

# Snapchat adds chat as messaging space heats up

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Snapchat is adding a chat feature to its ephemeral messaging service.

Despite its name, the Snapchat app has never offered real-time conversation —until now. Previously, users were only able to send each other photos and videos that self-destruct a few seconds after they are viewed.

The Los Angeles startup said Thursday that Snapchat users will be able to chat by swiping right on a friend's name. When users leave the chat screen, messages will be automatically deleted. In keeping with Snapchat's tradition, [users](#) can take screenshots of the chat if they want to preserve it.

Users will also be able to video chat, as they would with Skype or FaceTime.

Snapchat's move comes as mobile messaging apps are soaring in popularity. Facebook is buying WhatsApp for \$19 billion.

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