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Frequently Asked Questions

Does your software work with PowerPoint?

Yes. i>clicker works easily with PowerPoint and is a less invasive/less time-consuming program for professors than the competing systems. We have a pretty different approach in terms of software than competing systems. i>clicker works with **any** existing presentation software (PowerPoint, Excel, Word, XML, Flash, Adobe). There is no need to re-author your lectures into our software. Instead, the i>clicker bar floats on top of your course materials and presentation. The i>grader screen shot function captures your screen every time you begin polling. This feature offers the ability to review your lecture and clicker questions after class without the drawback of having to re-author your questions in a complicated software application.

If you are currently using PowerPoint and want to use i>clicker, simply write your questions into PowerPoint as you would any other course presentation materials. When you open the i>clicker software (via "Start Session"), the i>clicker floating menu bar will appear and will simply float on top of your PowerPoint presentation. No additional work is required. Writing good, conceptual clicker questions is difficult enough; why should you have to waste time programming your questions into another proprietary and often complex software application?

What if I don't use PowerPoint? Does your software "convert" my presentation into PowerPoint?

No problem. We are not tied to PowerPoint in any way. You can easily use i>clicker with any software. We are not exclusive to PowerPoint and we don't "convert" your content into a PowerPoint slide show. We believe that faculty should have the freedom to use whatever presentation software they feel is appropriate for their course materials. Many of our faculty use Adobe, Flash, Word, Keynote, and even Notepad to prepare lectures. i>clicker is not tied to PowerPoint and works beautifully with any Macintosh or PC presentation software tool.

Will the software float above Maple, Mathematica, and other types of this software?

Yes. The i>clicker floating menu bar sits on top of any application (such as Mathematica, PowerPoint, Acrobat, Word, Internet Explorer, etc). There is a minimize button to allow you to hide the i>clicker software (at your discretion).

How can I display i>clicker in conjunction with Keynote Presentation software?

In Keynote Preferences, there is an option labeled "Allow others to use the screen." If you check this, and then open i>clicker, the control bar should appear on the screen.

What are Your System Requirements?

PC
Windows XP Professional or Home Edition, or Windows XP Tablet PC Edition, Windows Vista
One USB port
Projection system (highly recommended)
Screen resolution of 1024 x 768
*We do also have a solution for Windows 2000. Contact technical support for help if you are a Windows 2000 user.

Mac

Max OS X version 10.3.9 or higher
One available USB port
Projection system (highly recommended)
Screen resolution of 1024 x 768

As noted above, the screen resolution on your computer needs to be set to 1024 x 768 in order to view the full i>grader application. To check your settings (and to make sure your resolution is properly set), go to “Control Panel” and locate the “Display” icon. Go to “Settings,” locate “Screen Resolution,” and move the arrow to “more” or 1024 x 768.

Are there recurring fees for instructors or students?

No, there are no recurring fees required of the school or the students. The only cost is for the hardware (generally, the student remotes). The only recurring costs are for replacement batteries. i>clicker software is open source; upon request, we can provide the PC and Macintosh source code.

Where should I place the i>clicker base unit in the classroom?

The i>clicker does not require a line of sight to receive responses, and can be placed anywhere in your classroom. For best performance and maximum range, we would recommend against placing the base unit inside any type of metal enclosure, such as a metal podium.

What is the range for the remote and base unit?

One base unit is capable of recording up to 1,500 remotes at a range of 200-250 feet. Only one base unit is therefore required for a classroom of any size.

Will the base unit interfere with any Wi-Fi signals?

No. i>clicker operates at 915 MHz, and so it will never interfere with campus Wi-Fi technologies (including Internet, cell phones, and wireless microphones).

How do you prevent nearby base units and clickers from interfering with each other?

The i>clicker base units can be set to any of 16 different sub-frequencies to prevent interference with nearby classrooms. The default frequency is set to the AA channel for both the base and the i>clicker remotes. If you are the only professor using i>clicker at a given time you don't need to worry about setting your receiver to a different frequency. However, if someone else is using i>clicker in close proximity, you (or they) will want to use a different sub-channel (such as AD). You can change your frequency via i>clicker Settings and Preference. The i>clicker remotes are also set to the AA channel by default; if a different frequency is used by the instructor, a message will appear on the lecture screen providing students with directions to switch frequencies.

