This is also where you can update your email and password as well as disable/delete your account following the production.

Voice & Video

Here is where you'll update the main functionality of Discord for use with your existing devices. Click on Voice & Video on the left-hand list.

Before



Input/Output Device

If you plan on using your internal microphone and speakers or earbuds plugged into your headphone port, you can leave set to Default. If you have external devices you wish to use, change to those devices here.

Input Mode

Change to Push to Talk.

Shortcut

Click on the small keyboard icon which will turn the box red. Push the “~” button on your keyboard (to the left of the 1 key) then click on Stop Recording.

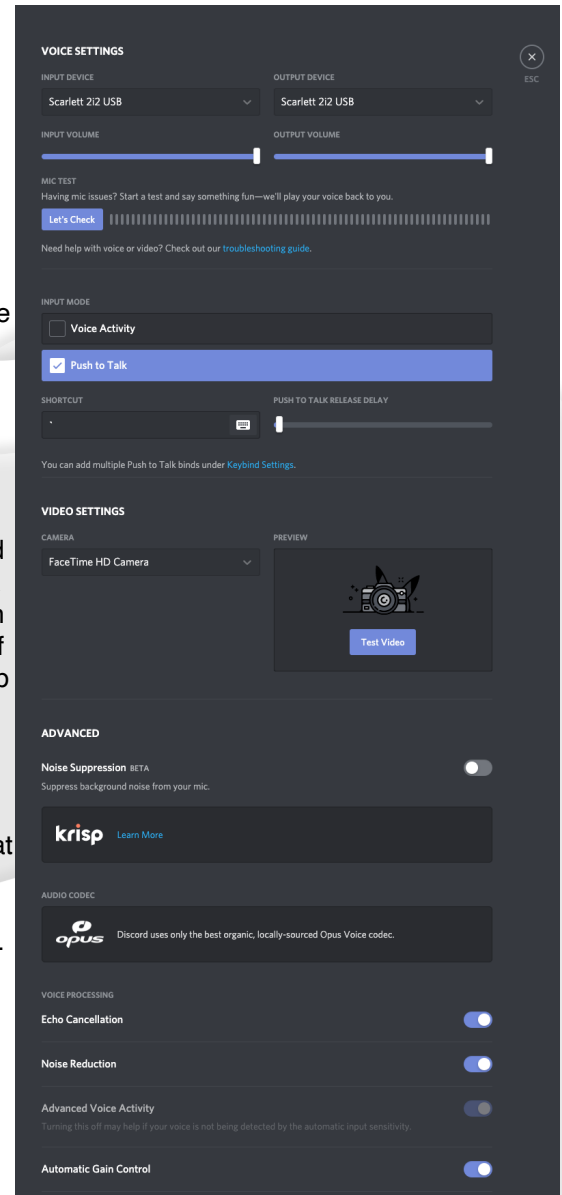
Video Settings

To minimize bandwidth requirements, PRG asks that you don't use your camera from within Discord so no need to change this setting.

Advanced

The ensure that your settings match the settings as shown in the images.

After



A Note about Push to Talk (PTT)

Along with HIGHLY recommending use of earbuds, (wired or Bluetooth) PRG has found that asking users to utilize the PTT functionality greatly reduces the instances of feedback while in the show as well as minimizing the chances that a user's mic is left open to broadcast unwanted noise/comments.

We've chosen to use the “~” because it is quickly accessed and not as highly used in other applications you might be running simultaneously with Discord. Please remember that PTT functions even when you are working in other programs if Discord is also open in the background.

