Skype: Answers

Staying in Touch Has Never Been Easier

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1. About Skype

“Skype: Staying in Touch Has Never Been Easier”

Staying in touch with family and friends, especially those far from home, can sometimes be difficult. New technology has made long-distance communication easier than it has ever been; yet, modern technology can be intimidating for those generations that did not grow up with it.

Skype, a world leader in Internet calling and messaging, has developed the following easy-to-use Quick Reference Guide to help seniors take the first step towards becoming empowered by technology rather than discouraged by it, connected by it rather than isolated. When you want to reach out, we hope you’ll reach for Skype.

2. System Requirements

Skype for Microsoft Windows

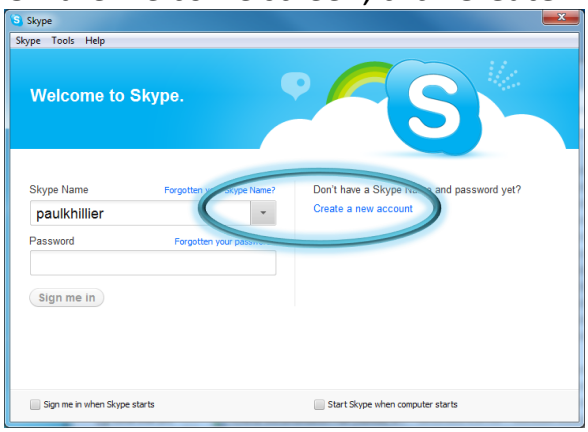
Operating System	Windows XP Windows Vista Windows 7 (32-bit and 64-bit versions supported)
Processor	At least 1GHz
RAM	At least 256 MB
Additional software	DirectX v9.0 or above

3. Getting Started

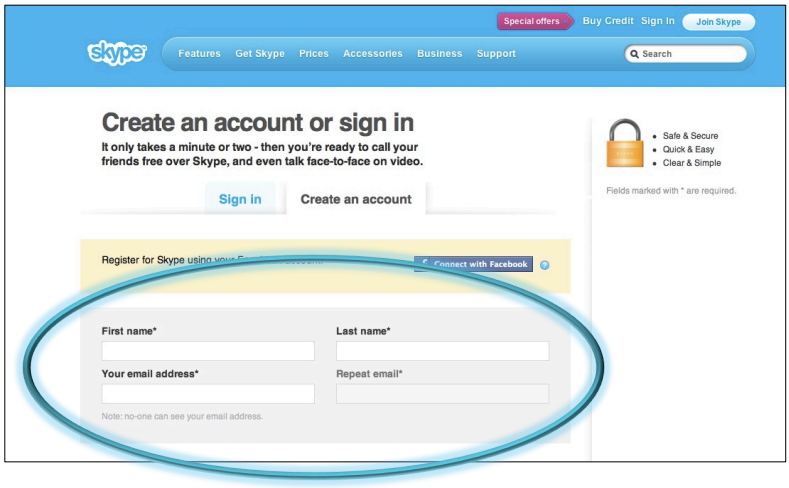
3.1 Creating a Skype account

3.1.1 Creating a Skype account

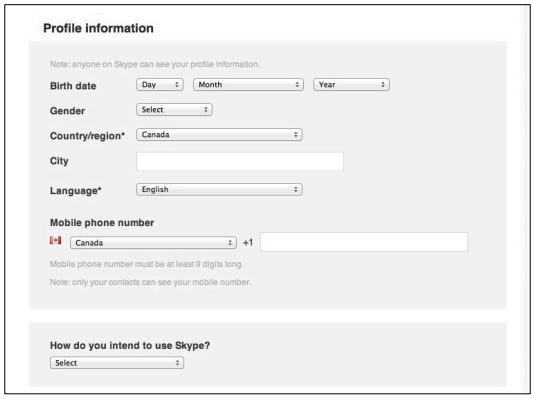
1. Double-click the Skype icon on your desktop to start Skype.
2. On the welcome screen, click **Create New Account**.



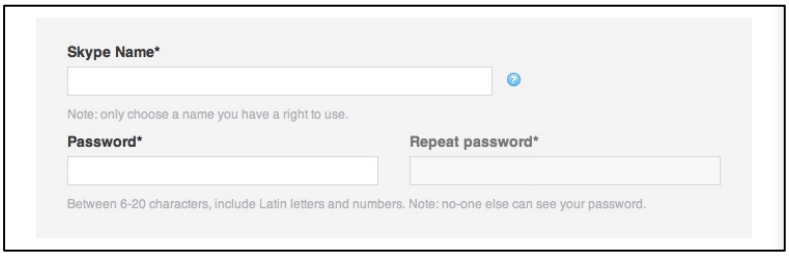
3. Your web browser will open.
4. Enter your **First Name**, **Last Name**, and **E-mail Address**.



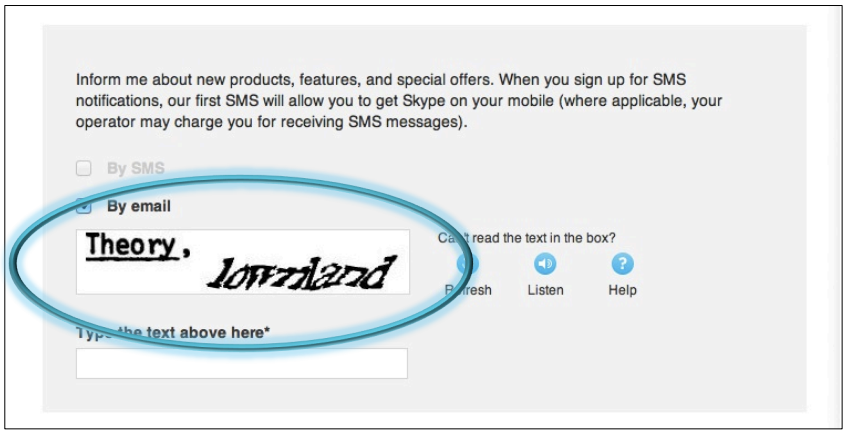
5. Add the profile details you wish to share (they will be visible to anyone on Skype).



6. Enter your desired **Skype Name** and **Password**.



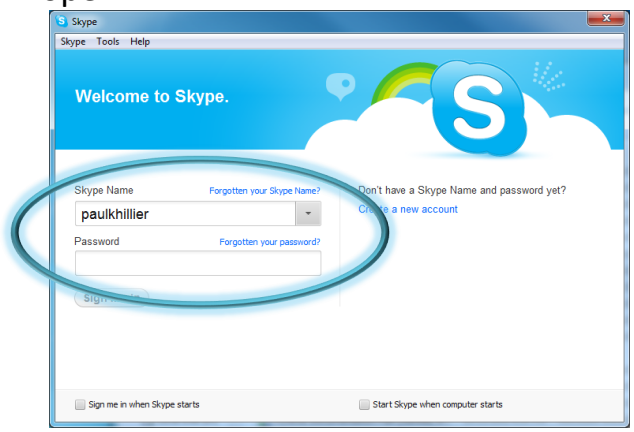
7. Enter the words in the box in the space below.



8. If you agree to *Skype Terms of Use* and the *Skype Privacy Statement*, click **I agree-Continue**. A confirmation message will be sent to your e-mail address.
9. You're now ready to use Skype!

3.1.2 Logging in

1. Double-click the Skype icon on your desktop to start Skype. The welcome screen will open.

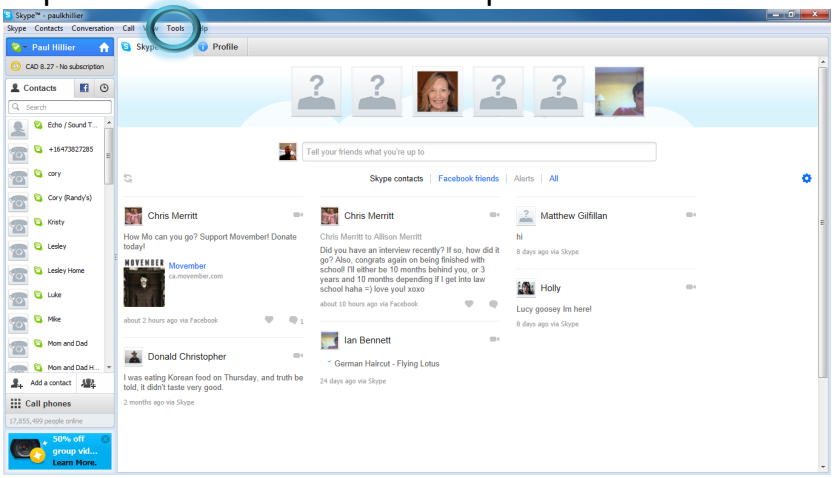


2. On the welcome screen, enter your **Skype Name** and **Password**.
3. Click **Sign me in** to begin your Skype session.

