Introduction

Maple T.A. is a software tool used to create and administer interactive assessments online.

Taking Maple T.A. Assignments

Students take Maple T.A. assignments by logging into Blackboard (my.unl.edu), clicking their course, navigating to the content area that contains the Maple T.A. assignments, and clicking an assignment.

Supported Browsers

The officially supported browsers for using Maple T.A. are:

Windows:
- Internet Explorer 6.x+
- Firefox 2.0+

Mac:
- Safari 1.2.1+
- Firefox 2.0+

WARNING: Google Chrome causes serious problems with Maple T.A. assignments. You can even lose your answers when using Chrome. In other words, DO NOT USE CHROME.
Finding Your Maple T.A. Assignments

Maple T.A. assignments can be found within the content area(s) of your Blackboard course in which you instructor has placed them. Your instructor should provide instructions on where your assignments can be found.

Recognizing a Maple T.A. Assignment

Most Maple T.A. assignments will be labeled as such in Blackboard. However, some instructors may remove the “Maple T.A. Assignment” label from the assignment links.
In that case, you can recognize a Maple T.A. by the following once you begin the assignment:

- The title in the title bar of the assignment window will begin with “Maple T.A.”
- The assignment’s menu will include Back, Next, Question Menu, Grade, Help, and Quit & Save

Anatomy of a Maple T.A. Assignment

A. **Navigation buttons** – The answers you selected for the current page of questions are saved whenever you navigate to a new page. The most work you can lose due to a computer crash is the answer on the current page of questions. With
this in mind, navigating to another page every few minutes and then returning is a good strategy when answering essay questions.

B. **Grade** – You MUST click the Grade button when you are finished with your assignment to receive a grade. If you close an assignment window without clicking the Grade button, click the assignment to resume and then click the Grade button to receive your score.

C. **Quit & Save** – Only use this button if:
   - There is no time limit on the assignment
   - You intend to resume your assignment at a later time

D. **Timer** – Timed assignments display a timer at the right side of the screen. A few important points about timed assignments:
   - The timer starts as soon as you begin the assignment, and continues whether or not you have the assignment open. Therefore...
   - There is no value in clicking Quit & Save while working out the answer to a question.
   - Because the timer is at the right side of the assignment window, it may not be visible if the window is sized too small. If you are taking a timed assignment and you cannot see the timer, either maximize the assignment windows or drag its right border to expand it.

E. **Point Value** – The point value of the question.

F. **Answers** – Different question types have different kinds of answering mechanisms. For multiple choice questions, you will select your answer by clicking a radio button. Other answer types may use checkboxes, dropdown lists, or text fields.

**Pre-Requisites for Assignments**

Some Maple T.A. assignments will have pre-requisites. An instructor can require a minimum grade on another assignment, or may make an assignment available only on certain dates, or may allow only a certain number of attempts.

Instructors have two methods for assigning pre-requisite:

- One method causes unavailable assignments to be hidden from students. If you do not see an assignment that you believe should be available...
If you expected the assignment to become available at 9:00 a.m. and your watch says it is 9:01, try waiting five to ten minutes – the clocks on the various servers can be a few minutes off.

Read the course information provided by your instructor to determine if the assignment has any pre-requisites. If it does, make sure you have met those pre-requisites.

Also read the course information to determine where the assignment should be located.

If all else fails, contact your instructor.

- The other method will not hide unavailable assignments, but clicking on an assignment for which you have not met the pre-requisites will open a new window containing a message explaining why you are not allowed (yet) to take the assignment.

**Types of Maple T.A. Assignments**

The most common assignments are:

**Practice**
- Can be taken on any computer
- Are not graded
- Your instructor will not even know if you have taken a Practice assignment
- Practice assignments are purely for practice

**Mastery**
- Can be taken anywhere
- Are graded
- Assignment continues until student has demonstrated mastery of the material

**Homework/Quiz**
- Can be taken on any computer
- Are graded
Proctored
- Can only be taken at a testing center or in the presence of a proctor
- Are graded

Number of In-Progress Assignments

Students may have only one active Maple T.A. assignment per Blackboard class. (An active assignment is an assignment that has been started, but which the student has not completed by clicking the Grade button.)

If a student tries to start a second assignment while another assignment is still active, they will be told that they need to complete the active assignment before starting a new assignment.

Viewing Your Results

Instructors have these options when it comes to allowing students to see their graded assignments:

- Allow students to see their results immediately
- Allow students to see their results after a delay – typically, after the assignment’s deadline has passed
- Never allow students to see their results

If students are allowed to see their results immediately, upon clicking the Grade button a View Details button will be displayed, and clicking it will display the student’s graded assignment.

To view graded assignment at a later time, students can log into their Blackboard class, click Course Tools, and click Maple T.A. Course Tools.
General Troubleshooting

My proctor's login doesn't work:
Call 472-2175 (toll free: 866-700-4747) or e-mail extservice@unl.edu.

The assignment window doesn't open when I click the assignment:
If the assignment window doesn't open when you click the assignment, you need to add my.unl.edu to all installed pop-up blockers.

I get a login screen for Maple T.A. when I click the assignment link:
There is probably a # character in the name of the assignment. Contact your instructor about this – the name of the assignment needs to be changed, and the existing link to the assignment needs to be deleted and replaced with a link to the renamed assignment.

The assignment opens, but the buttons don't work, and/or the timer doesn't work:
You need to update Java. Close the assignment window, go to www.java.com, download and install the latest version of Java. When you re-enter the assignment, all should be well.

If you are taking a distance education class and my exam froze or my computer crashed:
Close the assignment window if the problem is with your assignment, or reboot your computer if the problem is with the computer. Get back into the assignment as quickly as possible if it is timed – the timer runs whether you are in the assignment or not. Your proctor can proctor you back into your assignment as long as you are not out of time. If you cannot get back into your assignment, please try the suggestions given below.

I get an error message when taking my assignment:

Try these steps in order:
- Make sure you are using a support browser – do not use Google Chrome
- Close the assignment window and try again
- Close the assignment window, clear your browser's cache (in IE, click Tools, Internet Options, click the General tab, and under Browsing History click Delete, select Temporary Internet Files and click Delete; in Firefox, click Tools, Clear Recent History, select Browsing & Download History and click Clear Now0
- Try a different browser and/or a different computer
- Notify your instructor
- Call 472-9305 – be ready to give the name of your class (as exact as possible, including section number), the name of the assignment you are trying to take, your name (and contact info if you leave a message)

I finished my assignment but my score doesn’t show up in my Blackboard gradebook:
Did you take your assignment in EDU or Maple T.A.? EDU does not automatically send scores to Blackboard and so you will need to wait for your instructor to manually post the scores. If your assignment was in Maple T.A., did you remember to click Grade when you were done? If you clicked
Quit and Save, you merely saved your progress and Maple T.A. thinks you intend to continue later. Get back into your assignment if you can and click Grade. Also, keep in mind that assignments containing questions that require manual grading will need to be graded before your score will show up in Blackboard – until then your score will be displayed as zero.