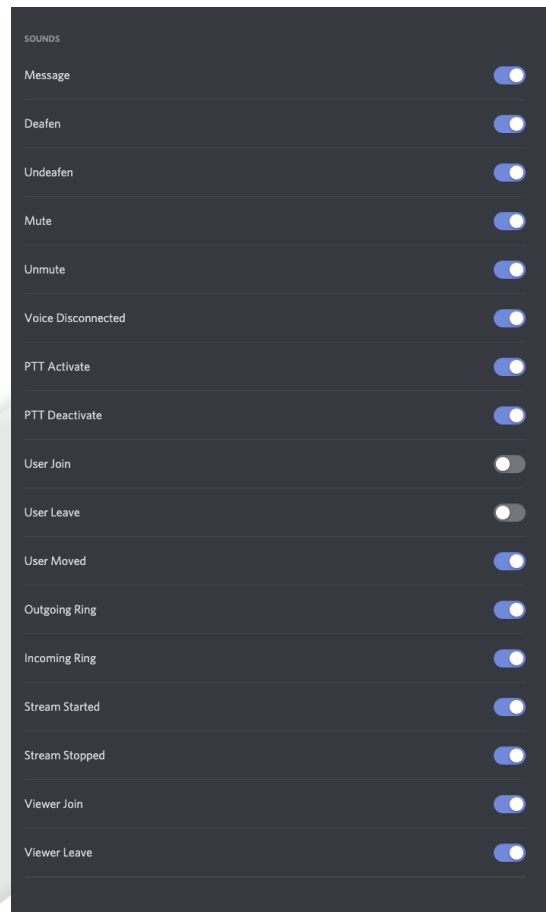


Notifications

This last bit of user setup is completely optional but recommended to avoid incessant audio notifications. Feel free to change others as you desire. Click on Notifications in the list on the left.

Under the Sounds section, turn off notifications for User Join and User Leave. Due to the nature of the PRG recommended workflow, there will be a lot of users entering and leaving rooms so we recommend turning these off.

Sounds



When finished making your changes. Click the circled X in the upper right corner to escape the User Settings window. You should now be back at the Home Window.

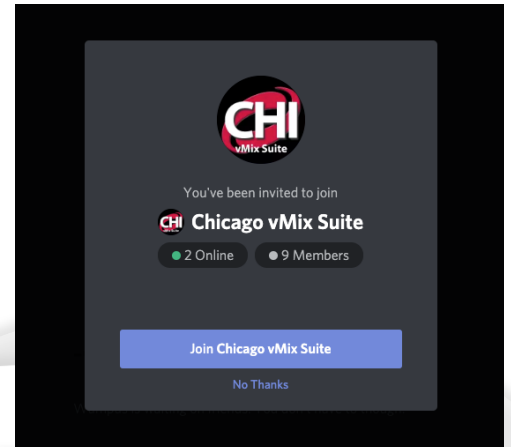
STOP! Congrats! You've done all of the prerequisites to efficiently get going on your tech day. The remaining steps will be completed on your show's tech day with the PRG Engineer-in-charge. You may wish to read ahead to get an idea of what is left but you will need additional information to complete the setup.

Step 5: Join a server

Launch Discord if it isn't already running. You should be at the Home Window. PRG has issued your project leader a Discord server invite link/address along with a condensed version of this step-by-step. Join the server using the information in one of two ways