Tip: If you know you will be using i>clicker near another professor using i>clicker for the entire semester/term, we recommend you set your default frequency *for the entire term*. You may also need/want to coordinate default frequencies (if i>clicker is in use campus-wide) with your instructional technology division.

What do my students have to do to change their i>clicker remote frequency?

If you are not using the i>clicker default frequency (AA) and have set your sub-frequency to a different channel in Settings and Preferences, i>clicker will alert your students to this change. In class, an alert will appear on your screen when you begin polling that will instruct your students to:

- A. Press the On/Off (power) button on their clicker until the blue Power light begins flashing.
- B. Press the new two-letter code (that you've designated in your Settings/Preferences). A green Vote Status light will indicate your students have successfully reset their remote frequency.

This code will remain in place for the duration of the lecture/session (as long as the remote is on). Students will need to repeat this procedure for every session, which is why setting one code for the entire term will be easier to administer and communicate.

Can't the base find the students' frequency for them? Why do they have to do this work? The other systems seem to make changing frequencies easier for students?

We considered adopting a protocol where the base would find the frequency for the students instead of asking the students to change the frequency themselves. But we decided the negatives of such a system far outweighed the benefits. In order for the other system to work (where the base finds the frequency), students must be registered and in many cases, must “log-in” or “join-in” to use this feature. We believe the a flexible registration policy (where the students don't have to be registered in order to vote) is essential to the early success of a classroom response system in any course. We also believe that taking 5-10 valuable minutes out of class time to ask students to “join-in” or “log-in” to a course is cumbersome and disrupts the lecture.

Our initial reviewer board (users of competing systems) all complained vociferously about students being required to register before using a system. They felt they lost 2-3 classes just trying to get students registered. So, we decided to collect and record

votes regardless of whether the students were registered or not. Students can register at a much more leisurely pace and professors don't have to take any class time to worry about registration.

In a recent survey of our i>clicker adopters, the flexible registration approach was cited as a consistent positive feature of our system. We did think about adopting the other frequency selection approach (the one our competitors take), but we feel that more faculty would benefit from the lax registration timeline than the frequency setting protocol. And our adopters (now quite a large community) agree.

All i>clicker remotes default to AA. If you need to (or are going to) use a different frequency than the default, students will need to change their remote frequency at the start of class. Doing so is quite trivial and takes about 3 seconds (instructions appear on the screen). We recognize that competing systems have adopted a different process whereby the base "selects" the frequency and communicates this frequency (wirelessly) to student's remotes. While this is a great system for students who have registered their clickers, it does not work for students who have not registered their clickers (i.e. tied their student ID to their clicker remote ID). So, while an automatic changing of the frequency is convenient, it is accompanied by a huge drawback regarding registration.

Can I use the base unit and instructor remote for more than one course?

The hardware can be used for as many courses as you like. To use the system with multiple courses, simply copy (or download) a separate copy of the i>clicker software for each course you are teaching. For example, if you are teaching Psychology 101 and Psychology 210, download two copies of the software. Name one folder Psych 101 and the other Psych 210. You can either copy the software from the flash drive you received in your adopter's kit or you can elect to download the software from the www.iclicker.com web site.

What is the difference between the blue and white remotes? Can I replace the blue remote if it has been lost?

There are no technical differences between the blue and white remotes. The white remotes are those sold to students (we do not sell the blue remotes to students). Each instructor's adopter kit includes two blue remotes (one for the instructor's remote function and one as a possible loaner to students). There are no technical differences between a blue "instructor's remote" and a white student remote. The color is designed to make it easier for you to keep track of your individual and loaner remotes.

A white remote can be substituted for the blue remote without loss of functionality. If you require a replacement for your instructor's remote, please contact our sales department by email at sales@iclicker.com.

What is the "instructor's remote" and what does it do?

You may program one of your remotes (any i-clicker remote will do) for your own use in class through the i>clicker software. There is no technical difference between an instructor's remote and a regular i>clicker remote; this is all controlled by the software. After designating an "instructor's remote," you will be able to control polling, as well as your presentation, without having to stand near your computer. Rather than interpreting the five choices (A, B, C, D, E,) as student votes, your voting options become control commands and will control certain pieces of the i-clicker polling software.

