

# Chromebook User Guide for Students, Parents, and Families



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# Getting Started

## 1. What is a Chromebook?

Chromebooks are similar to laptops. Unlike most computers, Chromebooks do not run Windows. Instead, they use Chrome OS, which is similar to the Google Chrome web browser. This means you can use a Chromebook to do just about anything you'd normally do online: read websites, check your email, and watch videos. Your Chromebook runs web apps instead of software programs used on other computers. For example, instead of using Microsoft Office to create documents, you can use Google Docs ([docs.google.com](https://docs.google.com)) and Google Drive ([drive.google.com](https://drive.google.com)) to create and share files online. Chromebooks are inexpensive, easy to use, and everything is saved on the web, so you don't have to worry about losing your files. They are worth approximately \$200-350. Since Chrome is run entirely through the web, you don't have to worry about viruses either!

## 2. Chromebook Hardware

Chromebook hardware may differ depending on Chromebook models. Please refer to the photos below regarding ports and the keyboard.



Charging port

HDMI

USB port

SD card reader

Headset /mic



USB port

Lock port



Your Chromebook keyboard works just like a regular keyboard, with a few small differences:

- Use the Search button to search your apps and the web
- To turn caps lock on or off, press Alt + Search

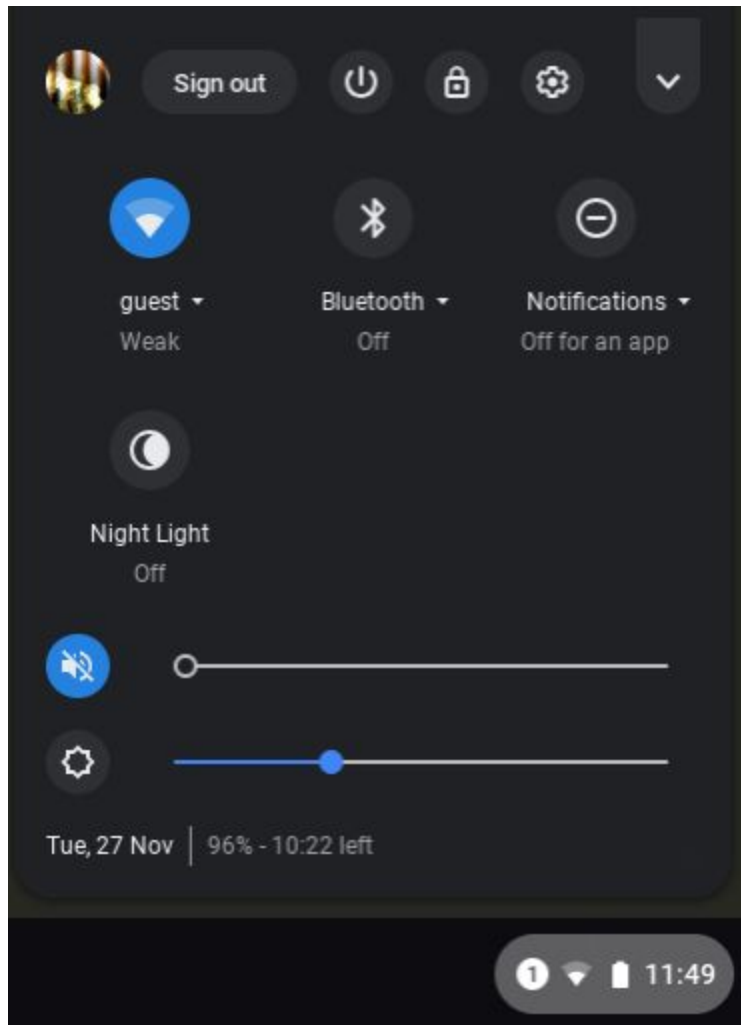
### 3. Powering on & off

Your Chromebook has a magnet in the screen which allows it to turn on right as it's opened! If after several seconds it does not turn on, you can press the power button on the keyboard. You can press and hold the power button in the upper right hand corner of the keyboard to shut off the Chromebook at any time. Shutting the lid will log you off. Pressing it once quickly will power it back on.

