

Chat Usage Guidelines

Updated 4/17/2011

1. Logging in

To log in to the project chat rooms, use the field catalog links to “X-Chat instant access” found on the catalog front page and under the “Tools & Links” button. These links take you to a mibbit login screen where you are prompted for a nickname and a passwd. Please DO NOT use the default nickname but enter your name and location using the following convention:

FirstNameLastname-Location

For Example:

TimLim-MGAUS1

Or

JMoore-Boulder

You can use initials if your first or last name is too long or just a single name if yours happens to be unique. Paul-VOC would not be a good nickname as the point of the nickname is for people to know who you are and where you are.

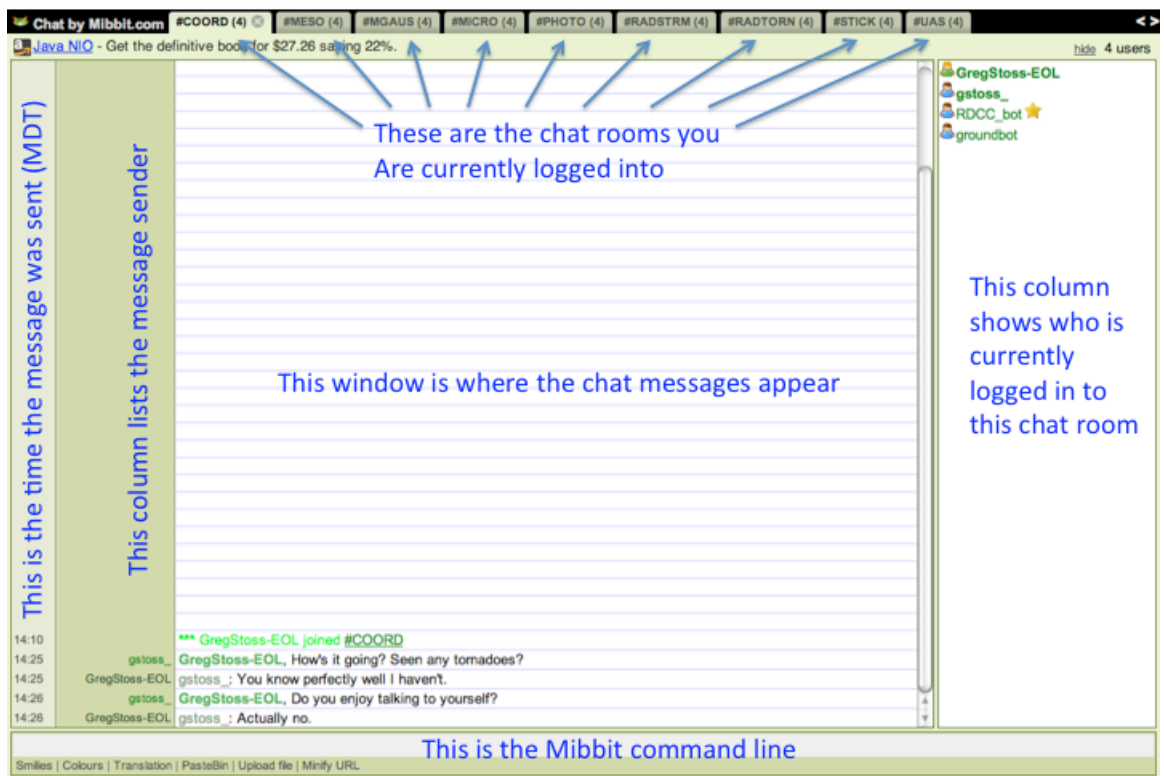
If you forget to change the default nickname before logging in, you can change it after you connect by typing on the Mibbit command line /nick yourname-location .

If you don't know the password please contact gstoss@ucar.edu . The passwd is available only to authorized project participants.

Once logged in you will see all messages that are sent after the time of your log in. Chat logs are published after the end of the field campaign which include the complete conversations that took place in logged chat rooms. If you need to see message that were sent a few minutes prior to your log in, please see section 6. Dealing with dropouts below.

2. The Mibbit IRC client widget

Figure 1 shows an illustration of the Mibbit widget in your browser:



The components of the Mibbit widget include the main window where the message content appears, the author window showing who sent the message, the time stamp window showing the Boulder time that the message was sent, the on-line window showing who's currently logged into this room, the tab bar showing the rooms you are currently logged into and the command line where you will type your messages and/or commands.

3. Chat rooms

The following chatrooms are available for DC3. Each has a specified usage, please keep chatter in that room to the particular topic(s) assigned to that room.

#DC3 – for chat related to mission coordination, and real-time decisions for all DC3 facilities

#GV – for chat related to instrument issues aboard the GV

#DC3-AL – for chat related to mission coordination and real-time operational decisions with the DC3 Alabama regional center

#DC3-CO – for chat related to mission coordination and real-time operational decisions with the DC3 Colorado regional center

#DC3-OK – for chat related to mission coordination and real-time operational decisions with the DC3 Oklahoma regional center

Members of particular mobile facilities will need to monitor their team channel for information and instructions and may want to monitor the #DC3 channel as well to stay abreast of developments. When you log in to Mibbit you will automatically be logged in to all of these channels and they will appear as tabs along the top of your Mibbit window. On login the #DC3 room will automatically be shown. To switch to another room, click on the appropriate tab to bring it to the top of the stack. Be careful not to click on the X in the tab as this disconnects you from that room. Should you inadvertently be disconnected from a room you can always type `/join #room` in the mibbit command line to get back into that room.

