Frequently Asked Questions for Connect

If you don't see your question answered below, please contact Connect's Community Manager to ask. You can also contact the Community Manager to suggest a question for inclusion on this list.

Accounts

What is Connect?

Connect is the unique, exclusive online community for members of NASBLA. You can use Connect to connect and network with other professionals in recreational boating, ask questions and seek advice, and share your knowledge and work with others. Connect is a safe place for recreational boating professionals to chat, share ideas and worries.

How do I sign up for an account at Connect?

If you're a NASBLA member, you already have an account at Connect! As part of your NASBLA membership, you can log in to community.nasbla.org and gain access to Connect and its communities.

What is my login? Can I change my login?

Your login is the email address associated with your NASBLA account—the same one that receives emails from NASBLA. See our video on Logging In.

To change your login, you'll need to change your email address in the system here.

What is my password? Can I change my password? What if I forget my password?

If you already have an account on NASBLA.org, use the email and password associated with that account to login. Typically, it's your work email. If you're not sure if you have a password, need to create one, or have forgotten your password, you can take care of that by following the link here. If you're still having password problems, please contact Customer Service at info@nasbla.org.

I'm not a NASBLA member. Can I still use Connect?

Yes. You can register for an account here to access this community.

Profiles and Personalization

I'm new. What should I do first?

We have a Quick Start Guide to getting started here. We recommend starting your experience on Connect by filling out your profile—adding your bio, a picture, and more. Just look for the green and blue boxes above each profile field; click that to edit your information for that field.

Do I need a profile picture? What can the picture be? How do I change my picture?

We all like to see the folks that we're talking to. Most people choose a profile picture that shows their face; however, if you're shy, a favorite photo you've taken—from a boat to a beautiful sunset—will certainly do. Obviously, don't choose any offensive or obscene pictures for your profile. Go to the profile box in the upper righthand corner and click the down arrow, and follow the dropdown to "Profile." On the left side of your profile, you should see the profile image area. Click "Actions" and select "Change Picture" it to change your picture.

I'm a private person. How do I maintain my privacy on Connect?

From your Profile page, click on "My Account" and then "Privacy Settings." Your privacy settings govern many things: whether other members can contact you, email forwarding preferences, and if/where your profile information is shown on Connect. If you have any questions about privacy issues, please contact the Community Manager. See our video on Privacy Settings.

I'm not a private person! Why should I set my privacy settings?

It's still good to know what you're getting into. We recommend that everyone looks at their privacy settings at least once, even if it's to set their profile information to "Public."

How do I change my contact information?

Click the Edit Contact Information link under your profile picture. This connects to the NASBLA database where you can update your contact info. Be sure to keep this info current, so that you don't miss out on NASBLA updates and information! You may not see your new info immediately: Connect has to send your updated info back to our database, so we have the most current information, and then it bounces back to Connect. If you do not see your new info after 24 hours, please contact the Community Manager. See our video on Updating Your Profile.

What should I put in my bio?

Your bio can be whatever you think is important; however, if you need ideas on what to say, why not answer the big questions: Who am I? What sorts of work in recreational boating do I do? Where do I do it? When did I start? Why have I chosen this field? How do I like to work? Answering some or all of these will allow other community members a chance to get to know you better. Have fun with it!

How do I link to other online platforms I participate in under my profile? How do I link to my blog? What if I don't use social media?

If you use other social media platforms or online communities (such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube) or have a blog, you can update those using blue Action box below the "Social Links" field in your profile.

If you don't use other online communities (or just don't want to link them), that's perfectly okay—just leave it blank.

What sorts of honors and awards should I share in my profile? What should I put for my education?

Have you won anything for your work or community involvement? We encourage you to brag a little bit in this field of your profile. Of course, if you *really* want to put your Perfect Attendance award from kindergarten, that's fine, too. The same goes for education—you can share whatever you feel comfortable with, or not share at all.

How can I view my own (or someone else's) previous posts, files, and comments?

You can see all this information by navigating to your profile (or the profile of someone else) and looking for the blue box that says, "My Contributions."

