

How to Build Your Own Chat Bot in Slack



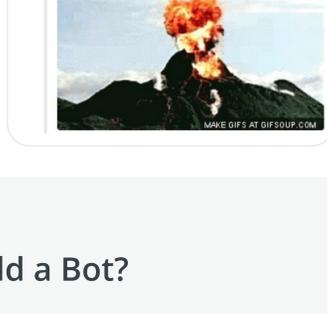
What Is a Bot?



Bots are tiny programs that live in your apps and respond to your commands to look up facts, send notifications, and more automatically for you.

For example, type a command like '/giphy volcano' to instruct the bot to find what you're looking for (a volcano gif from Giphy, in this case).

Bots are the big new thing in chat tools such as Facebook Messenger, Slack, and Skype, as well as in personal voice assistants, such as Amazon Alexa.

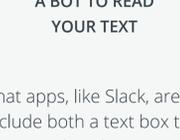


What Do You Need to Build a Bot?

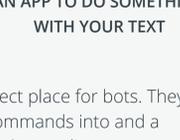
You only need 3 things to build a bot:



A PLACE TO TYPE YOUR TEXT



A BOT TO READ YOUR TEXT



AN APP TO DO SOMETHING WITH YOUR TEXT



Chat apps, like Slack, are the perfect place for bots. They include both a text box to type commands into and a conversation view to see what the bot replies.

Pre-built integrations from Zapier help you connect your apps and pass data between them. Using Zaps, or integrations inside Zapier, you can connect Slack to hundreds of other apps just by clicking through a simple wizard.

What Types of Bots Can I Build?



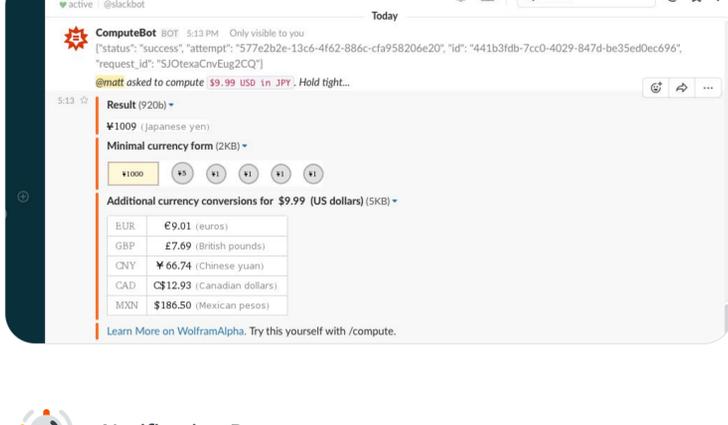
Slackbot Replies

The simplest bots come built into your Slack settings. You add a phrase for the Slackbot to watch for, and then tell it how to respond.

For example, tell Slackbot to watch for messages that say 'office security code', then have it automatically respond with the number whenever that phrase is typed in.

TIP

To make a Slackbot Reply, go to slack.com/customize/slackbot and add the phrase and response you want. These will automatically work in any channel other than your personal Slackbot channel.



Notification Bots

Notification bots watch another app for an update and send it to Slack.

They'll show up every so often when there's something new—a news update, new document, or trending hashtag, perhaps—and post it to your Slack channels.

TIP

There are dozens of notification bots for social networks, news, and more in the Slack App Directory.



Slash Commands

Slash command bots wait for your signal, then perform some sort of task based on context that you provide.

You trigger them by typing a '/' followed by their name (/giphy, say, for the Giphy bot), and then type in a command. The bot will then find what you're looking for and post it back to Slack in a reply.

Bots can do just about anything you want: start a new meeting, compute a value, do research, and more. For that, you'll need to either code your own app or use Zapier integrations to connect Slack to over 600 of your favorite apps.