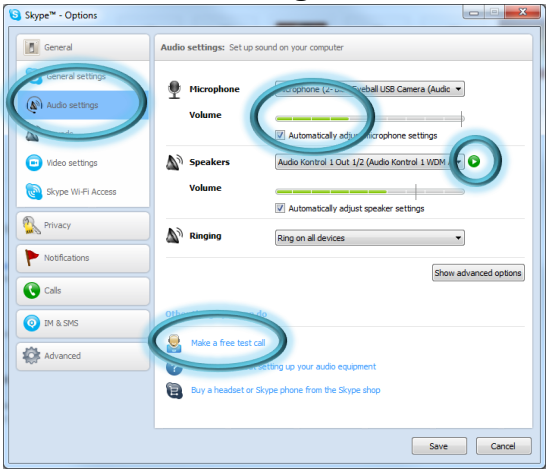
3.2 Setting up Skype for the first time

3.2.1 Connecting a microphone and configuring audio settings

1. Plug the microphone cable into your computer's microphone jack.
2. Open the **Tools** menu at the top of the home screen and click **Options…**



3. Click **Audio settings**.

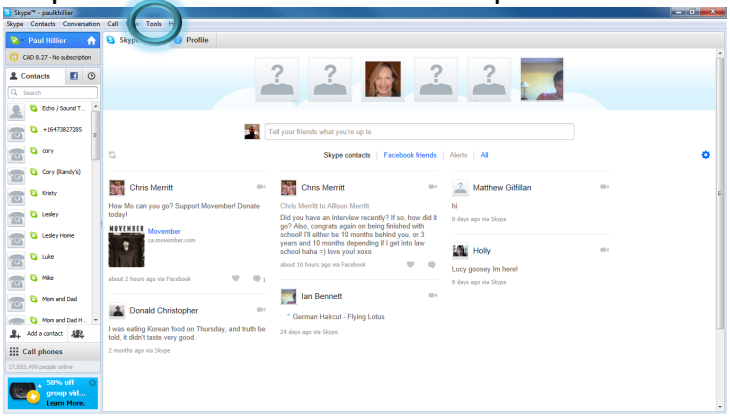


4. To test if your microphone is working, speak into it. If the microphone is properly connected, you will see green bars moving with your voice next to **Microphone**.
5. To test your speakers, press ▶ next to **Speakers**. If your speakers are properly connected and at a suitable volume, you will hear a test sound.
6. To make a test call to check your settings, click **make a free test call** next to .

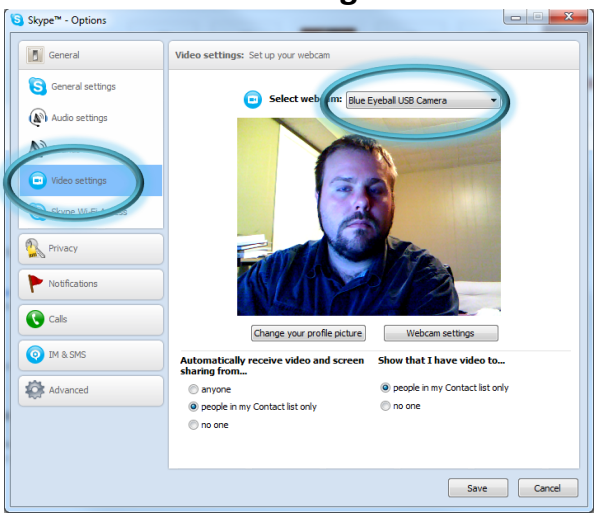
3.2.2 Connecting a webcam and configuring video settings

1. Plug the webcam's USB cable into your computer's USB port.
2. Double-click the Skype icon on your desktop to start Skype and sign in.

3. Open the **Tools** menu at the top of the home screen and click **Options…**



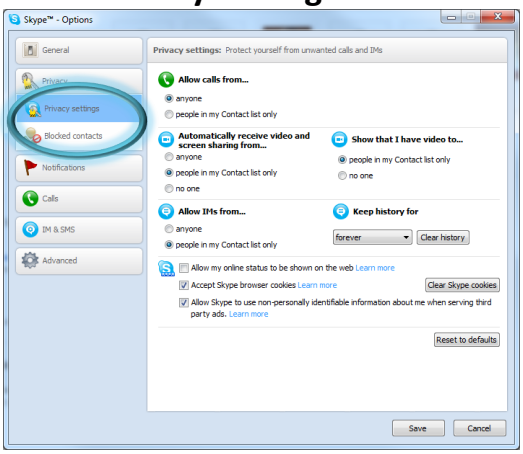
4. Click on **Video settings.**



5. If the webcam is properly connected, you will see video in the window.
6. If you have more than one webcam connected, use the dropdown menu to select the webcam you would like to use.

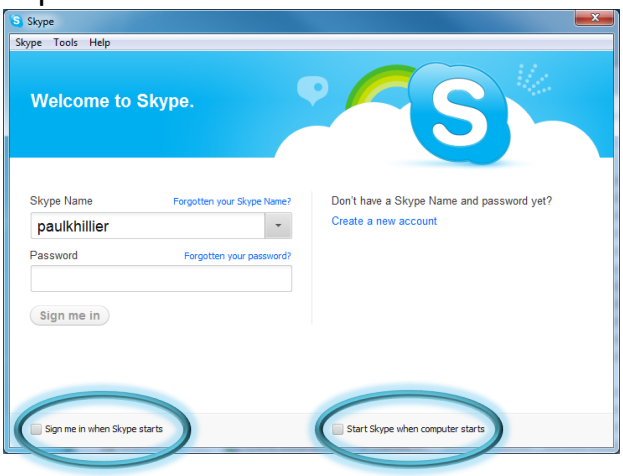
3.2.3 Configuring privacy settings

1. Open the **Tools** menu at the top of the screen and choose **Options…**
2. Click **Privacy settings**.



3.2.4 Configuring start-up settings

1. Double-click the Skype icon on your desktop to start Skype. The welcome screen will open.



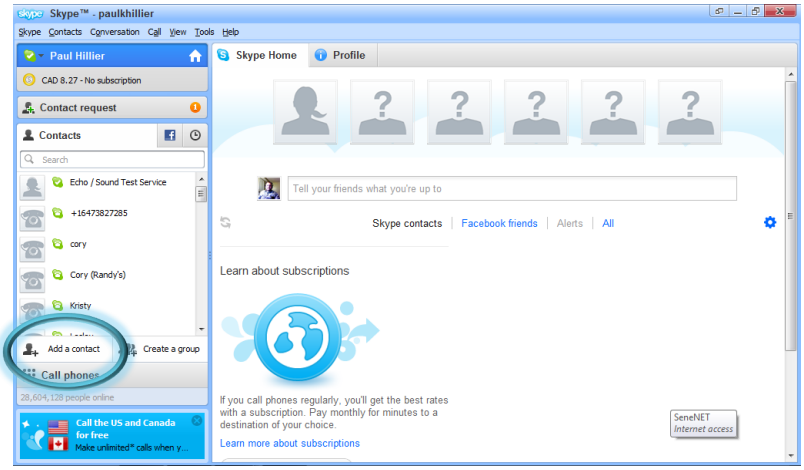
2. Click the checkbox on the left to turn **Sign me in when Skype starts** on or off.
3. Click the checkbox on the right to turn **Start Skype when computer starts** on or off.

4. Skype Contacts and Making Calls

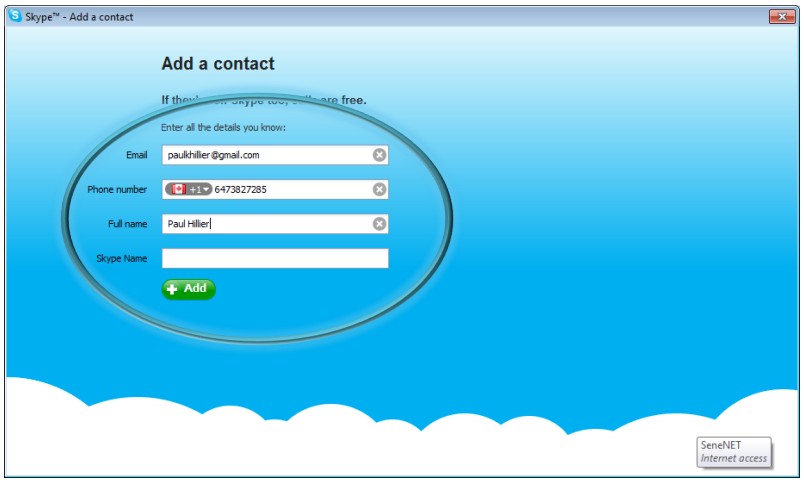
4.1 Contacts

4.1.1 Searching for and adding contacts

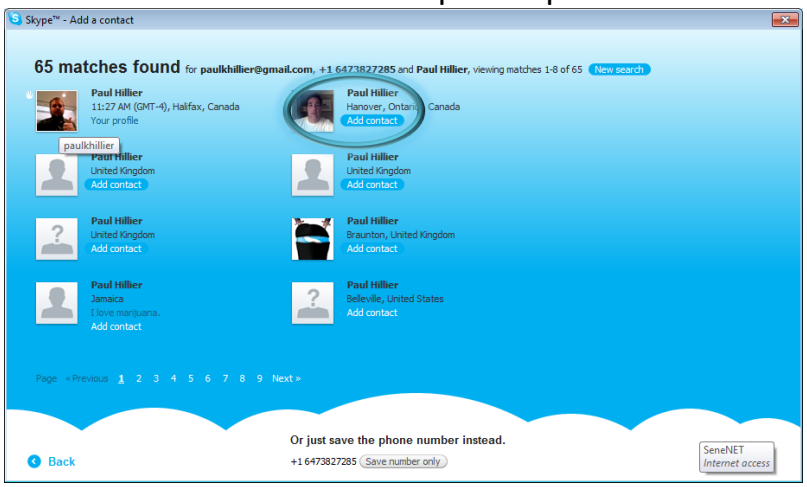
1. Click **Add a contact** on the home screen.