### 4. Dashboard

In the lower right hand corner, there is a small toolbox for accessing WiFi networks, adjusting brightness, sound, settings, and setting accessibility settings such as enlarged cursors or high contrast screens. Feel free to access this at any time, though some

settings are restricted by the Gaston administrators. It will look like this, but some settings and displays may differ:



In the lower left hand corner, there are “kiosk” apps that launch apps in secure browsers without a logon, primarily used for testing. Elementary and junior high students may be familiar with accessing these, primarily i-Ready. While i-Ready can be accessed through a browser, some students may be familiar with navigating this area.

## 5. Charging Your Chromebook

Your Chromebook should be charged every evening. While the battery life varies, your Chromebook should last for the entirety of instructional hours. Make sure that the Chromebook does not completely die as this can damage the battery. Only charge your

Chromebook with the GSD charger loaned with the device! Your charger may look different depending on device.

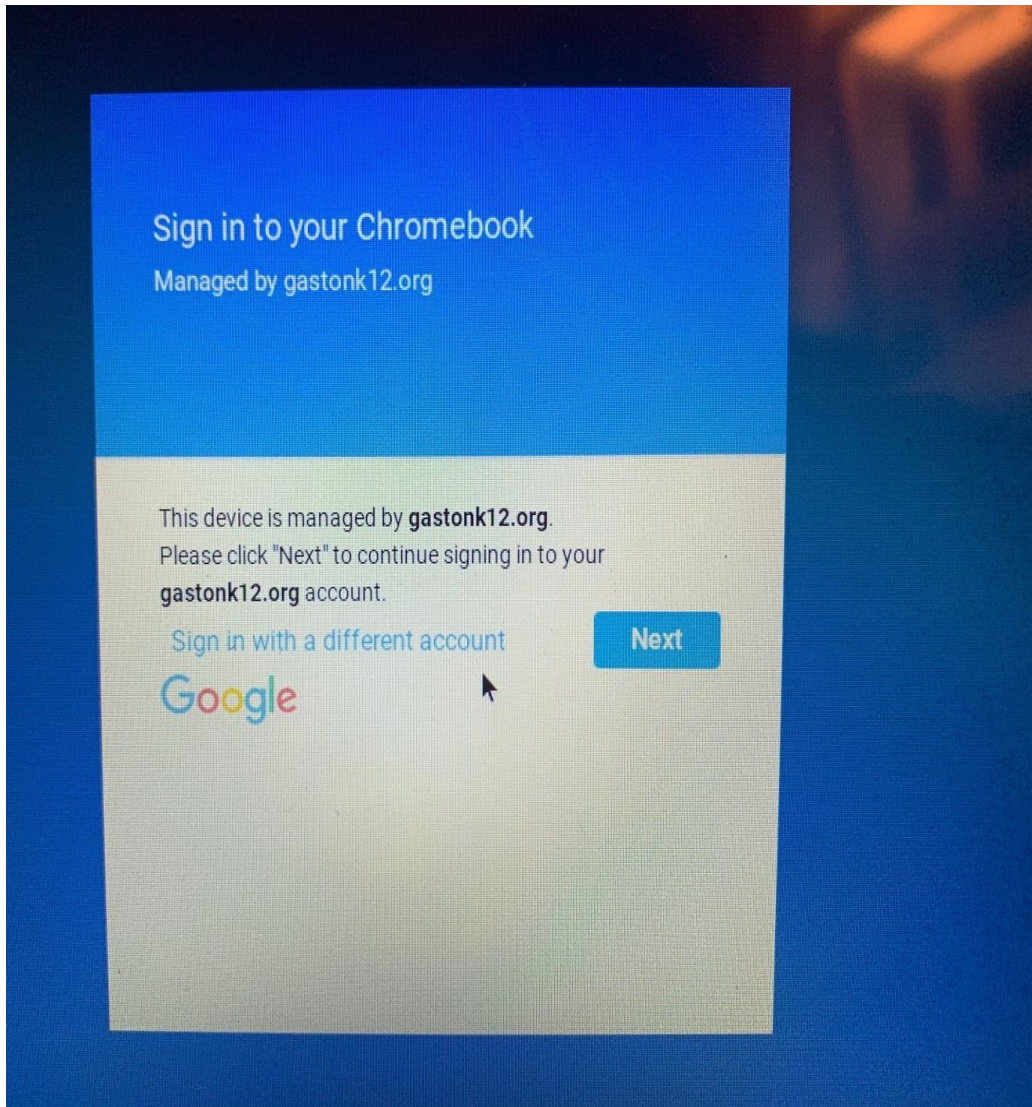
## **6. Updates**

Chromebooks are updated remotely from our IT department and are pushed out as quickly as Google tests and releases updates. If you'd like to check for updates, you can click on the three dots in the upper right hand corner of a Chrome browser > Help > About Google Chrome > Check for Updates.

# Using Your Chromebook

## 1. Logging On

When you open your Chromebook, you'll see a screen that looks like this:



**Note: Elementary students may NOT be familiar with this screen -- they may be used to a screen with a "G" that does not force log on. Due to off campus federal filtering requirements, they must log in via this screen after selecting "Sign in with a different account" and using the same credentials they are familiar with.**

Junior high and High school students will be familiar logging in with this screen.

Click “**Sign in with a different account**” and enter your students credentials to proceed.

It is important that you click “**Sign in with a different account**” to avoid logging in via Clever, an app that has not yet been fully implemented by the district. By clicking “Next”, your student may be greeted with an error message. Restart the Chromebook and try again, clicking “**Sign in with a different account**”

Only emails that end in @gastonk12.org domain can sign into Chromebooks. All Gaston students are issued an email. The email protocol is first name, last initial, grad year. Their password is their six digit student ID.

