19 INCREDIBLY USEFUL SLACK SHORTCUTS, FEATURES AND OPTIONS

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01

FIND THE INFO YOU NEED WITH ADVANCED SEARCH MODIFIERS

Try some of the following commands in the Slack search box:

- "in:[channel]" to search only for messages and files in a specific channel
- "in:[@name]" to search only your direct messages with a particular person
- "to:me" to search only direct messages sent to you
- "from:[@name]" to search only messages sent from a particular person
- "from:me" to search only messages sent by you
- "has:link" to search only messages that include a URL
- "has:reaction" to search only messages that have received reactions
- "before:[date]"; "after:[date]"; "on:[date/month/year]"; or "during:[month/year]" to look for messages from a specific timeframe

For super-effective searches, string multiple commands together—like "from:me has:link during:2017" to see every message you sent with a URL last year

02 NARROW DOWN SEARCHES TO AVOID INFO FROM IRRELEVANT CHANNELS

Open up Slack's preferences and look in the Search section. There, you can blacklist certain channels from ever appearing in a search.

03 SAVE YOUR PLACE IN A CHANNEL OR DIRECT MESSAGE

Hold down the Alt or Option key and then click any timestamp (or long-pressing on a timestamp from the mobile app and selecting "Mark unread"). The next time you open that thread on any device, you'll be taken directly to the point you set.

04 GET WHERE YOU NEED TO GO FASTER BY USING SLACK'S QUICK SWITCHER

No clicking or navigation required. Hit Ctrl-K or Cmd-K and type the first letter of your desired destination. You'll see a list of options appear and can select the one you want or type additional letters to narrow it down further. (Bonus tip: If you're using one of the Slack desktop apps, Ctrl-T or Cmd-T will do the same thing. Take your pick!)

05

MAKE IT EASY TO FIND IMPORTANT MESSAGES OR FILES BY PINNING THEM TO A CHANNEL

Click the three-dot menu icon above a message (or long-press it from the mobile app) and select "Pin to this conversation." The item will then appear within a pushpin icon at the top of the thread, where everyone will see and be able to access it as needed.

06

CATCH UP ON ACTIVITY QUICKLY WITH SLACK'S 'ALL UNREAD' FEATURES

First, make sure the feature is activated within the Sidebar section of the desktop app's preferences. Then just look for the "All Unreads" line in the sidebar, and start there to see a single centralised list of everything you haven't read.

07

REDUCE CLUTTER BY HIDING ALL INCLINE IMAGES PREVIEWS

Type "/collapse" to get rid of them, then type "/expand" if and when you want everything back.

08 TRANSFORM THE APPEARANCE OF YOUR WORDS BY USING ADVANCED TEXT FORMATTING COMMANDS

You may know about Slack's basic text-formatting commands—asterisks around text for bold, underscores for italics, but the app also has advanced options that'll let you further transform the appearance of your words.

- A tilde (~) around text will create a strike-through effect
- An angled bracket (>) in front of text will put it into a blockquote format
- Three angled brackets (>>>) will blockquote an entire message, even if it spans multiple paragraphs
- A backtick (`) around text is technically for fixed-wide code, but it can also be used to create emphasis by turning your text red and placing it into an offset box
- String three of those backticks together around text and you'll create a larger offset block for preformatted, fixed-width text

09 ADD BULLET POINTS INTO MESSAGES

Just hit Alt-7 (using the number pad) in Windows or Option-8 from a Mac to insert the bullet symbol (•), then hit Shift-Enter to move down to the next line.

10 GET THE ATTENTION OF THE RIGHT PEOPLE BY USING THE RIGHT COMMANDS

Including "@everyone" in a message will notify every single person on your team, while "@channel" will notify everyone associated with your current channel, "@group" will notify everyone associated with a specific user group, and "@here" will notify everyone who is online, active, and available.

11 MESSAGE SOMEONE PRIVATELY FROM ANYWHERE

This even works for public channels. Simply type "/msg" or "/dm" into the message box followed by the user's name (starting with the "@" symbol) and your message.

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COLLABORATE ON THE FLY USING THE IN-BUILT DOCUMENT EDITOR

Hit the "+" next to the message box in any channel or thread, then select "Post" and write away. You'll find tools for formatting text within the paragraph symbol on the left side of the screen. When you're done, hit the green "Share" button to select where the post should go, and whether anyone else should be able to edit it— or look in the top-right menu for an option to create a public link.

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SHARE YOUR COMPUTER'S SCREEN WITH ANYONE

The other person can also draw on your screen or take control, if you want. Use the phone icon within any messaging thread to start a voice or video call, then look for the "Share your screen" icon (the circle with a computer monitor in it, to the left of the "End call" button) to get started.

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CONDUCT SIMPLE POLLS WITHIN CHANNELS

Pose a multiple-choice question, assign an emoji to each option, then immediately add each emoji to the message as a reaction. Your coworkers can then click on a reaction to vote, and Slack will show you a running total.

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SET UP CUSTOM KEYWORD NOTIFICATIONS TO MAKE SURE YOU NEVER MISS ANYTHING IMPORTANT

You could use words relevant to your general focus or specific to current projects. You could even include variations of your own name so Slack will alert you anytime they come up in a conversation. Open the Notifications section of Slack's preferences and look for the "My Keywords" section to set things up.

You can also give yourself a break from interruptions and let Slack activate Do Not Disturb mode automatically during certain times of day. Click the bell icon in the sidebar of the desktop app, then select "Do Not Disturb schedule" to define your quiet hours.

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QUICKLY SILENCE NOTIFICATIONS

Type "/dnd" followed by an amount of time in the Slack message box. You could use "/dnd until 3:00," for example, or "/dnd for 20 minutes." You could even be more general and go with something like "/dnd until tomorrow morning." If you want to turn notifications back on immediately, just type "/active."

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CREATE REMINDERS FOR OTHER PEOPLE OR EVEN A WHOLE CHANNEL

For instance, "/remind hamilton.morris Get new stapler Monday morning," "/remind #initech Submit TPS reports every Friday," or "/remind #remotestaff Submit expenses on the 28th of every month."

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USE SLACKBOT FOR PERSONAL STORAGE

Just drag any files you want to save into your Slackbot thread, and they'll be stored and searchable by you—and a couple clicks away from sharing with others, if you're ever so inclined.

19

USE SLACK AS AN RSS READER TO SHOW NEW ARTICLES FROM A PARTICULAR SOURCE

Either in a channel or in a private message thread for your eyes alone. Just track down the URL of the RSS feed you want (for instance, https://fastcompany.com/user/jrraphael/rss) and then type "/feed subscribe" followed by that URL.

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