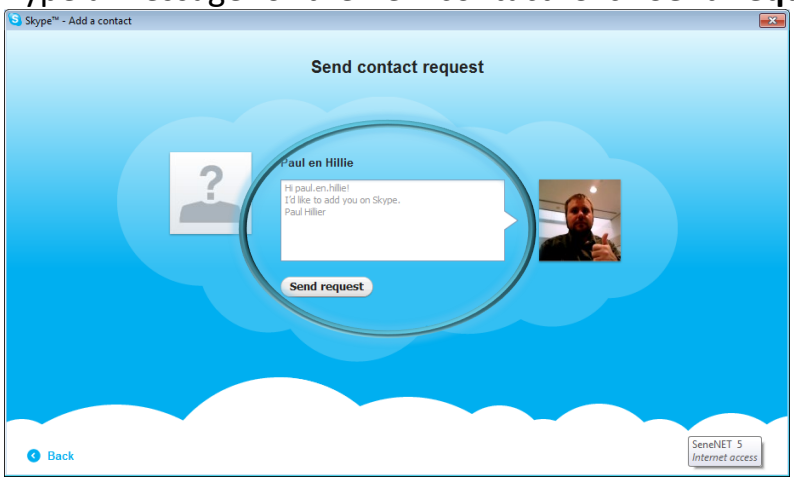
2. The **Add a contact** window opens. Type the details you know about your contact and click the **Add+** button.



3. Find the contact you want to add from a list of possible matches. Click **Add contact** next to the user's name and profile picture.

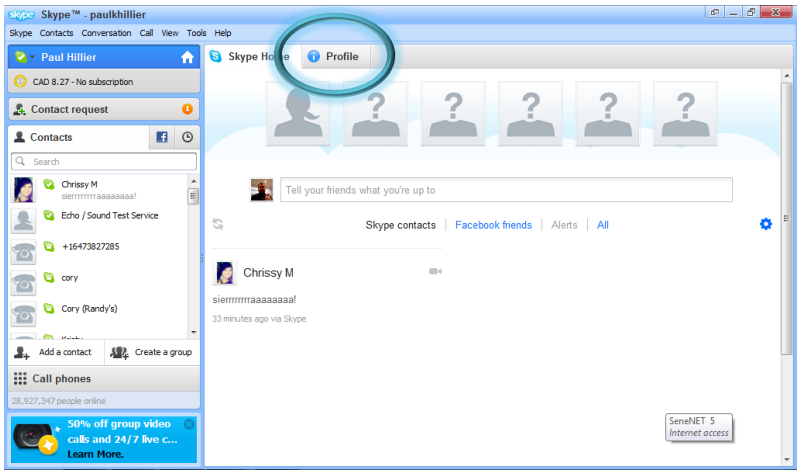


4. Type a message for the new contact. Click **Send request**.

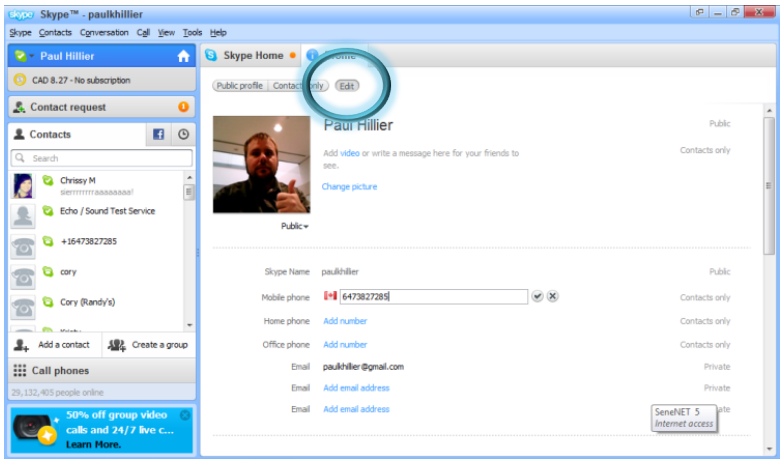


4.1.2 Editing your profile

1. Click **Profile** on the home screen.



2. Click **Edit**.



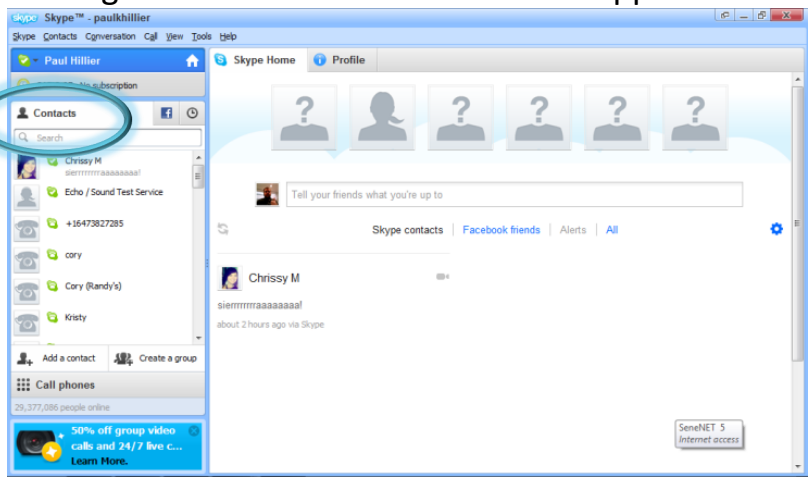
3. You can add a mobile phone, home phone, and/or office phone number to your profile. To add a phone number, click **Add number**. Type the number you want to add, then click ✓.

4. You can add up to three email addresses to your profile. To add an email address, click **Add email address**. Type the email address you want to add, then click the ✓.

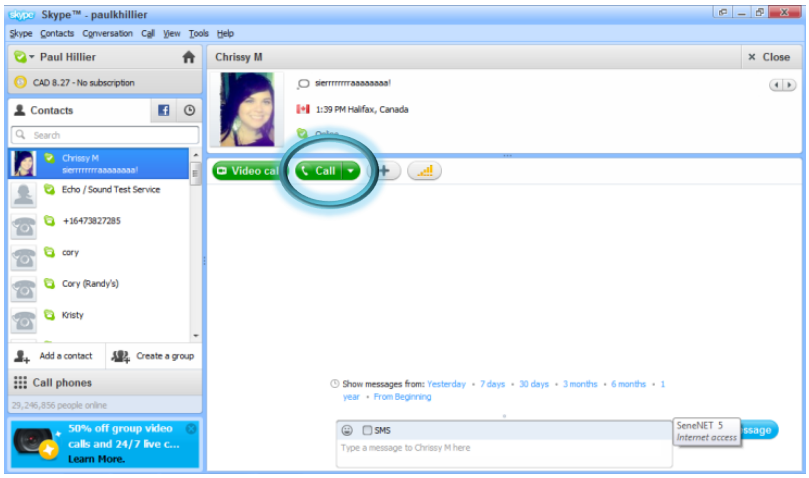
4.2 Making and Receiving Calls

4.2.1 Making a voice call

1. Choose the person you are calling from the list of **Contacts** on the home screen by clicking on it. The contact's details will appear to the right of the **Contacts** list.