How do I enable the "instructor's remote"?

To activate the Instructor's Remote, you must enter the clicker's serial ID (located on the bottom of the back of your i-clicker) in the Designated Instructor's Remote field (below) in General Settings and Preferences. Remember, your earlier entry (Set for Course or Set for Session) determines the length of time your clicker will function as the Instructor's Remote. If you plan to use the Instructor's Remote regularly, we recommend you set the code for the entire course (or term).

How can I upgrade my i>clicker software?

Current and new users of i>clicker can double-click the WebUpdate icon in the course folder to update both i>clicker and i>grader. This function is in both the MyCourseMac and MyCoursePC software folders. You may also download the latest software from <http://www.iclicker.com>.

What is the battery life for the remotes? How long do students have when the "low battery" light appears?

The battery life is approximately 200 hours. The "Low Battery" light will flash red when a user needs to replace the batteries. Once this light begins flashing, the user will have less than 10 hours of battery power remaining. Each i>clicker uses 3 AAA batteries, which are inexpensive to replace. New i>clicker remotes include 3 AAA batteries.

Is there an auto shut-off feature?

The clicker will remain on for 90 minutes as long as there is an activated base in the classroom. If a student leaves class and forgets to turn off his/her clicker, it will automatically turn off after 5 minutes. In fact, it will automatically turn itself off even if a particular button is being continually compressed (so, for example, if it were accidentally turned on in a backpack).

How do you replace batteries?

There is a small slot on the back of the i>clicker remote. You will need to insert a paperclip or similar device (such as the clasp on a pen) to release the covering, allowing you to remove and replace the batteries.

What's the expected product life (length of time) of the i>clicker?

We will support the current software until at least July 2010. We do make regular and ongoing improvements to the software based on user/reviewer feedback, but will make all changes backwards compatible so the i>clickers you purchase now will still be supported. We also anticipate we will be developing new, innovative hardware and software solutions for many years to come.

What if a clicker breaks or is defective?

There is a standard one-year limited warranty available with each new i>clicker remote. If your clicker is defective, the process of returning it will depend upon how it was obtained/purchased. If purchased through the campus bookstore, students may return it to the bookstore. If you purchased a department or class set, you will need to contact us at sales@iclicker.com to request a replacement and return the defective unit to us for analysis. We are very flexible in accepting "defective" remotes. That said, our hardware (bases and remotes) is extremely reliable. We have less than a .001% defective remote rate and less than .0001% defective base/receiver rate.

How do students register their remotes?

i>clicker offers you two straightforward national registration options: an in-class, roll call registration feature and a registration Web site, both of which can be easily incorporated into your course. Minimal information is required of your students and both registration options are tied to your class roster. Registration does not cost your students anything; there are no site license or registration fees for i>clicker software.

Not comfortable with our national options? We also work with campuses to provide you with the scripts and code to host registration on your own campus. Many of our institutional adopters have implemented this system and the work to do so is quite trivial. Contact us at support@iclicker.com for more information.

Do my students need to be registered before class?

No, students do not need to be registered in order for i>clicker to collect votes. For students who are not yet registered, responses will be associated with the remote ID. In other words, you can use i>clicker to collect data/votes from the very first day of class and eventually tie all students to their remote IDs through either roll call registration or web site registration.

Can an i>clicker remote be used as a loaner?

Yes. Instructors can use spare remotes as loaners to students who may have lost a remote or forgot to bring one to class. The remote ID can be assigned to a student for a single session, and the remote can be reassigned in future sessions. Each instructor's adopter kit includes two blue remotes, and generally one is used for loaning purposes (although many professors teaching large sections opt not to offer a "loaner" to students because of class size and potential administrative problems).

My students registered online, but I cannot download their registrations via WebSync. What is wrong?

Most likely, nothing. The Web Synchronization feature will connect the serial numbers of clickers that have participated in your class with the student registrations online. To make use of this feature, you will first need to hold at least one class session. Don't worry – your student's votes will still be recorded and saved even if you do not synchronize right away.

If you have session data and still cannot synchronize the data, try checking your roster file to make sure that it is formatted properly. If you are still having trouble, please contact our Support Center toll free at 866-209-5698, or you can send an email to support@iclicker.com and they will be happy to assist you.