4. Sending Messages

To send a message to someone else on chat using mibbit, first make sure you clicked on the appropriate tab to select the proper chat room in which to send the message. Then type your message on the mibbit command line and hit return when finished. Your message will be posted to the chat room for everyone to see. It is often a good idea to put the person's nickname at the beginning of your message followed by a colon, (e.g. "meitin-Boulder: Hey Jose how's it going?"). This will highlight the name portion of your message in their Mibbit session so it's a little easier for them to recognize someone is specifically addressing them. You can see an example of what this looks like in Figure 1 above where the user `gstoss_` sent a message to `GregStoss-EOL`. Figure 1 is a snapshot of `GregStoss-EOL`'s Mibbit session.

Shortcut: If you type the first few letters of a nickname into the Mibbit command line and hit the Tab key, mibbit will finish the name and the colon section for you. You just have to type enough characters to uniquely identify that nickname.

All messages in the official project chat rooms are being logged at an EOL server for data archival after the project. These logs are sanitized of inappropriate and secure information and published after the field campaign has ended and are available for download from the Data Archive at EOL. For this reason you should be careful what you say in these rooms. Please refrain from using foul language or making remarks that may be derogatory or offensive to others. If you must pass secure information such as personal telephone numbers, pass words, hotel room numbers, etc, we suggest you use a private channel that will not be logged. You may open a private channel to another person on chat at any time by typing `/query usernickname` on the mibbit command line. This will open a private chat room for the two of you. You should see a new tab appear at the top of your window

with the other person's nickname on the tab. **NOTE: The other person will not get the invitation to join your private chat room until you actually type a message to them in the private room.** If you need several people to join a private chatroom for an off-line discussion, you can make a new chatroom on the fly by typing `"/join #newchatroom"` and sending message to the other to join you in the new room using the same command. Neither of these conversations will be logged. You can also monitor who's in a particular room by looking at the users panel on the right hand side of the window.

5. Useful Commands

`/nick newnickname` – changes your old nickname to the newnickname. You should use this if you forgot to change the default nickname on the login screen or if your location/vehicle changes.

`/query nickname` – establishes a private chatroom between you and user nickname to talk privately. User nickname will not see this new channel until you actually send them a message in the new room.

`/help` – shows you a brief list of available commands that Mibbit recognizes. Unfortunately, it does not provide a comprehensive list of all the commands Mibbit recognizes. Mibbit is a widget and as such does not support the full range of IRC commands. If you are familiar with IRC using other clients, some commands may be supported while others are not. This document provides info on some of the more useful commands that are supported.

`/away message` – This changes you log in status to temporarily away. If you wish you can include a message that will appear in the room with regard to where you are going or when you might be back, etc. This is useful if you need to step away from chat for a meeting or lunch and don't want to logoff. `"/back"` reverses the status when you return.

`/join #chatroom` – This command logs you into a preexisting chat room if #chatroom exists at the time you type the command or creates a new chat room on the fly if #chatroom does not otherwise exist. Note that new chat rooms created in this way are not logged by EOL.

Up and down arrow keys – move backward and forward through your message sent/command history in the command line. Useful if you have to resend all or part of a previous message or need to re-type a command

6. Dealing with dropouts

As many project participants will be connecting to chat via different networks including satcom and possibly cellular, dropouts may occur when the user loses their internet connection or is in a no-coverage area. In the Mibbit widget it may or may not be immediately obvious to the user that they have lost their connection unless they try to type a new message. We suggest that users in mobile platforms use other methods to monitor the status of their internet connectivity. It may also not be immediately obvious to others in a chat room that a user has lost their connectivity either. There is a gray area of several tens of seconds to a few minutes before Mibbit will time out the user who dropped off. When a time out has occurred Mibbit will auto-generate a status message in the room that says the user has disconnected. When a user has dropped off and then regains connectivity and logs back into Mibbit, they can query the groundbot to see what messages they may have missed while they were offline. The command to review previous messages is `!replay X minutes` to see the last X minutes of messages or `!replay Y lines` to see the last Y messages that were sent. To review messages in a different chatroom than the one you are currently in you can type `!replay X minutes of #chatroom`. These old messages will be returned in a private chat room between you and the groundbot so another tab will appear at the top of your Mibbit screen. Anyone can of course use the replay command at any time during a session but it should prove most useful to a user who has inadvertently dropped their connection. You can also get help on the replay command by typing this message to the groundbot: `groundbot: help replay`.

7. Logging Off

To log off Mibbit, simply quit the browser window that Mibbit is running in. This is more reliable than `/quit` which seems to only intermittently work in Mibbit.