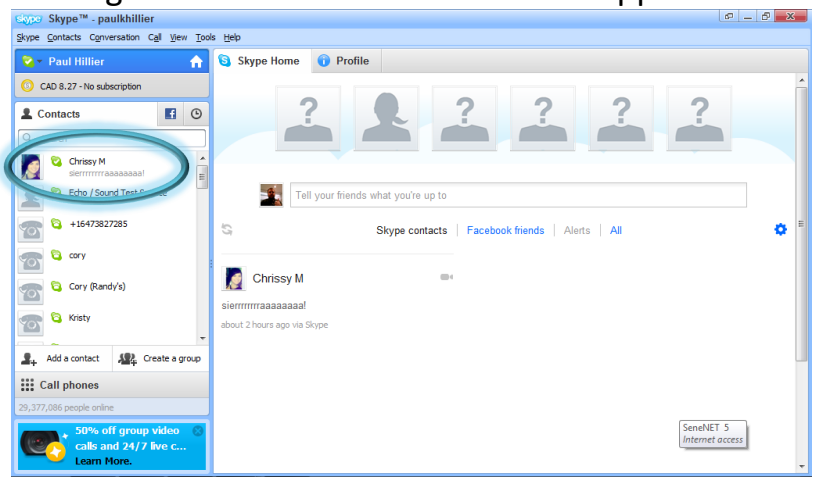


2. Click the **Call** button to make a voice call.

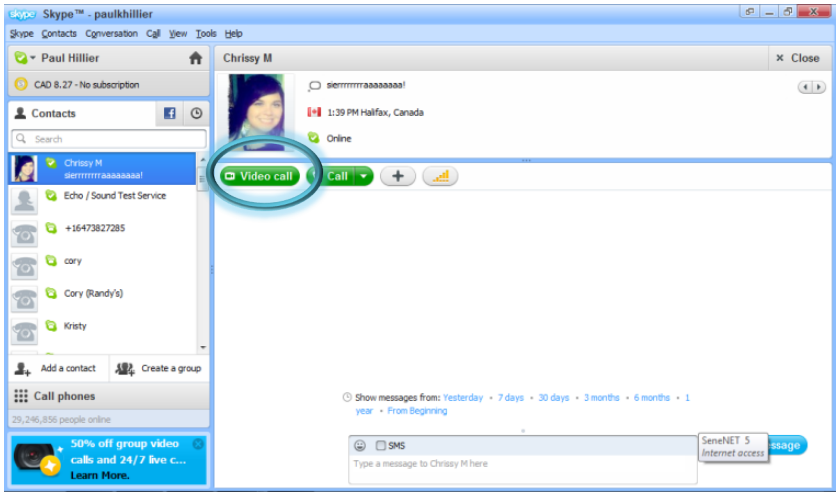


4.2.2 Making a video call

1. Choose the person you are calling from the list of **Contacts** on the home screen by clicking on it. The contact's details will appear to the right of the **Contacts** list.



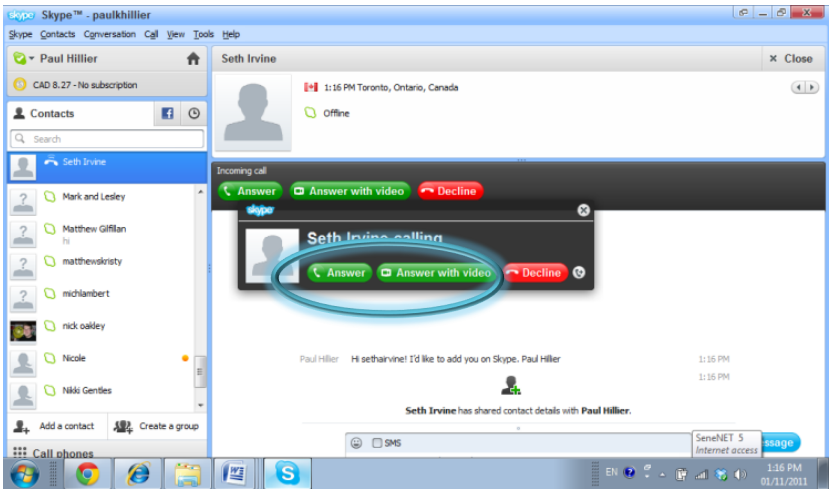
2. Click **Video call** to make a video call.



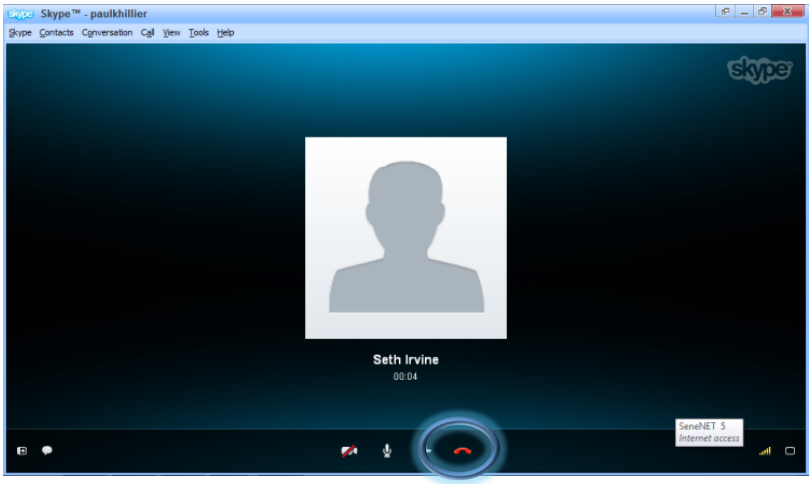
4.2.3 Receiving a voice or video call

A window appears when another Skype user calls you.

1. Click **Answer** to start a voice call.
2. Click **Answer with video** to start a video call.



3. To end the call, click .



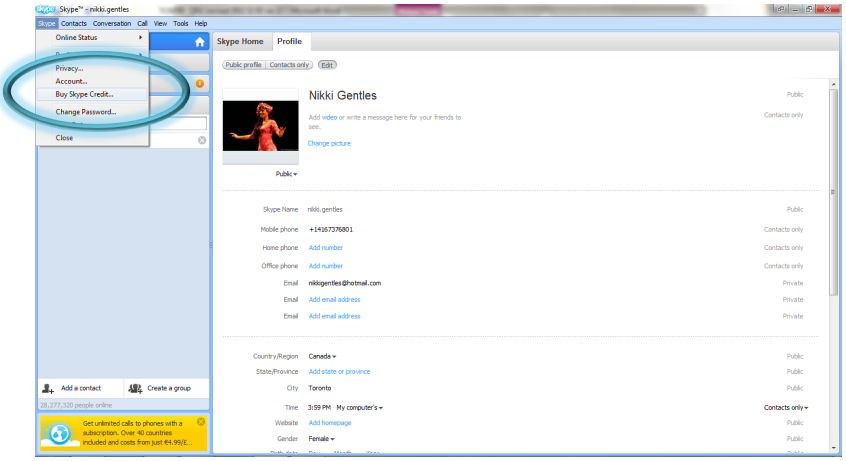
5. Making Telephone Calls and Using Voice Mail

5.1 Skype credit and telephone calls

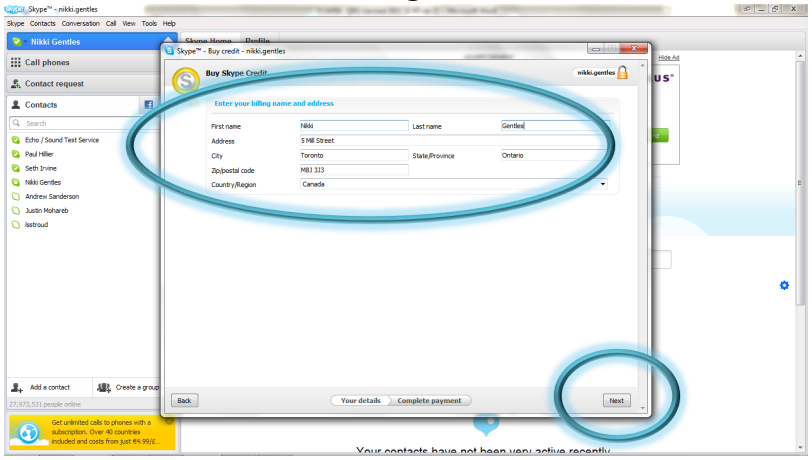
Calls can be made from your mobile or landline by purchasing Skype credit or through unlimited monthly subscription.