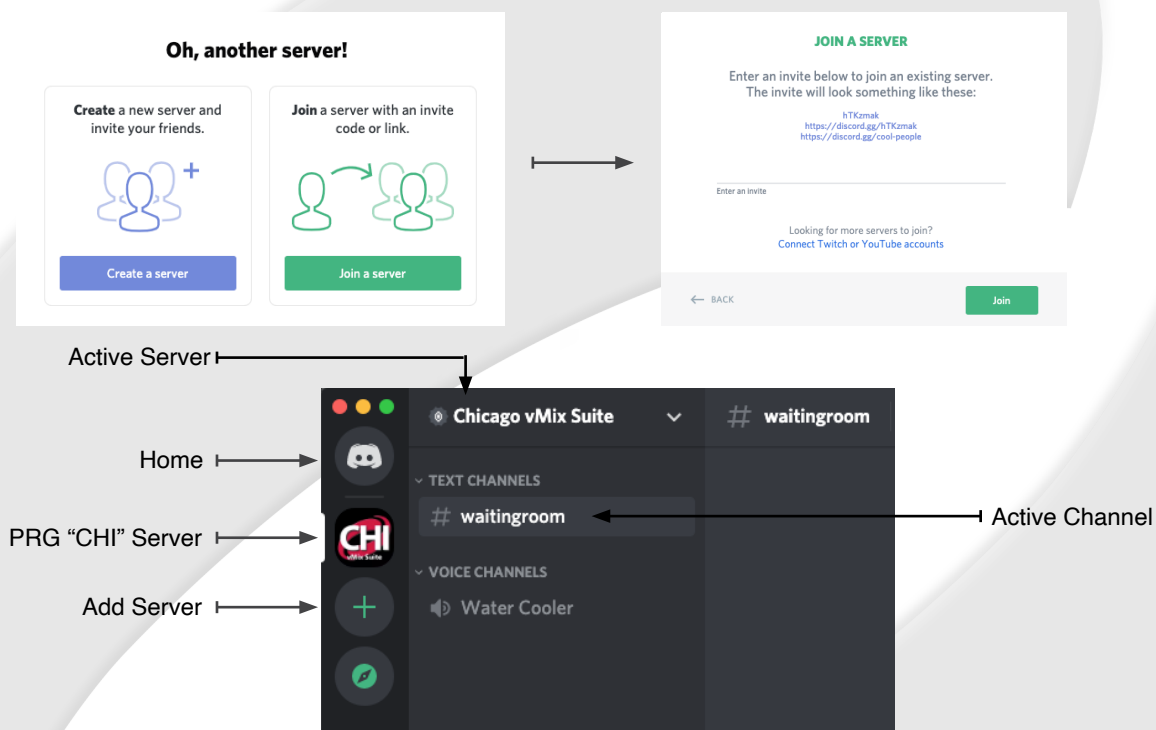
By clicking on provided link

Depending on which PDF reader you're using, directly clicking the server link will open up a Web browser and then automatically send the relevant information to your Discord app. A similar version of the screen to the right will display in Discord confirming that you'd like to join our Discord server. Click Join Chicago vMix Suite*.



By manually adding server

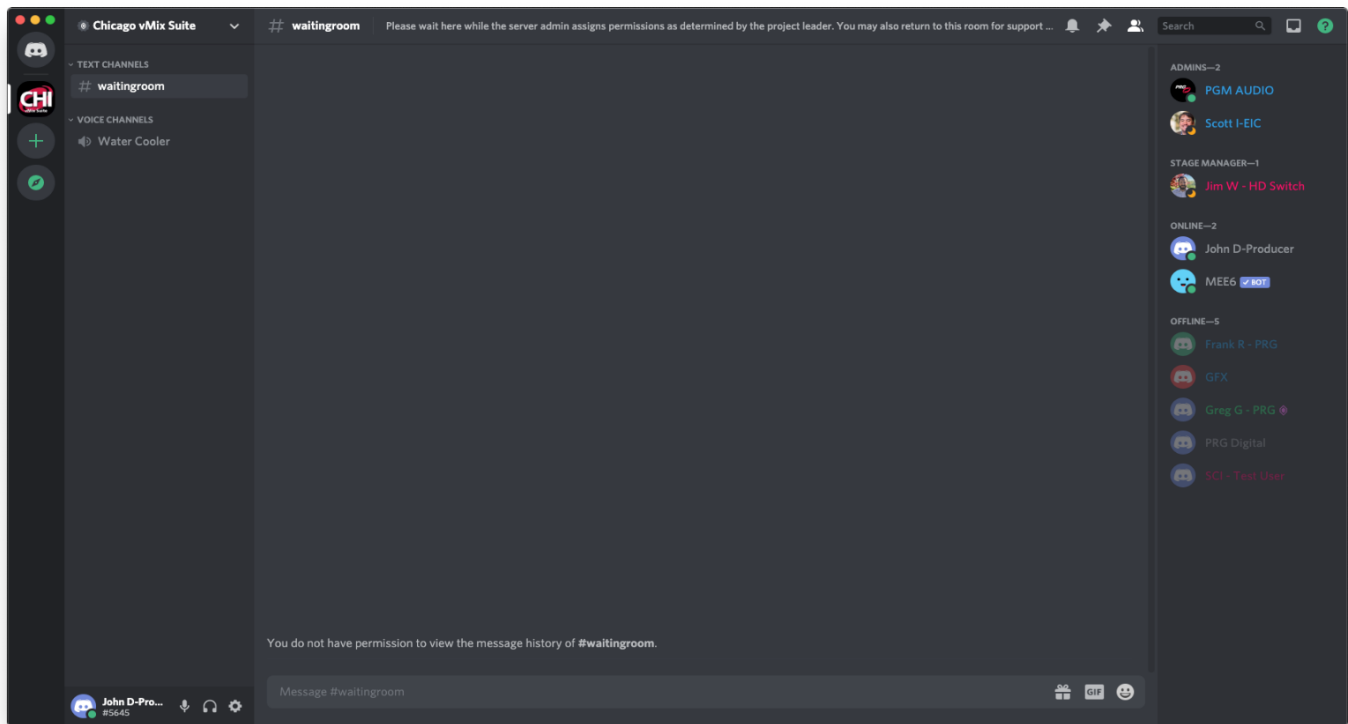
If either you didn't receive the direct document or the link isn't working in your PDF viewer, you can also add the server directly by clicking the green "Add Server" plus sign on the far left of the Discord application. In the window that appears, click the green "Join a server" button. Type the link into the window that appears and click Join.



Two things happen when you click to join. A new server is added to your server list and you enter the #waitingroom Text Channel. Unless you are working with two or more PRG productions or also use Discord outside of a PRG production, you'll only see the one PRG server in your list.

