How to Set Up Groups in Moodle

I. Using Groups

The **Groups** feature allows you to separate students into groups for the entire course or for specific activities. You can also specify whether or not the activities and resources for one group are visible to the other groups. To use groups:

1. Create the groups.
2. Enable groups at the course level or activity level.
3. When you add resources or activities, select which groups(s) they are for.

II. Creating Groups

A. In the **Administration** block in the left column, click on **Groups**. The groups page will appear with the Groups tab selected. It contains two columns:

   - The **Groups** column on the left shows the names of the groups that have been created.
   - The **Members of** column on the right shows the members of the group that is selected on the left.

   If you haven't created any groups yet, the columns will be empty.

B. Create the groups and assign members to each. There are two ways to do this:

   - **Manually** — Create the groups and then select members for each group from a list.
   - **Auto-Create** — Have Moodle create groups according to your criteria and then allocate members randomly or alphabetically by first or last name.

---

**Manually Create Groups**

Create Groups
1. On the Groups page, click on the **Create group** button (below the Groups column).

2. When the Create group page appears, type the **Group name** in the text box. (The group description is optional. If you want, you can also define an icon for the group by uploading an image. This icon will appear on the Participants list, Forum posts by those group members, and other places.)

3. Click **Save changes**. This will take you back to the Groups page.

4. Repeat steps 1-3 for each of the groups that you want to create.

**Add Members to Groups**

5. To add members to the groups, select the first group name in the left column of the Groups page, and then select the participants (use shift or ctrl for multiple selections) from the right column (Members of).

6. Click the **Add** button to move them to the selected group.

7. Click on the **Back to groups** button to return to the groups page.

8. Add members to each of the remaining groups by repeating steps 5-7.

If you need **to remove participants from a group**:

1. Select the appropriate group in the left column to view the members.

2. Select the participants to remove in the right column.

3. Click the **Remove selected members** button.

**Auto-Create Groups**

1. On the Groups page, click the **Auto-create groups** button (below the Groups column).

2. When the Auto-create groups window opens, select the way you want the groups to be created.

   a. **Select members from role** — Moodle will select only students, unless you select another option.

   b. **Specify** — Select **Number of groups** to have students distributed among a specified number of groups. Select **Members per group** to make the number of groups based on a specified number of students in each group.

   c. **Group/member count** — In this field, type the number of groups you want created, or the number of members you want in each group (depending on the method for creating groups that you specified in the previous setting).

   d. **Naming scheme** — In this field, you indicate the format for the names of the groups. For example, if
you are creating groups for a wiki, you could insert Wiki @ in this field. Moodle would create groups with the names: Wiki A, Wiki B, Wiki C, Wiki D, etc. If you inserted Wiki #, Moodle would create groups with the names: Wiki 1, Wiki 2, Wiki 3, Wiki 4, etc. The default scheme (the scheme that is automatically entered and will used unless you change it) is Group @, which will create Group A, Group B, Group C, Group D, etc.

If you click on the Show Advanced button, you will see two additional options:

e. Prevent last small group — You can check this option to prevent Moodle from creating very small groups, when the number of students or number of groups you specified does not divide equally into the total number of students. Instead, one additional student will be added to some of the groups.

f. Allocate members — For this option, you can change the way members are assigned to groups. The options are:
   - No allocation (Members will not be added to the groups that are created.)
   - Randomly (This is the default selection — the method that is used if you don’t change this option.)
   - Alphabetically by first name, last name
   - Alphabetically by last name, first name
   - Alphabetically by ID number

3. If you want to preview the groups before creating them, click Preview. The groups and group members will appear at the bottom of the page. If you want, you can then change any of the criteria you selected.

4. Click Submit to create the groups.

III. Enabling Groups

You can enable groups in Moodle at two levels:

- **Course Level** - Groups apply to the entire course.
- **Activity Level** - Groups can be applied to selected activities, such as Forum, Wiki, Assignment, etc.

In most cases, you will be applying groups at the activity level — to a particular forum, assignment, wiki, or other activity.

### Applying Groups at the Course Level

1. In the Administration block, click on Settings.

2. When the Edit course settings page opens, scroll down to the Groups section.

3. Change the Group mode setting from 'No groups' to one of the group options:
   a. Separate groups — Each group can see only their group.
   b. Visible groups — Each group can work only in their own group, but they can see the work of the other groups.

4. If the Force option is set to Yes, the course groups will apply to all activities, and you cannot define other groups for individual activities.

5. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click Save changes.

### Applying Groups at the Activity Level
1. If you have already created the activity, click on the **Edit icon** next to the activity name. (If you haven't yet created the activity, you can apply the Group setting when you create it.)

2. When the **Edit course settings** page opens, scroll down to the **Common module settings** section.

3. Change the **Group mode** setting from 'No groups' to one of the other group options:
   a. **Separate groups** — Each group can see only their group.
   b. **Visible groups** — Each group works in their own group, but can also see the other groups. The work is of the other groups read-only.

4. For the **Visible** setting, you can select **Show** or **Hide**, depending on whether you want the groups to see each other's work.

5. Scroll to the bottom of the page and click **Save and return to course**.

---

*Created by Jane Rice. Updated April 2010.*

*For further information, see the [Groups section in MoodleDocs](http://www.sjcc.edu/OnlineLearning/Moodle/Moodle-HowTo-Faculty/...)*