5.1.1 Adding Skype credit

1. Open the **Skype menu** at the top of the home screen and choose **Buy Skype Credit**.

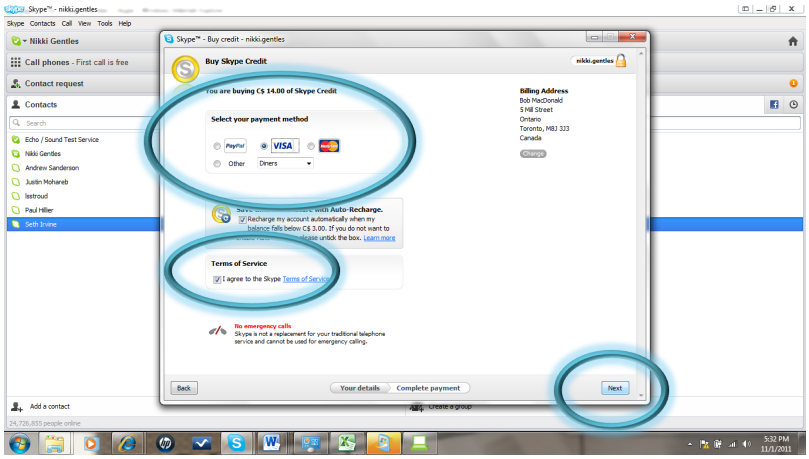


2. Enter your **name** and **billing address**.
3. Click **Next** in the bottom right-hand corner.

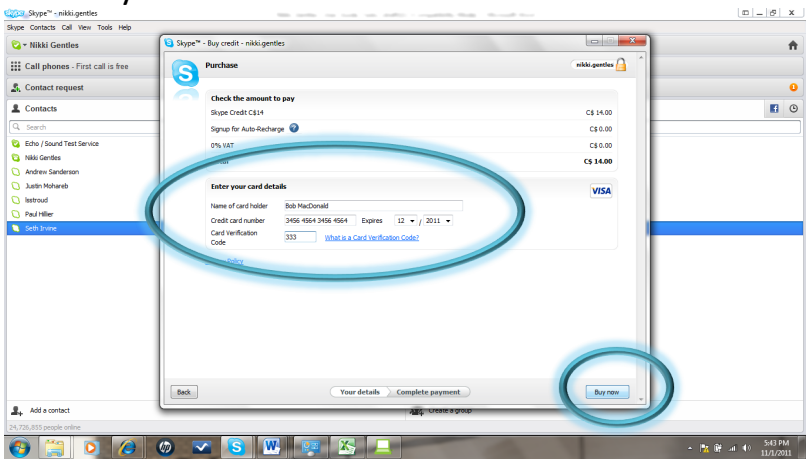


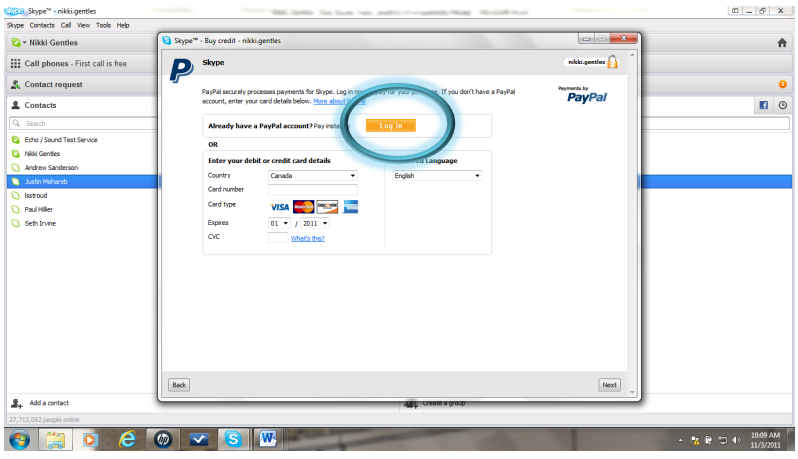
4. Select your method of payment by clicking the appropriate checkbox. Read the **Terms of Service**.

5. If you agree, click the check box. Click the **Next** button to proceed.



6. Enter your card details then click **Buy Now** OR **log in** to your **PayPal** account to pay instantly.

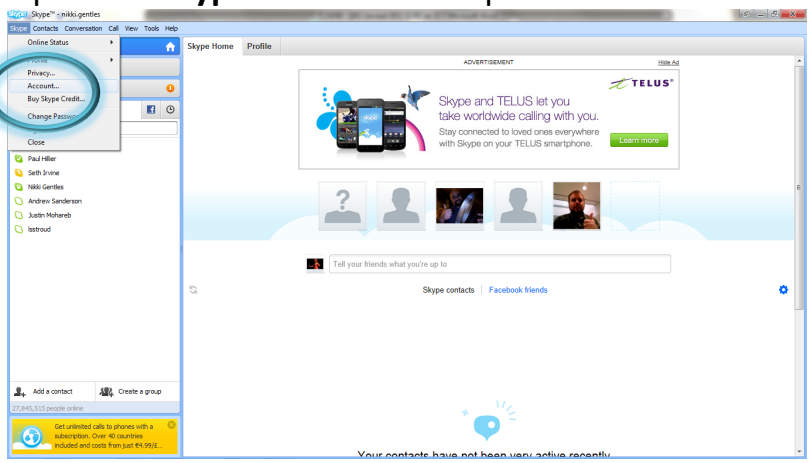




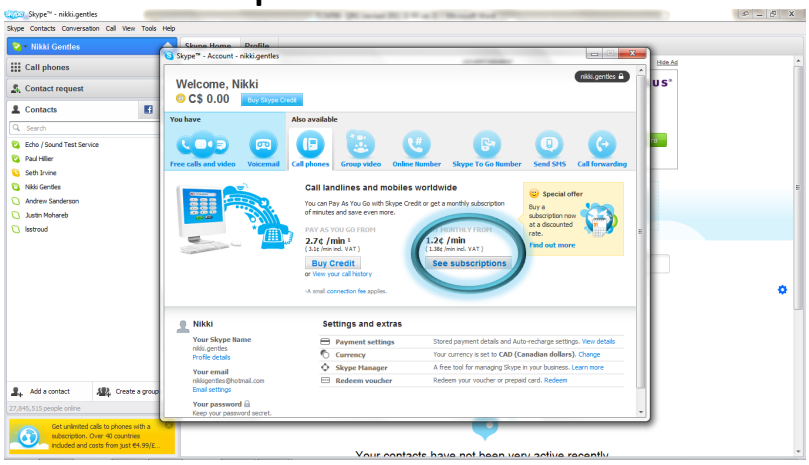
You now have Skype credit and can begin making calls to mobile or landline phones.

5.1.2 Setting up an unlimited monthly subscription

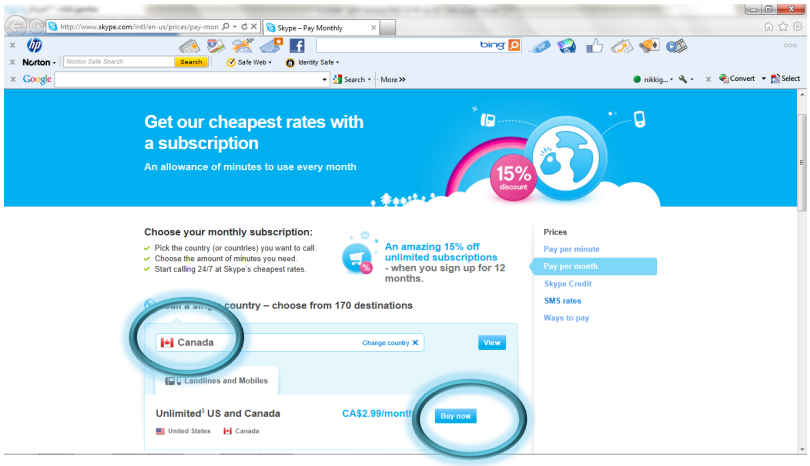
1. Open the **Skype** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Account**.



2. Click **See subscriptions** in the new window.

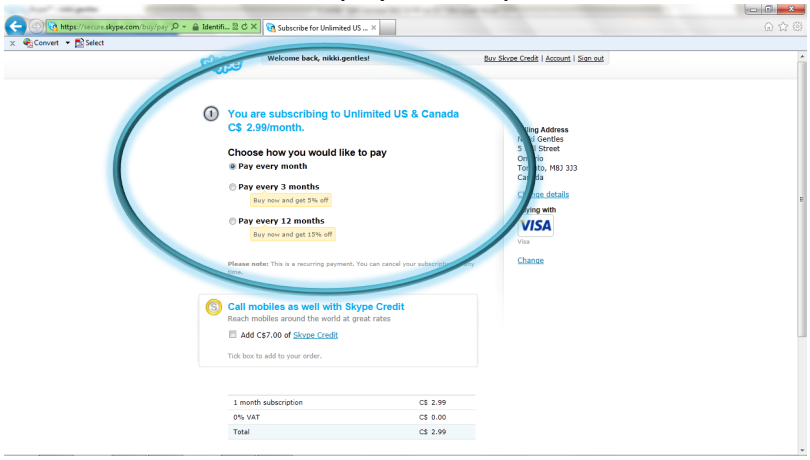


3. Choose the country you are calling. The default is set as Canada. Click in the field and start typing the country name until the correct one appears.



