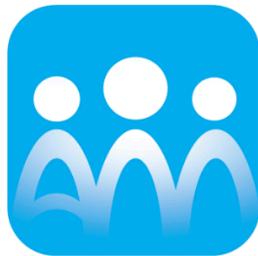


Attendance Manager

App for recording student training records

One of the most important responsibilities for instructors is to safely keep current training records of all students who train with us.



Attendance Manager

The earlier version of the app was ideal for smaller dojos but now with cloud backup of data larger dojos can have multi-user instructor access to input and share attendance information. *This is for Apple products only.*

June, 2017 update: Since writing the original article version 2 has been released and the data is now stored in the clouds, not via DropBox. There is an annual subscription fee (or monthly option) instead of a small, once off payment. You need to decide if the subscription fee is equal to the value of using this app.

While we have printed record books available to all dojos there is a shift toward electronic record keeping so in 2015 I decided to see what was available to electronically keep records of student training history. I ended up selecting Attendance Manager as the best app I trialed that fitted our specific purpose.

I've been using Attendance Manager (AM) for about two years now and it has proved to be invaluable as a method of keeping track of training records and student class fees. It comes free, but you have to pay USD\$35 annually if you want to create and send reports plus automatically backup your records in the clouds, which is exactly what you do want, it is worth every cent in my estimation.

You may trail the app free for 7 days and there is the option of a monthly USD\$3.99 subscription fee, in case you want to trial it for longer before jumping into an annual subscription.

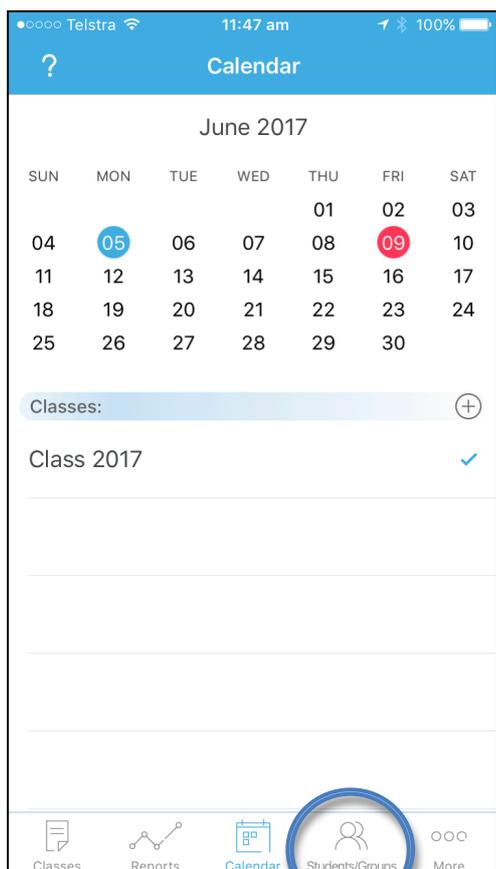
The original version was very inexpensive but did not backup automatically. The changes brought about with version 2 have really enhanced the app with a greater safety margin and there are many small amendments that make the process of record keeping even easier to manage.

There is no manual as it is pretty intuitive, this is as close as you'll get to a 'manual', however there are simple guide pages built in at relevant spots.

How to use it

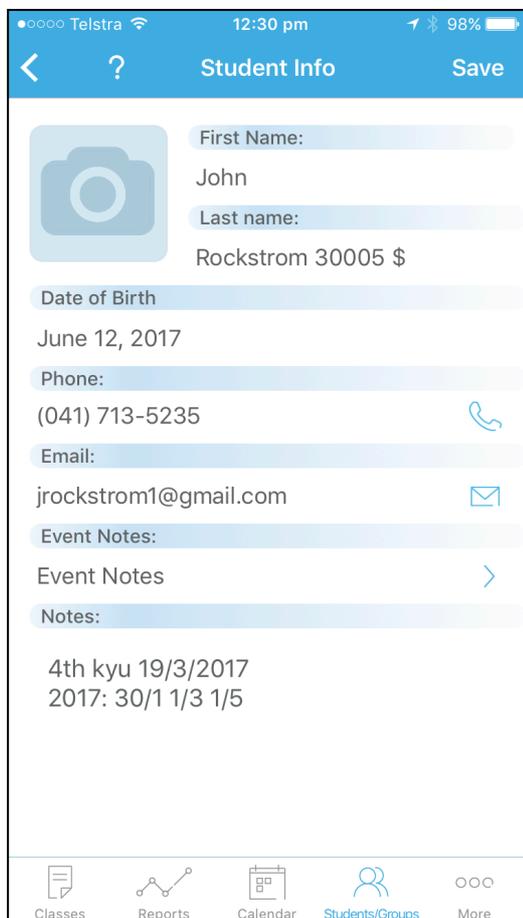
Students

A tools list at the base of the app gives you the options to do a number of activities.