*PRG has several vMix suites as well as Production Managers located throughout the world utilizing Discord for production communications. Your project's specific Discord server will likely vary from Chicago and will be confirmed prior to joining a server.

The #waitingroom



↑
Type your #waitingroom message here.

Everybody, no matter what permission level they are granted, is able to see and send messages in the #waitingroom channel. This channel is actively monitored by the EIC so anytime you have a question or technical issue, ask about it in #waitingroom. Keep in mind that the channel can also be seen by anybody else in the server, so don't post any personal information.

The main purpose of the #waitingroom is for the EIC to see that you've joined the server and to assign you a permissions level based on what your show lead has given to PRG. Please be patient here, if there are a bunch of people joining at the same time, it might take a couple of minutes to get you setup.

By default, you will also have access to a channel called Water Cooler. This channel will be where daily production meetings and any other business that may require everybody on the server to be present can take place. See information in Steps 6 & 7 to learn how to use Voice Channels.

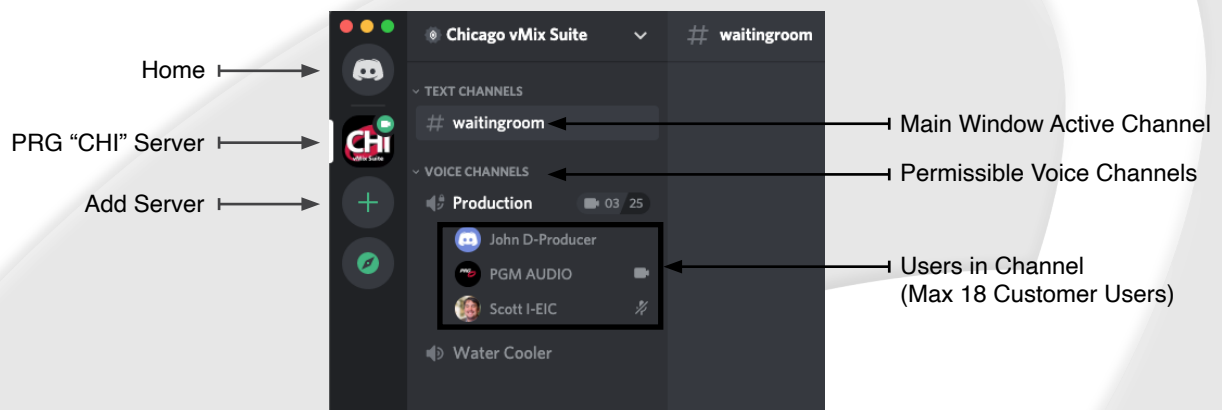
If after five minutes you don't see additional Channels populate in list on the left, message the EIC in the #waitingroom. The EIC will likely ask you to restart Discord or will need to double check with your project lead to see what permissions you are supposed to have.

Once your full permissions are assigned, you will see two or more Voice Channels populate under the Text Channels.

Step 6: Enter a Voice Channel

Voice channels include both Audio and Video sources. In PRG's typical setup, there are four voice channels, each with different user access and content.

Voice Channel Details		
Voice Channel Name	User Permission Level	Content/Usage
Production	Admin, Production Crew, Stage Manager	Production Multi-view, Program Audio
Green Room	Admin, Stage Manager, Pre-senter	Prompter (if necessary)
Private	Admin	Private conversations. Any user can be moved to Private channel by request to EIC.
Water Cooler	Everyone	Daily production meetings