How will students know when their votes have been received?

When a student has voted successfully (vote has been received and confirmed), the “Vote Status” light on the student’s remote will flash green. A red flashing light indicates that the student’s vote was not received and s/he will need to vote again. If you have stopped polling, the students’ clicker will flash red three times as well (and votes will no longer be accepted). In order to receive student votes, you must enable polling (by pressing “Start”).

Can students change their responses?

Students can change responses as long as the polling remains active. During an active polling period, i>clicker records each student’s last response. Once polling for a particular question has been turned off, any response changes will not be received (and the clicker status light will flash red).

How do I view voting results in class?

The results chart can be displayed either by clicking the “Display” button on the i>clicker floating bar, or pressing the “B” key on the designated instructor’s remote. Results from any session can be reviewed at a later time using i>grader (through the “Set Scores” function and by running the HTML reports).

How is the session data saved? Can it be exported to a course management system such as WebCT or Blackboard?

Each session is saved in a comma-delimited .CSV file, named according to the date and time the session was held. These files are then read by i>grader and presented in an easy-to-view gradebook. i>grader includes options to export the data to a large variety of formats, including WebCT, Blackboard, and ANGEL.

What is the difference between a score of NA and a score of 0 in i>grader?

A zero indicates that the student did respond in class but did not qualify for any points. The student may not have answered enough questions to meet the participation requirement, or may not have answered any questions correctly resulting in a lack of performance points.

NA indicates that the student did not provide any responses for a session. A student who missed class or did not answer any questions would receive an NA. This value is treated as zero points for calculating averages, but is displayed differently to indicate at a glance that the student did not participate.

My class is finished for the semester and I will be teaching a new course. How can I start over?

The easiest way is to download a new copy of the software from <http://www.iclicker.com>, and to archive your old course folder for your records.

Can I add my own applications or modify i>clicker?

Absolutely. i>clicker and i>grader are both open source and are therefore adaptable to your needs.

Is there training available?

Yes, training sessions are available [daily](#). Visit <http://iclicker.webex.com> to register for a training session. There is also extensive documentation available on our website, <http://www.iclicker.com>.

How stable is i>clicker?

We are going to be supporting i>clicker for many years to come. i>clicker was acquired by Holtzbrinck Publishers in 2005. Holtzbrinck views i>clicker as a natural fit with its focus on teaching and learning and is committed to the long-term support of and investment in the solution. Holtzbrinck Publishers has been publishing outstanding educational products for more than five decades and includes such recognized houses as Farrar Straus and Giroux, Henry Holt & Company, W.H. Freeman and Worth Publishers, Palgrave Macmillan, Bedford/St. Martin's, Picador, Roaring Brook Press, St. Martin's Press, Tor Books, Scientific American, Nature, and Bedford Freeman & Worth Publishing Group.. As one of Holtzbrinck’s distinguished educational holdings, i>clicker is distributed by the VHPS warehouse in Gordonsville, Virginia (the same warehouse that distributes all of Holtzbrinck’s U.S. publications).

Holtzbrinck is a privately held, family-owned and very secure company focused on education. We see >clicker as a natural fit with our business mix and will be supporting it (and expanding it) for the next few years. You, your faculty (and your students) will be well supported for as long as you are using i>clicker.

Are your clickers exclusive to one publisher?

No. i>clicker is supported by a large network of publishers. We have adopted a “non-exclusive” publisher approach, so that faculty have the freedom to choose the textbook and clickers of their choice. We are proud to be partners of Pearson Education, Thomson Learning, Bedford, Freeman, and Worth Publishers, John Wiley, Elsevier, Houghton Mifflin, Norton, and Lippincott/Williams and Wilkins Publishers. In doing so, we are providing higher education instructors with the greatest flexibility when choosing a book and a response system. Our basic philosophy is to offer i>clicker remotes at the lowest possible stand-alone price so that students who purchase used books are not penalized.

Is technical support available?

Yes, there is technical support available for instructors as well as students from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 p.m. EST, Monday-Friday. You can either call our Technical Support Center toll free at 866-209-5698, or you can send an email with your particular concern to support@iclicker.com.