The best thing to do first is to create a list of students for your dojo via the 'Students' button at the lower edge of the app. Groups can also be created with this button.

In this section you can create a small profile for each student, below is a profile I created a sample profile, so you can see the layout. I found it worthwhile to put the students membership number directly after their surname so you can always see it whenever you see the student's name in any report.



If the person has just joined I use a special character in that spot so I know their application is underway, or even type in IM if they have applied for Interim Membership.

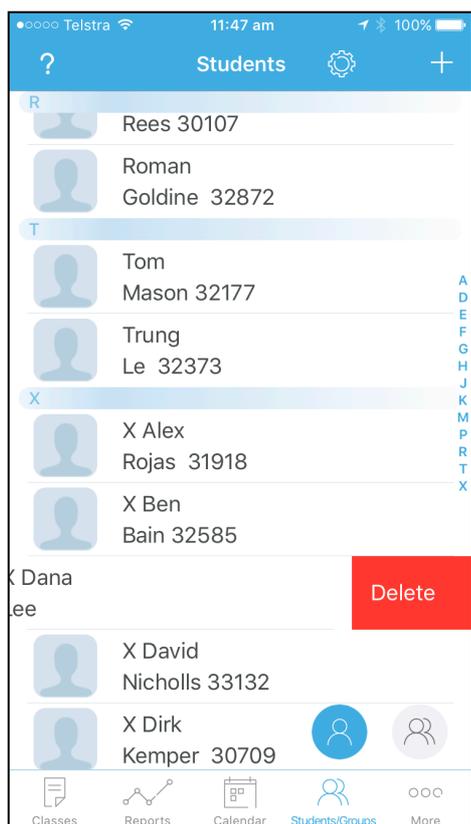
The DOB field is a great way to record the day they started so I can quickly reference training days from that point if necessary, and keep track of when they need to upgrade their membership.

At Mt. Eliza we use a monthly payment system for dojo fees, if a student is a little slow in paying for the next month I add a '\$' beside their name which reminds me to follow up when I next tick them for attendance.

In the Notes area I log each time they pay training fees with the due date of when they are paid up to. We offer a discount rate for up to 5 months in advance (many regulars pay the five months). The student is also issued with a training fee card to record that payment date, so the both should tally. It is a useful backup if they lose their card (which happens quite regularly).

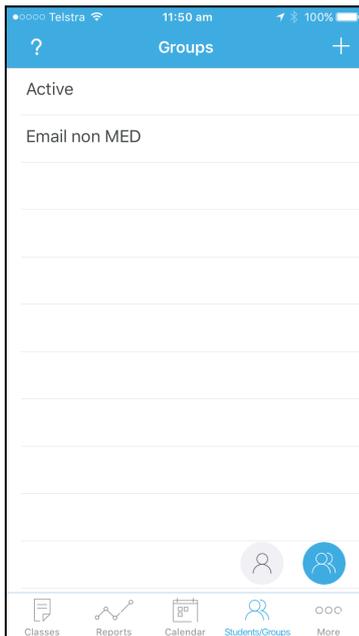
You'll notice an email address is also loaded into AM, which means you can email from the app with ease any Group or individual with dojo information. This app has improved my communication with students 10 fold because it is so easy to manage!

The student list can be set to sort by First or Last name.



If you decide to delete a student's profile from the Student List their class details remain in the system, you do not lose their class history.

Groups



Once you have a student list you can group them in a variety of ways.

As Mt. Eliza is a small dojo, I have an 'Active' group in which I list all those who attend regularly. It's easy to add or delete members from a Group. A larger dojo might have 'Monday', 'Thursday' and 'Juniors' groups. When it comes time to record training you can load whole groups into the daily report, which saves a lot of time. For students who attend spasmodically, they are easily loaded as required on the night, from the full student list.