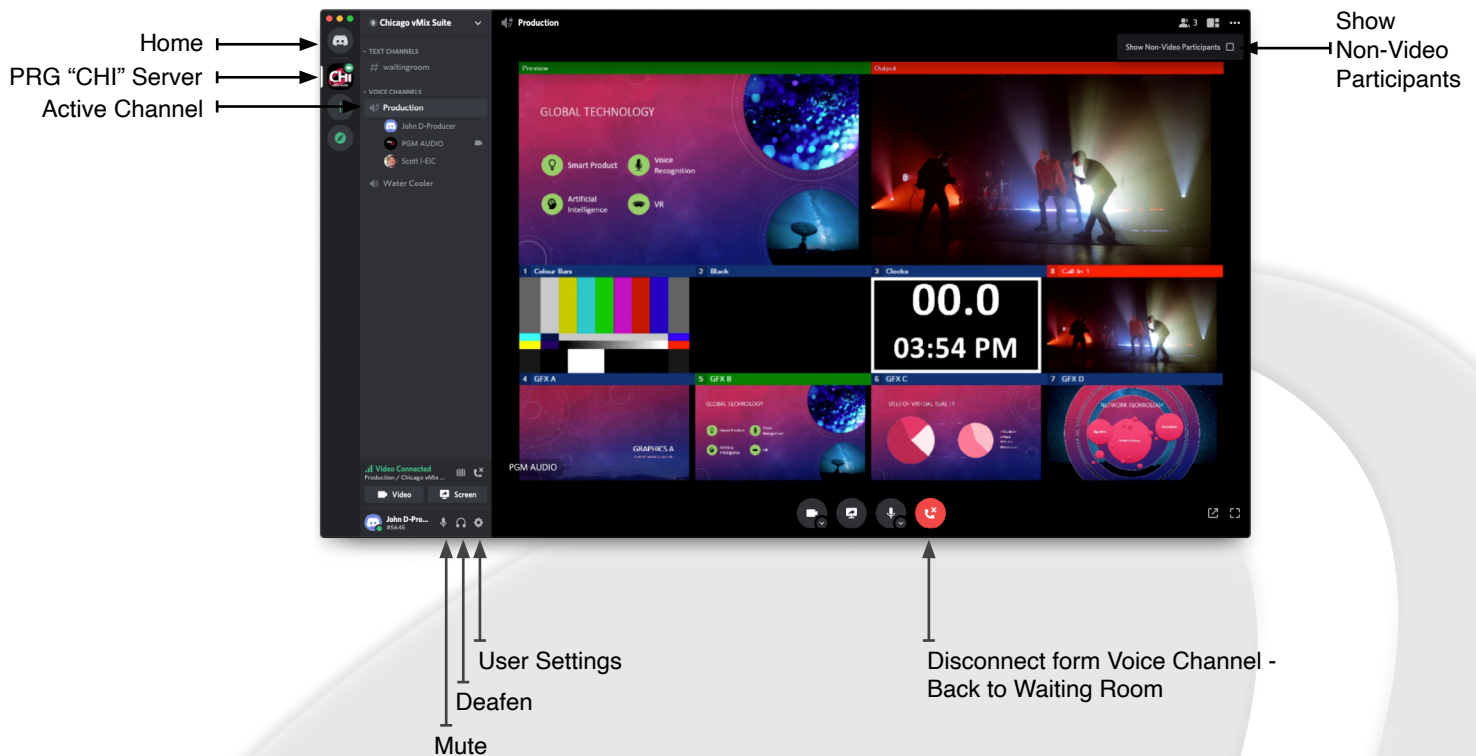


When you've been assigned permissions, your Channel Bar will populate with the rooms to which you've been granted access.

To enter a Voice Channel from the waiting room, simply double-click its name in the channel list. An audio notification will sound and your name will be listed under the name of the channel. You will also see a tiled screen, zoom style, with all active users in the main area of the app. While most users will have various hues of pastel representing them, there should also be one user, called **PGM Audio** in the Production Channel and **GFX** in the Green Room Channel that has video associated with it. To highlight the video, click on the three dots in the upper right corner of the application and uncheck "Show non-video participants."

Step 7: Use the Voice Channel

Production Voice Channel



Once you've made it into the Voice Channel, there isn't much you need to do. In order to talk in the channel, press and hold the "~" key to open your mic and speak into your microphone. Once you've finished up your comment, release the "~" and Discord will close your mic. If you require it, you can also deafen the channel by clicking the headphone icon near your name. This will mute the audio coming from the channel and you won't hear anything, including the PGM Audio Feed, so be careful if using this function. Also be sure to leave your Mic icon unmuted. We are using the PTT functionality so there is no need to manually manage your microphone.

If you have access to multiple voice channels via your permissions, all you need to do to move between them is click once into the new channel. Your microphone's PTT functionality will remain the same.

If you'd like, you're able to navigate back to the #waitingroom while still monitoring the audio and a small version of the video content in the channel. Just click on the #waitingroom channel. When you've finished sending a message, double-click back on the Voice Channel you were in.

**Step 8: Day close and show close**

When you've finished for the day, disconnect from the

Channel by either clicking the red disconnect button in the main window, or the smaller disconnect button near your name.

When you've finished the show, right click on the PRG server icon on the left and select Leave Server. A confirmation box will appear. Click once more on Leave Server. At this point, if you anticipate doing other shows vMix projects with PRG, you may want to consider keeping your Discord installation and account. Otherwise, feel free click into user settings>My Account>Edit and then choose "Delete Account." Uninstall Discord as you would any other program on your computer.