4. Choose one of the available subscriptions for the country you are calling by clicking **Buy Now**.

5. Click one of the three payment options.

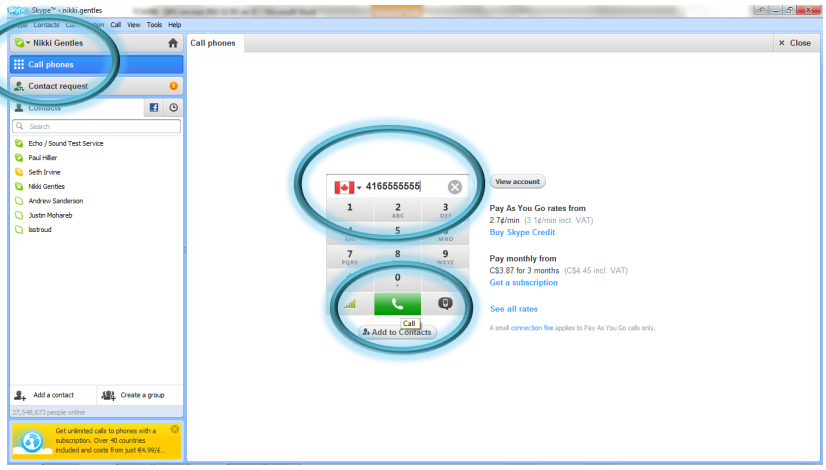


6. Scroll down and read the **Skype Terms of Service**. If you accept, click the check box next to it.
7. Click **Next**.
8. **Enter your card details** then click **Buy Now.**
9. Repeat steps 3 to 8 for as many countries or regions you would like to add.

You now have a Skype subscription and can begin making calls to mobiles or landlines.

5.1.3 Calling a landline or mobile phone

1. From your home screen, choose **Call Phones.** A new Call Phones box will open up.
2. **Enter the number** you are calling then click .

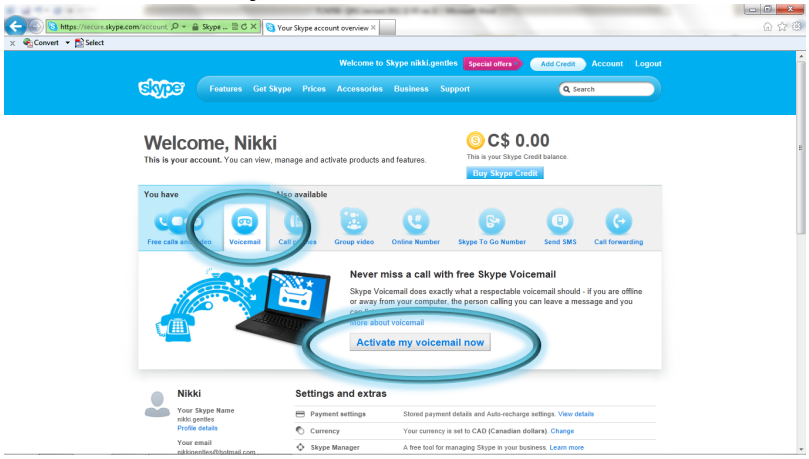


Skype will begin dialing the person you are calling. If you don't have any Skype credit or a subscription, the system will prompt you to add one (see 5.1.1).

5.2 Using voice mail

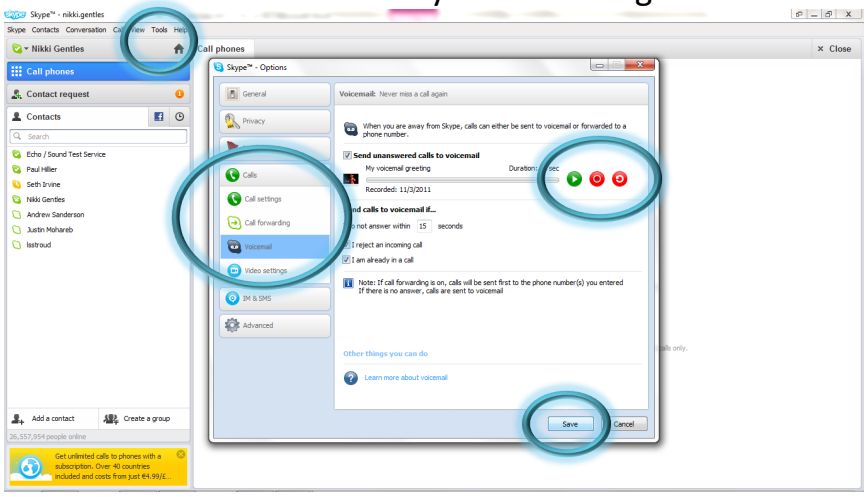
5.2.1 Setting up voicemail

1. Open the **Skype** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Account**.
2. From your Skype account, click on the **Voicemail** tab**.** On the Skype Voicemail screen, click **Activate my voicemail now**.



5.2.2 Setting up a personalized greeting

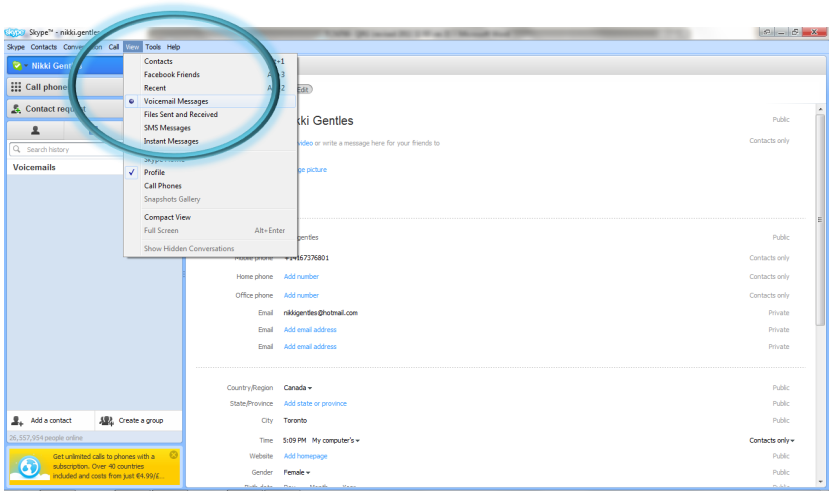
1. Open the **Tools** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Options** from the drop down menu.
2. Click on the **Calls** button then click on **Voicemail.**
3. Use the Record button and speak into the microphone to record your personalized greeting. You can play it back and retry as often as needed.
4. Click the **Save** button to set your recording.



5.2.3 Listening to voicemail

1. Open the **View** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Voicemail messages** from the drop down menu. A list of voicemail messages with the date and time they

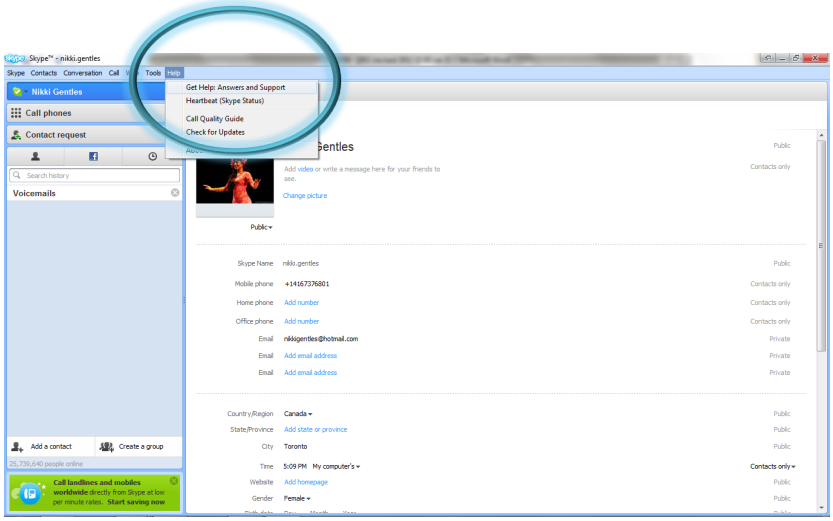
were left will be displayed. New unread messages will have an orange dot beside them.



2. Click on the voicemail you want to hear.
3. Click on the **Play** button next to the voicemail.

6. Troubleshooting

If you are experiencing difficulties using Skype at any time, open the **Help** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Get Help: Answers and Support** to access Skype's online help pages. There you will find FAQs, How-to guides and an online support group.