What are these ribbons on my profile? How do I get more ribbons?

Ribbons are a fun sort of flair for the profile—they show your level of community engagement. So if you want a ribbon, hurry up and join the conversation or share some resources.

Contacts and Other Social Stuff

What are contacts? Someone made me a contact, now what?

Contacts can be people you know, or simply people you're interested in networking with. It can allow you to filter certain kinds of information so that you only see it, or allow it to be seen, by people you've selected. Making someone a contact also makes keeping track of him or her a little easier—you have a link to their page on Connect right in your profile. You can accept or reject a contact request, though we recommend accepting…who doesn't like a new friend?

How do I find other members to add to my contacts?

You can find other members by searching for them in the Directory (accessible via the Directory link in Connect main navigation bar). You can search by name, company name, and email address in the basic search. Going to the Advanced Search allows you to search by additional criteria such as location. You can then add someone to your contacts using the "Add as a contact" button that appears on their member profile or in the search results. See our video on the Membership Directory.

Help! I got a contact request from someone I don't want to be contacts with!

Not here to make friends? You are under no obligation to accept a contact request that you don't want. Likewise, don't be offended if someone doesn't accept your contact request until you get to know one another better.

Communities

What is a Community on Connect?

Communities are sections of Connect devoted to certain groups of people, topics, or locations. Most communities have both a Discussions section (like a message board) and a Library section (where you can upload files and other resources). Every NASBLA member automatically belongs to the "NASBLA Roundtable" community. You can then join additional communities if you so choose.

What kinds of Communities are on Connect?

Connect offers many communities that you might find interesting. For example, there are communities for boating educators, boating law administrators, people studying for the CRBP, and more. You can see the list of available communities here.

How do I join a Community?

If you navigate to "Communities" using Connect's main navigation bar, one of the options in the dropdown menu will be "All Communities," which will open the page listing all available communities. Click the blue "Join" button to the right of the community name to join it.

What is the NASBLA Roundtable Community?

The NASBLA Roundtable community is an open forum containing all NASBLA members. It's a good place to ask questions if you want them to be seen by as many people as possible.

What are My Communities? How do they work?

My Communities are groups that you have joined. You're automatically joined to the NASBLA Roundtable. Other communities can be seen under All Communities and you can request to join those that interest you.

What is the difference between "All Communities" and "My Communities"?

"All Communities" displays all the communities on Connect, whether you belong to them or not. "My Communities" displays only the communities to which you belong.

Community Notifications

Why should I get Community Notifications from Communities I'm interested in?

Don't want to miss important discussions on Connect? We offer a variety of notification options that will send an email to your inbox updating you on activity in Connect communities you're interested in.

How do I manage my notifications?

Go to your profile by clicking the arrow beside your picture in the upper righthand corner. Click the box that says My Account and then click Community Notifications. Clicking this will take you to a screen for managing your community notifications. See our video on [Community Notifications](#).

What are the different options for notifications?

You can choose to subscribe in Real Time (each time a new post is added to a particular community in Connect, you receive an email with its contents), Daily Digest (a once-a-day email with all of the day's activity from that community), Plain Text and No Email. If you're not sure, we recommend starting with the Daily Digest—it allows you to stay in touch quickly and easily.

What is the difference between HTML and text formats?

HTML-formatted emails are rich with images—they look almost like Connect itself, while text-only emails have all formatting stripped out. We recommend selecting HTML-formatted emails unless your email application can't handle rich formatting.

I don't want emails from Connect! What should I do?

Go to "My Account" and "Community Notifications" and select "No Email" for each community you belong to.

Discussions

What are Discussions?

Discussions are sections of Connect that act like message boards for a particular community. In discussions, you can ask and answer questions, share your expertise, offer advice, and more. Each discussion section contains multiple threads about different topics.

Wait, how are Discussions different from Communities?

Communities contain Discussions, Discussions contain various discussion threads, and each discussion thread contains one or more posts.

What makes a good post to a Discussion?