For example, johnd35@gastonk12.org, followed by 123456.

Your students should know this information. If they don’t, please contact your student’s teacher or building secretary.


**\*Note: You cannot change a password from a Chromebook, despite there being a “Forgot Password” option.**

## **2. Connecting to WiFi**






Before you log in, you may be asked to connect to a wireless network. Please connect to your home network. There are no longer WiFi restrictions on student Chromebooks taken off campus. Chromebooks only work when they are connected to WiFi, though some apps may have an offline mode.

## **3. Accessing Apps**

Your students will be using apps that they are familiar with. Here are a list of apps and icons one can access on a Chromebook


-  **Chrome** - your internet browser to access the internet, similar to Internet Explorer and Mozilla Firefox. You can access Google Chrome from any device, not just a Chromebook!



-  **Docs** - similar to Microsoft Word, a place to create and store documents
-  **Classroom** - a learning system from Google, where your student's teacher will assign and grade work
-  **Drive** - a Google Cloud storage space that can be accessed anywhere, with any device
-  **Slides** - similar to Microsoft Powerpoint, a place to create and store slide presentations
-  **Sheets** - similar to Microsoft Excel, a place to create and store spreadsheets
- **YouTube** - an online website owned and operated by Google for sharing and viewing videos. YouTube through the education suite through Gaston is moderately restricted, though adult supervision is encouraged when your child is browsing.

Upon logging in, there are pages that are set to open on startup:

- The Gaston Homepage -- [www.gastonk12.org](http://www.gastonk12.org) -- full of resources and links students are familiar with accessing, and a page just for parents!
- Gmail -- mail.google.com -- for accessing students email
- Classroom -- classroom.google.com -- for accessing your students assignments and class feed
- Drive -- drive.google.com -- for accessing students documents all in one place

At any time once logged in, you can click on the nine dots  in the upper right hand corner to quickly access a variety of Google apps while remaining logged in

You can also click on the gray circle on the bottom left of your Chromebook and select the “Up” arrow to bring up a tray with an assortment of apps. This screen is often referred to as a “Launcher”.