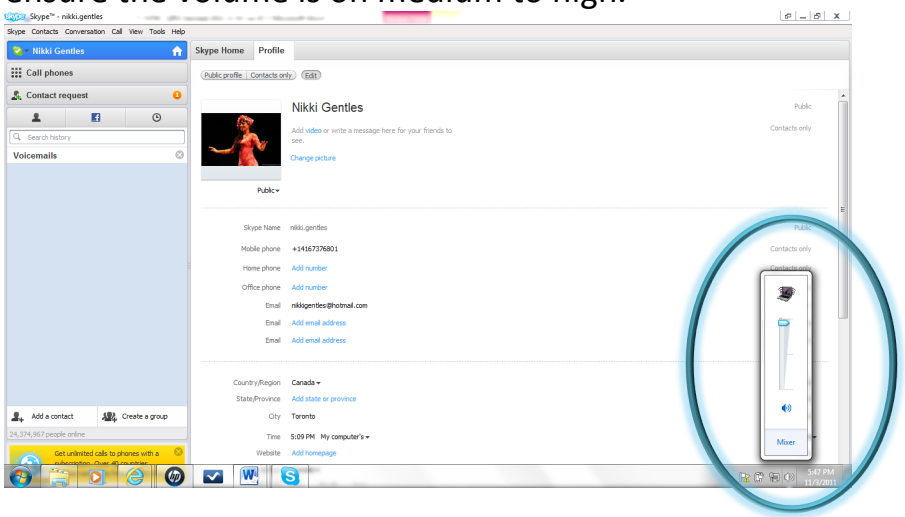
In the following pages, you will find solutions to five common issues.

6.1 I can't hear the other party

There are a few potential issues that can lead to this problem. Follow these steps until you can hear the other party.

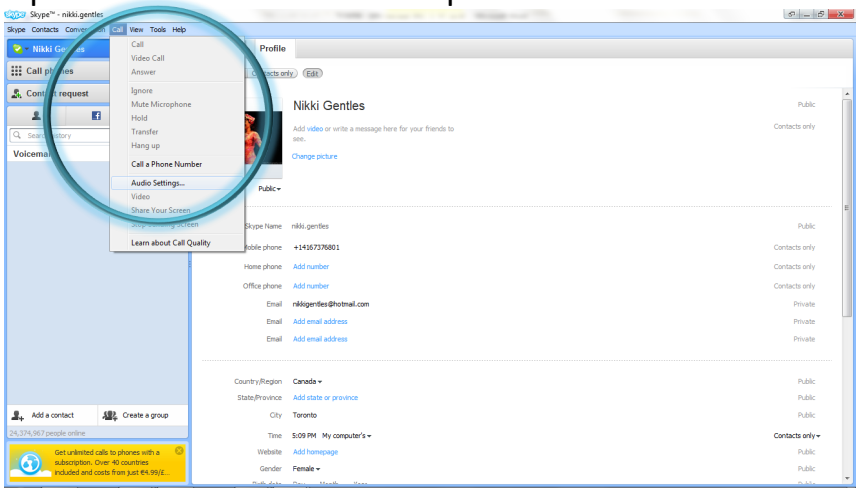
6.1.1 Check the volume controls on your computer

1. The speakers on your computer might be on low or mute. Most computers have a speaker button in the bottom right-hand corner of the monitor. Click on it and ensure the volume is on medium to high.

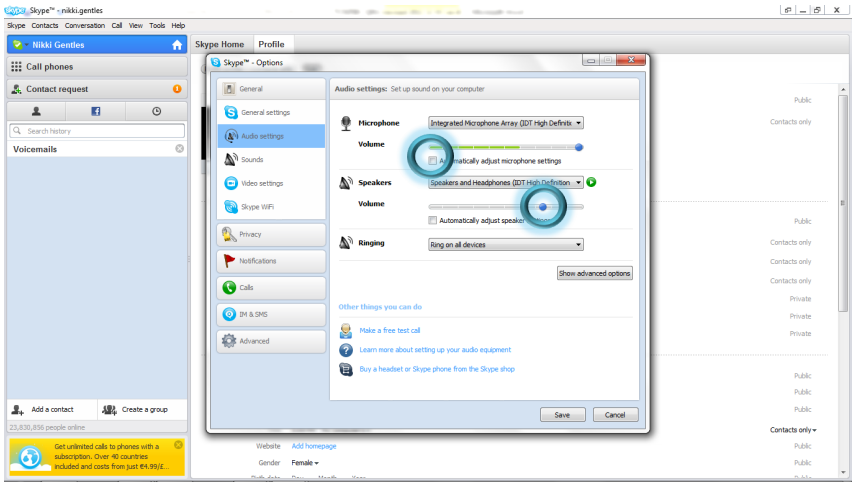


6.1.2 Check your audio settings

1. Open the **Call** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Audio Settings**.



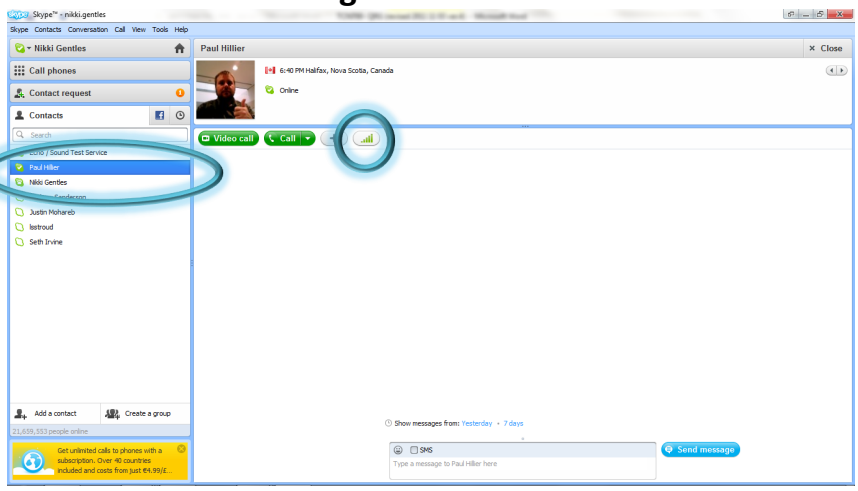
2. To manually adjust the microphone and speaker settings, first uncheck the boxes to **automatically adjust the settings** then move the blue dot on the slider to the right to increase the volume.



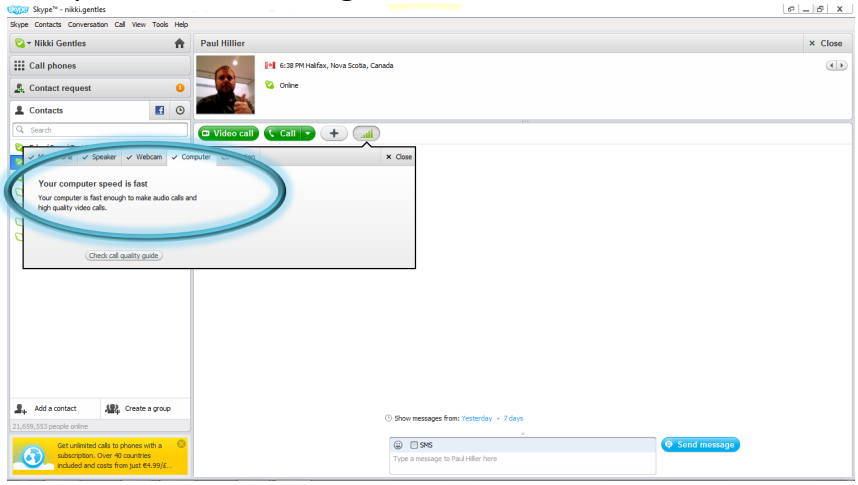
3. Test the speakers by clicking ▶. If you hear sound, the speakers are working properly.
4. Click **Save**.

6.1.3 Check your computer speed and connection

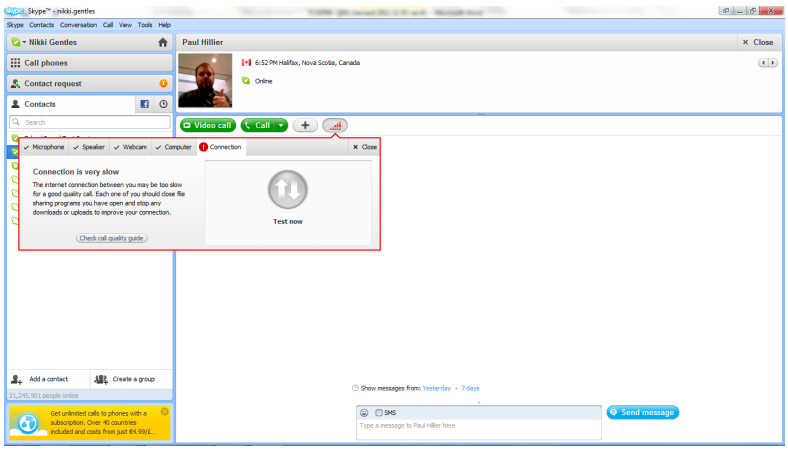
1. Choose the person you want to call by clicking on their name in the **Contacts** field and click **Check Settings**.



2. Click on the **Computer** tab and you will see a message that tells you whether your computer is fast enough for this call.