A good discussion post is on-topic, relevant, and insightful. Don't be the guy who posts "I like turtles" in the vessel registration community! We also recommend keeping your subject line concise, accurate, and specific. Don't start every thread with "I have a question…" but instead name threads things like "Question about Inflatable Life Jackets" or "How do you track BUIs?"

How do I post a message to a Discussion?

You can post a message to a discussion by going to the Discussions section of the community you wish to post in. Click the green button "Post New Message" on the right-hand side of your screen. This will take you to a page for posting your message. See our video on [Posting a Message](#).

How do I format my post in a Discussion? Can I add links? Can I use HTML?

At the top of the body of your message, you will see a menu bar with options for formatting your post that looks like most word processing programs. You can bold, italicize, underscore; insert bullet points and special characters; cut, copy, and paste; undo and redo; add or remove a link; and attach an image. To add a link, click the chain link icon and insert the URL or email address you wish to link, plus the text you wish it to be anchored to.

How do I reply to a message in a Discussion?

To reply to a message, simply click "Reply to Discussion," which you will find in the box to the right of every post on Connect.

I want to respond to someone privately. What should I do?

To respond to someone privately, click "Reply to Sender" in the box to the right of their post. This feature is especially good for off-topic or private issues. Don't choose "Reply to Sender" if you want everyone on Connect to see your response.

How do I edit a post I've made to a discussion?

To edit a post you've made on Connect, go to the post, and then click the blue box/arrow beside "Reply to Discussion" and choose "Edit" from the dropdown. Remember that posts are sent immediately to Real Time subscribers and there is no way to recall Discussion emails that have already been sent. However, your edited post will be the one that appears in the next Daily Digest.

How do I delete a post I've made to a Discussion?

To delete a post from a discussion on Connect, please [contact the Community Manager](#). Remember that posts are sent immediately to Real Time subscribers and there is no way to recall Discussion emails that have already been sent—so always think before you post!

How do I edit the signature that appears at the end of my posts?

You can edit your signature by selecting "My Account" then "Discussion Signature" from your profile. Your default signature is [FirstName][LastName][JobTitle] and [CompanyName]. Available variables appear on the right-hand side of the window to format your signature.

Libraries

What is a Library on Connect?

Libraries are collections of files and other resources (e.g. PDFs, Word docs, images etc.). The file then can be viewed and commented on within the Library.

What should I post to the Libraries?

Most people use the libraries to post documents related to their jobs. We ask that you only post images that you own the rights to; to do otherwise is a violation of copyright as well as a violation of Connect's Code of Conduct.

How do I share a resource on Connect?

To upload a resource to Connect, select Resources from the main navigation on Connect and select NASBLA Public Library. This will take you directly to the contents in the Public Library. Click on the green box Create a New Library Entry. From here, enter your title and description, and select a library (usually NASBLA Public Library) and entry type (usually Standard File Upload). Finally, click the blue "Next" button.

You will now be asked to upload your file. Click Select Files to Upload. Then click the blue Upload box. When you're done, select "Finish." You will automatically be taken to your uploaded file, where you can edit, and make title or description changes if you need to. See our video on Uploading to the Library.

Can I post someone else's resource to Connect?

No, unless it's in the public domain (like from a government entity). You may like someone else's resource and want to share it with others, but if you do not own the rights, posting it to Connect is a violation of copyright and our Code of Conduct.

How do I see the files I have shared on Connect?

Go to your profile and click "My Contributions" from the blue tabs at the upper middle of your profile page.

Moderation

What isn't allowed on Connect?

We want Connect to be a free, open, and welcoming space, and we are committed to maintaining a respectful exchange among members and staff. In order to maintain this environment, some perspectives are not welcome on Connect. Specifically, we reserve the right to suspend your account for

posting racist, sexist, or hateful statements or images, or for threatening, harassing, or bullying members. Posts and profiles containing profanity, nudity, violence, and pornographic imagery are forbidden. Don't spam Connect. Don't consistently post off-topic.

All users agree not to post any material that is protected by copyright, trademark, or other proprietary right without the express permission of the owner(s) of said copyright, trademark, or other proprietary right.