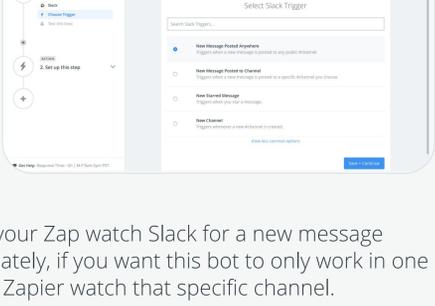


How to Build a Reply Bot in Slack with Zapier

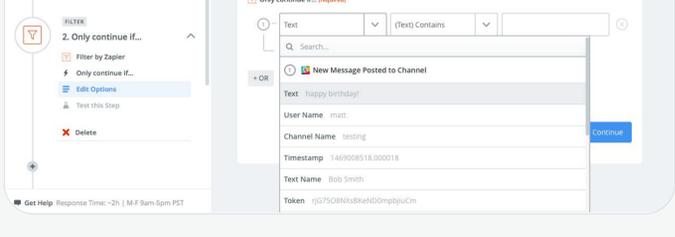
- 1 Create a Zapier account or log into your Zapier account.



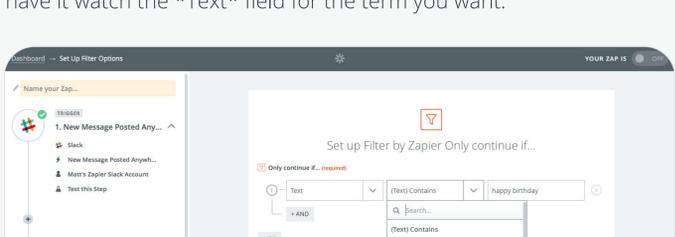
- 2 Click the *Make a Zap* button in the top right corner, and select Slack as your Trigger app.



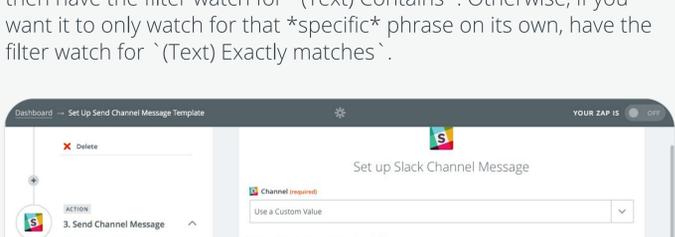
- 3 On the next page, have your Zap watch Slack for a new message posted anywhere. Alternately, if you want this bot to only work in one channel, you could have Zapier watch that specific channel.



- 4 Add a filter to watch for a specific term (otherwise, your bot would run every time anything is posted to Slack). Add another filter to your Zap, this time selecting the *Filter by Zapier* app. In its settings, have it watch the *Text* field for the term you want.



- 5 If you want the bot to run whenever those words are posted to Slack, then have the filter watch for '(Text) Contains'. Otherwise, if you want it to only watch for that *specific* phrase on its own, have the filter watch for '(Text) Exactly matches'.

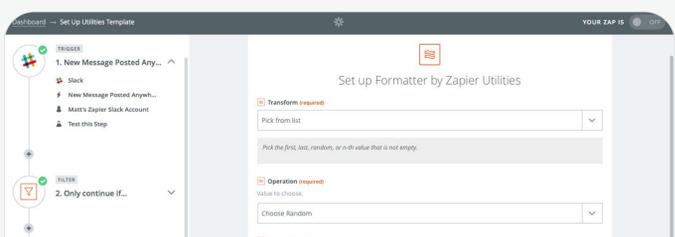


- 6 Add another step to your Zap, select the Slack app, and choose the *Send Channel Message* action. There, in the *Channel* field, select "Choose a custom value" and then select the channel name from your original Slack message so the reply will end up in the same spot.

- 7 Type in the message you want to post in the "Message Text" box.

- 8 Add a name and icon to your bot.

- 9 Save and turn on your Zap.



Turn your Zap on, and the next time someone says "happy birthday" they'll get surprised with one of your GIFs.



Learn how to build notification bots and more advanced slash command bots at:

<https://zapier.com/blog/how-to-build-chat-bot/>

Go build your own bots with your Zapier account and your favorite chat-like tool, including Twitter, HipChat, Telegram, and SMS.

