

How to use Google Hangouts

We are offering all our clients the option of Google Hangouts video call/telephone call/chat appointments while the COVID-19 coronavirus situation is ongoing. If you wish to utilise this service, please let your clinician know as soon as possible.

Please note: Google Hangouts can only be used with other Gmail users. If you do not have Gmail, you will need to use another virtual option. We offer Skype, Zoom and WhatsApp calls here at Gateway.

1. What is Google Hangouts?

Google Hangouts is a chat, phone call and video call app available to Gmail users. It allows you to send text messages, video calls and phone calls on your computer or phone.

2. Why are we using Google Hangouts?

We understand that social distancing and social isolation is going to have an impact on our clients. We want to continue therapy, assessments and support as far as possible while the coronavirus situation is ongoing.

While video calls are not always as beneficial as face-to-face sessions, we believe that it is essential for support to continue. We will be offering Zoom, Skype and other video options to all our clients for the duration of the coronavirus pandemic.

The Gateway team all use Gmail, which means we can use Google Hangouts if our clients prefer. It is also an excellent app for text-based messaging for those who prefer that over video calls.

3. What equipment do you need?

You don't need special equipment to use Google Hangouts. If your laptop has an in-built webcam and speakers, that should be sufficient for video sessions to take place. If your computer does not have this functionality, you could use your mobile phone instead.

You will need an internet connection or 4G to use Hangouts on your phone or laptop.

If you want to use Hangouts on your phone, please download the app using the relevant link:

iPhone: <https://apps.apple.com/gb/app/hangouts/id643496868>

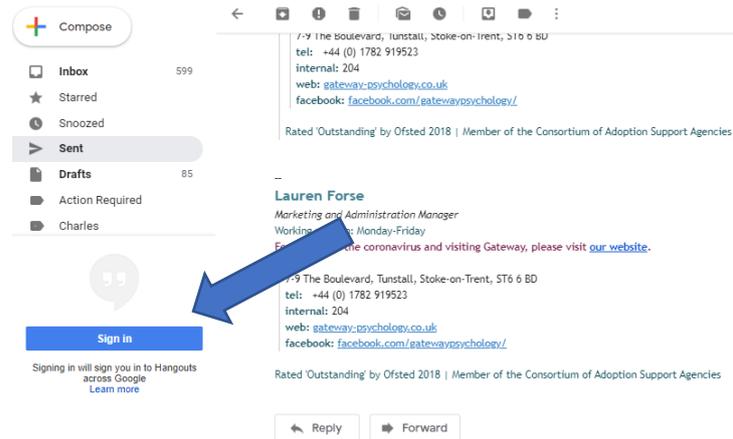
Android: https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.talk&hl=en_GB

We suggest using earphones with a microphone (like your iPhone or Samsung earphones) when joining the meeting. This will help you hear the audio clearly, as well as help your clinician hear you clearly.

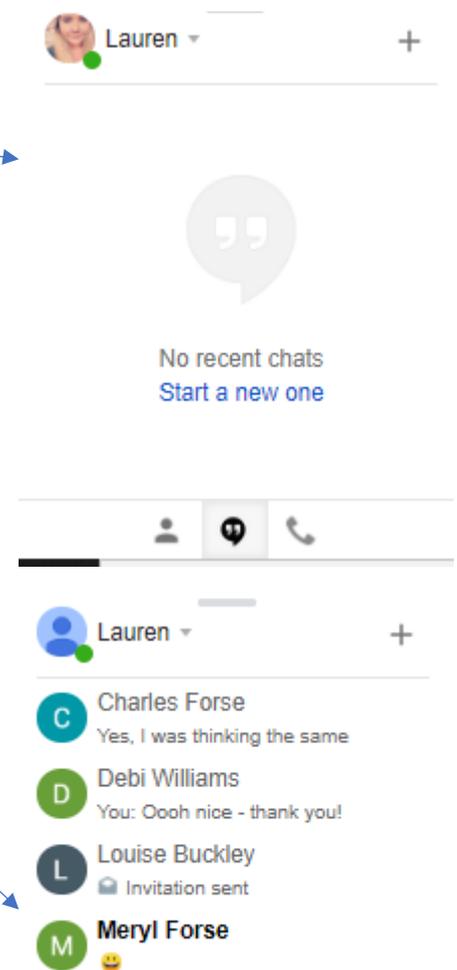
4. How to use Google Hangouts on your computer

Google Hangouts is available to users on Gmail. You cannot easily use Hangouts without a Gmail account, and you cannot easily chat with others who do not have a Gmail account. The Gateway team all use Gmail, which means we should be able to chat with you if you are also a Gmail user.

1. Open your Gmail account.
2. You should be able to see your chat window and the bottom left corner of your screen.



3. Click 'Sign In' if you are not already signed in.
4. You should see a screen that looks something like this:
5. You may also see a list of chats if you are already using Google Hangouts to chat with people.
6. Click on 'Start a new one' to begin a new chat or use the + symbol in the top right corner.
7. Type in the email address or name of the person you want to contact.
8. This will open a new chat window in the bottom right-hand corner of your screen.
9. Type using the text box to send messages. You can also attach photos and send emojis if you wish to.
10. If someone contacts you, you will get a notification sound, and their message will appear in bold in your chat list.