Finally, please extend the benefit of the doubt to newer members who are having trouble, and treat the staff and other members with respect. See our Code of Conduct for more information.

I want to talk about a product or service on Connect. May I?

You are absolutely welcome to talk about products and services that have helped you as a professional; however, any activity that could be construed as advertising or selling is prohibited.

Someone posted something to Connect that seems like a violation of etiquette. What should I do?

If you see a post on Connect that is hateful, obscene, or bullying, please feel free to flag it for moderation. To do this, click "Mark As Inappropriate," which you will find in the box to the right of every post on Connect. This will temporarily remove the post from Connect and place it in the moderation queue, to be viewed by the Community Manager. The manager will then decide whether or not the post is appropriate and take action as needed. Do not flag posts simply because you disagree with them; abuse of flagging privileges could result in action by Connect team.

What constitutes bullying on Connect?

We define bullying as impolite, disrespectful language or imagery directed at another member. Disagreeing with someone does not constitute bullying. However, we strongly encourage you to phrase your dissenting opinions in a way that shows thoughtfulness and respect for other members, even if they disagree with you. NASBLA reserves the right to take immediate action against bullying behavior, including removal of posts and revoking posting privileges.

Someone is bullying me or other members. What should I do?

If you or someone else are feeling bullied, please contact the Community Manager directly to discuss your problem. Posting about it on Connect is not the most effective way for the NASBLA team to resolve disputes of this nature.

Help! My post disappeared from Connect! What happened?

Your post has probably been flagged by another member. The moderation team will review the post, and either release it back onto Connect (if it is deemed appropriate) or delete it permanently (if it is deemed inappropriate). You will usually be notified if your post is deleted, along with an explanation as to why.

This person is stupid and I hate them! I want to post it to Connect! May I?

No. This is bullying, and nobody likes a bully.

This person said something that hurt my feelings! What do I do?

Please flag the post you found hurtful, or send a message to the Community Manager to discuss the issue. However, we reserve the right to take no action if we feel action is not warranted. Before reporting something, consider whether that person truly intended to offend.

I am angry about something involving NASBLA! Can I rant about it on Connect?

Ranting, angry posts will be removed. If you have a problem with NASBLA that requires resolution, why not discuss it with Customer Service?

I want to tell someone something questionable in a private message. Can I do that?

Sending hateful, obscene, or bullying messages is also against Connect Code of Conduct, and could result in loss of posting privileges.

What about free speech? Why can't Connect be moderation-free?

Connect exists for the benefit and enjoyment of all members. We are not interested in censoring opinions; as such, we will only remove posts that violate the rules of etiquette above, because those posts impede on the ability of all members to benefit from and enjoy Connect.

Can I be banned from Connect?

Members found to be in violation of the terms of service and Code of Conduct may have posting privileges revoked at the discretion of NASBLA.

Problems

I'm having problems! Who should I contact?

If you're having problems with Connect, please contact our Community Manager.

Something isn't working properly on Connect. I think it might be a bug. What should I do?

Please email the Community Manager with details of what seems to be the problem. The more detail (screenshots, etc.) the better! Be sure to note which browser and operating system you're using.

Note: Connect does not support browser versions that are no longer supported by their manufacturer. For Connect websites to display correctly, cookies and JavaScript must be allowed/enabled. If Connect

isn't displaying properly for you, check to see if you're using the latest version of your web browser. Also, you might try a different browser to see if that corrects the problem. Please note that not all webpage display problems are caused by browser incompatibility. Interrupted Internet connections, heavy traffic, viruses, spyware and bugs can also affect how a webpage is displayed.

I have a request for a new feature on Connect. Where is the best place to ask for it?

You can send your [request to our Community Manager](#) to look into. We can't promise anything, but we definitely want your input!

I have questions about my NASBLA account, involving billing or something else unrelated to Connect. What should I do?

If you have any questions or problems having to do with your NASBLA account, please contact [Customer Service at info@nasbla.org](#).

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