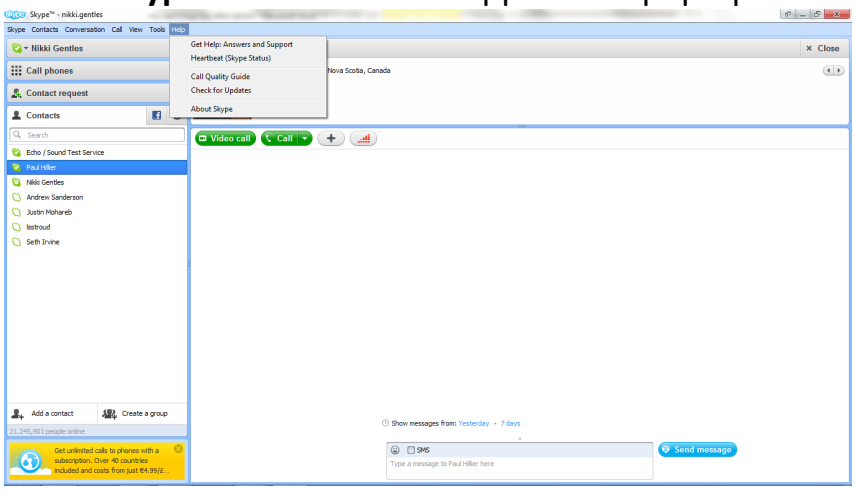


3. Click on the **Connection** tab and click **Test now** to see if your Internet connection is fast enough for the call.



6.1.4 Get the latest version of Skype

1. Check which version of Skype you are using by clicking on the **Help** tab and choosing **About Skype**. The version will appear in a pop-up window.



2. Update to the latest version of Skype by clicking on the **Help** tab and choosing **Check for Updates**. If there are any system updates, they will automatically download.

6.1.5 The other party can't hear me

Ask the other party to follow the steps 6.1.1 to 6.1.4 until the problem is resolved. If still experiencing difficulties, refer them to **Get Help: Answers and Support** under the **Help** menu to access Skype's online help pages and support group.

6.2 There is an echo when I speak

The problem is on the other end of the call, from the person hearing their own voice as an echo.

1. First try lowering the speaker volume on the problematic end of the call.
2. If the problem persists, try moving the microphone farther away from the speakers until the echo goes away.
3. If the problem persists, try using a headset instead of speakers.

6.3 I do not see the other party

To make a video call, you need to ensure your software is updated, the hardware is functioning and check all connections and compatibility.

6.3.1 Check to see if you are using the latest version of Skype

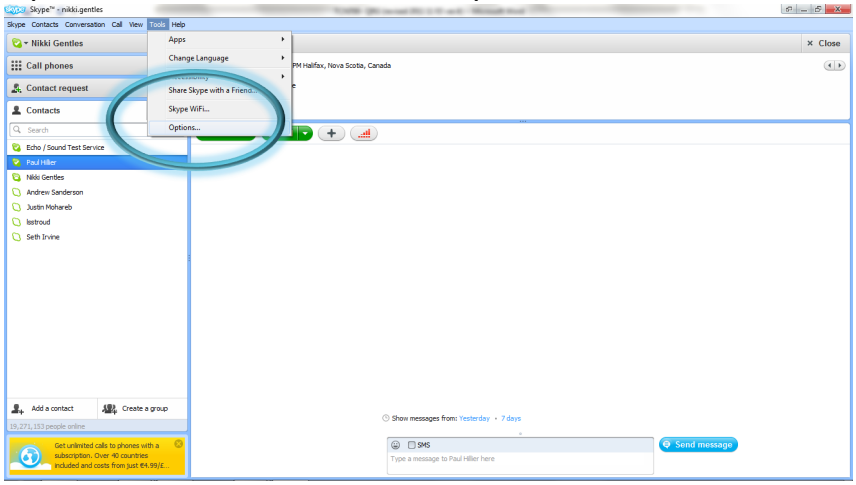
You will need Skype 4.2 for Windows or higher or Skype 5.0 for Mac or higher.

6.3.2 Close other programs using the webcam

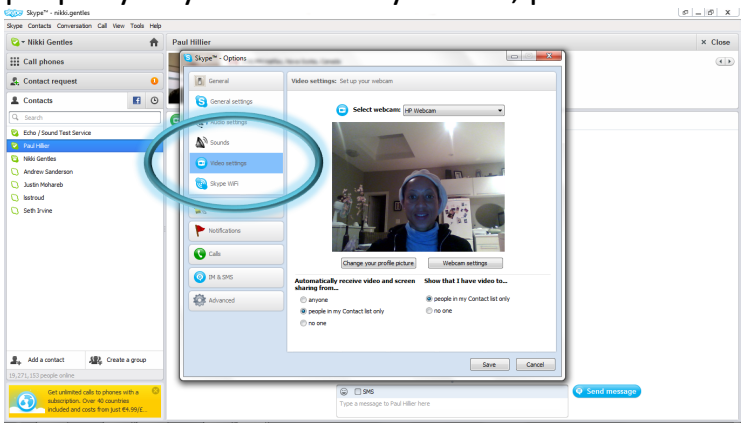
1. Close all non-essential programs. Other websites and software with video capabilities might be interfering with Skype usage.

6.3.3 Check to see if your webcam is working properly

1. Open the **Tools** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Options**.

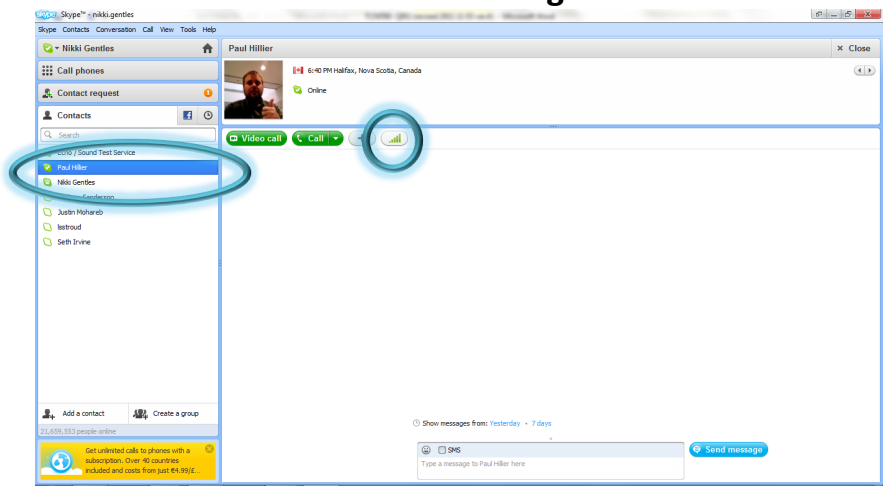


2. Click **Video Settings.** If you can see yourself in the webcam window, it is working properly. If you can't see yourself, proceed to the next steps.

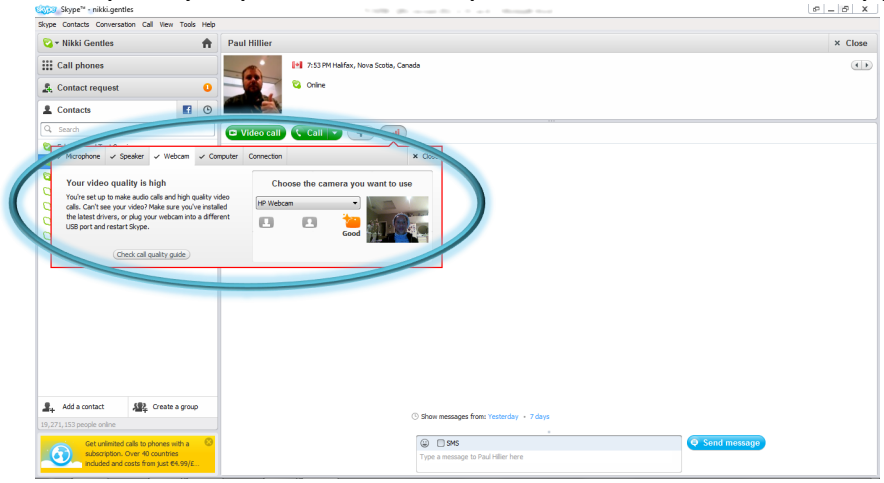


6.3.4 Check your video call settings

1. Choose the person you want to video call by clicking on their name in the **Contacts** field and click on the **Check settings** button.



2. Click the **Webcam** tab and you will see a message about the quality of your video. If the quality is poor, a list of tips to solve the issue will appear.



6.3.5 Webcam driver and compatibility issues

If you are still experiencing problems with your webcam, open the **Help** menu at the top of the home screen and choose **Get Help: Answers and Support** to launch the Skype website**.**

1. Choose **Support** at the top of the home screen**.**
2. Click on **Video Calling** in the drop down menu then click on **Video Calling** on the main screen.

A section called **How can I check that my webcam is working correctly?** includes more tips on resolving driver and compatibility issues.