5. How to join a call with your clinician

We are offering Hangouts for a range of virtual sessions. You can use the app for telephone calls, video calls and text-based chat.

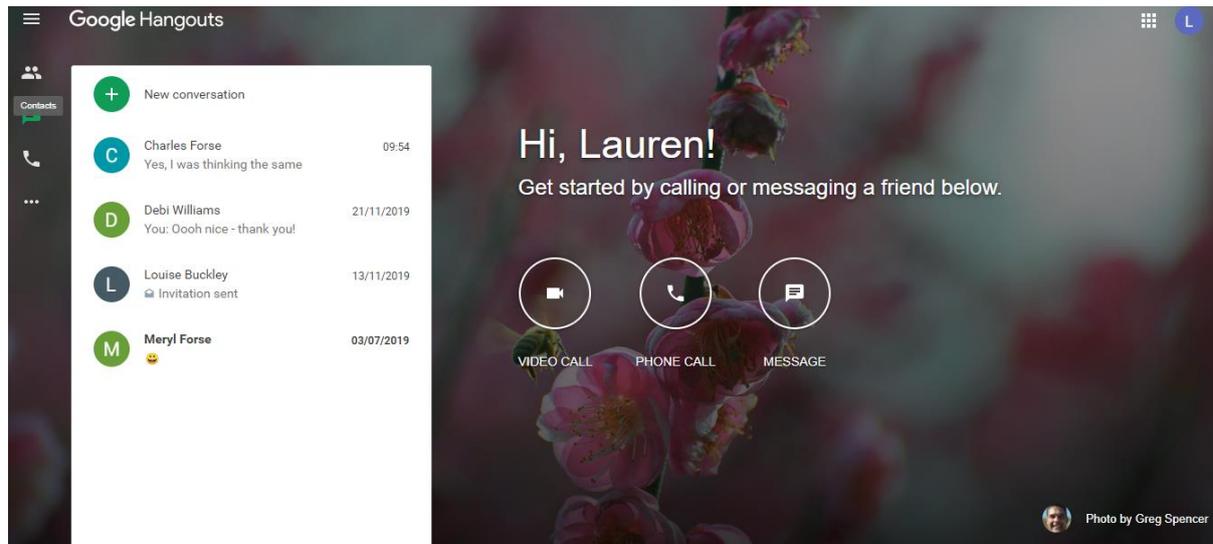
Your clinician will add you as a contact when it is time for your session to begin. They will contact you in the pre-agreed way (e.g. by phone, video or text).

7. Using Hangouts in a separate tab

WhatsApp is available on your computer too. This only works for text-based chat. You cannot video call through WhatsApp Web.

Using Google Hangouts in your Gmail window is useful if you want to send a quick message. For a more formal experience, visit <https://hangouts.google.com/>.

This will open Hangouts in a new tab, and you will be able to see a full-screen version of your messages. You can also video call and phone call through this app.



8. Technical difficulties

We will do our best to minimise any technical challenges, but please be aware that these might occur.

Issues like:

- Internet speed
- Speaker quality
- Microphone quality
- Problems with WhatsApp

Could all impact on your session. If we experience any technical issues, we will endeavour to continue the session with the video feed turned off. If this does not work, we will continue the session by telephone.

Please be patient with us while we begin using this technology!

9. Tips for helping your session go smoothly

While the coronavirus pandemic is ongoing, we may make adjustments to ensure you receive support. That could mean that we change the way we use your sessions, and they might be quite different from what we usually do face-to-face. It could mean that we do more therapeutic support work with the parents/carers, for example.

Please be reassured that any adjustments will be made with your situation in mind. Your clinician will think very carefully about how best to approach using video technology. If you have any questions, please speak to your clinician.

Some other tips for helping your video sessions go smoothly include:

- Choose a quiet place for your video session. Somewhere with a neutral background and not too much noise is usually best.
- Use earphones with a microphone attached to improve sound quality (just earphones could be fine too!).

- Try to avoid interruptions as much as possible. If you are a parent/carer and are able to, ask your partner to watch your children while the session is underway.
- Ask all family members to keep noise down while your session is underway.
- Keep pets away from the room while the session is underway to avoid distractions.
- Test your microphone and video before you join the call.
- If you want to, you could restart your computer 30 minutes before the session to make sure your technology is running as quickly as possible.
- The same attendance rules apply to video sessions. Please attend your appointment on time. If you are unable to attend, please let the clinician know at least 24 hours before your session is due to take place.
- If you need any adjustments making to the schedule of your call (for example, if you would prefer two 30-minute sessions a week rather than one 1 hour session), we may be able to accommodate you. Please speak to your clinician about this.
- If you have any technical difficulties, please contact Lauren (lauren.forse@gateway-psychology.co.uk) or Charles (charles.forse@gateway-psychology.co.uk). We will do our best to help.
- If you have any other questions or concerns, please speak to your clinician.

8. Thank you for your patience!

We know it is a difficult time at the moment, with guidance from the government rapidly changing as the situation progresses.

We are doing our best to ensure our clients still receive support from Gateway Psychology. We hope that video sessions will help us do just that and will endeavour to keep all appointments in the diary.

We will keep you updated with how the situation is progressing and advise when appointments can return to normal.