## Bookmarks

Once a student logs in, their bookmarks from previous sessions will sync. In a Chrome browser (accessible by clicking the rainbow Chrome button and also opening the Chromebook), there is a “gastonk12.org” bookmarks folder with resources your student may frequently access.

Students can also bookmark new pages and resources as they see fit to access again in the future. You can bookmark a page by clicking the star on the right in the URL line (where you type www.), or right clicking the bookmark bar (on a Chromebook you use two fingers on the touchpad).

## Chromebook Shortcuts

- Ctrl+C - Copy
- Ctrl+V - Paste
- Ctrl+X - Cut
- Ctrl+A - Select all text
- Ctrl+Z - Undo
- Ctrl+T - Open a new tab
- Ctrl+Tab - Move between tabs
- Ctrl+ +/- - Zoom in and out. You can also use two fingers on the touch pad.

There are many more shortcuts. Feel free to explore and use your Google device to your advantage!

## FAQs

**Q: Who do I contact if my Chromebook is having technical problems?**

A: Please email [info@gastonk12.org](mailto:info@gastonk12.org) if you believe there to be a hardware or configuration issue. For any other issues, please contact your student's teacher.

**Q: Who do I contact if my student can't log in?**

A: Please contact your student's teacher who can provide log in info or walk through the log in process with you. Please refer to "Logging In" above.

**Q: Can you print from the devices?**

A: Digital online file sharing between staff and students is one of the great advantages of the Chromebooks and is an easy and efficient way to distribute and turn in assignments without printing. It also saves on paper, ink and toner use, thereby saving money. There are ways to print from the Chromebooks, but it's not encouraged or particularly easy.

**Q: Can the Chromebooks be used with another username or personal Gmail account?**

A: No. Students and staff cannot access a district-owned Chromebook with any other login other than their district-assigned email..Students should not login to any web-based service with a personal account; the Chromebook is for educational purposes only.

**Q: Can documents and bookmarks created on the Chromebook be accessed on another device?**

A: If a student logs into another device with their school username (a PC laptop, a school lab computer, a loaner Chromebook, etc.) all of their information (bookmarks, emails, documents, applications, etc.) will be available to them on that device when using a Chrome browser.

**Q: Will unsafe or inappropriate websites be filtered on the devices?**

A: Before each Chromebook device connects to the Internet, it must pass through district network firewalls and filters. This happens whether the device is browsing on campus on school-owned networks, or off campus using another WiFi router that is providing the Internet connection. Our web filters are programmed to block inappropriate content as much as possible, but the Internet is an ever-evolving network

and some things will get through. We encourage supervision and conversations with your student.

**Q: Can the district track web history?**

A: Yes. The district can track information on what sites students were on, when they were on them, and how long they were on those sites. Students should only visit sites that are approved by the district and those that are not in violation of the Acceptable Use Policy. Violations of the policy can result in disciplinary action, including the student being suspended from using the school network and device use.

**Q: Will devices be kept by students over summer?**

A: No. Devices will be turned in at the end of the school year so the district can do maintenance on them.

**Q: Can parents use the Chromebooks?**

A: When a student is logged into the Chromebook, parents can use them to check on student work, view their browsing history or connect with teachers through our Skyward parent portal or via the student's email. The Chromebooks are not intended for personal use by the student or their parents.

**Q: How can I clean or sanitize my Chromebook?**

A: A gentle sanitizer wipe, like Clorox, on the keyboard is sufficient. Anything with at least 60% alcohol and no excess liquid.

If you have any further questions, please refer to [www.gastonk12.org](http://www.gastonk12.org) or contact [info@gastonk12.org](mailto:info@gastonk12.org). We look forward to having your students back to school with us! Please stay safe and remain healthy.