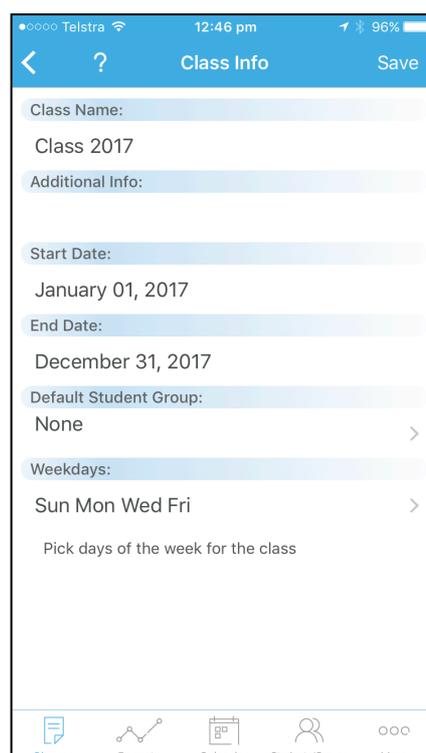
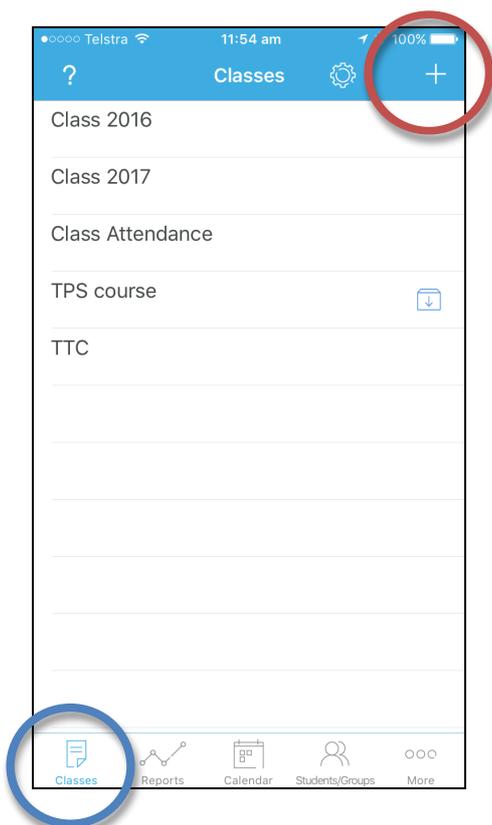
For students you haven't seen for while but think they might return I put an 'x' in front of their first name and they automatically fall to the bottom of the student list, out of the way.

Mt Eliza dojo also has a number of students who regularly visit and I can communicate with them as a separate group.

Class Info

The last section you need to establish is which days you will be training and this is done under Class Info, you get to it via the Class button at the bottom then click on an established Class or create a new one by using the plus sign at the top right.

You establish a list of which training occurs on what days. Now, when you look in Calendar view if a class is listed on that day it will be available to select. In 2016 I had a 'Class 2016', I created a new one for 2017, 'Class 2017'. Whenever I run a report that refers back to 2016 any class details from that year will be reported (see also Class/Student reports).



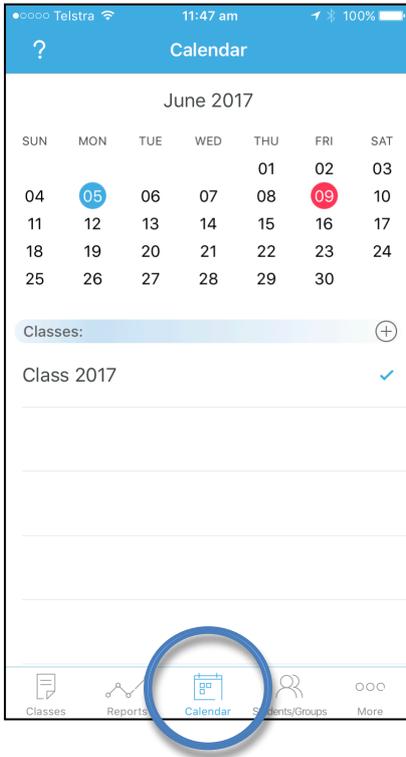
With v2 you may now define the calendar period of the class.

Additionally, you can pre-assign a Group to automatically appear whenever the class is selected in the Calendar screen.

Calendar Screen

The Calendar screen shows the current month and highlights the current day. You can see if any classes have been established in Class Info for that day.

In the image below the blue spot indicates the day I've selected, the red spot indicates the current day. If I were to touch on a Saturday or Sunday, the TTC class option would appear as those days had been set for the TTC class in Class Info.



To record a class attendance on 9 June I would select the 'Class 2017'. When opened it offers a choice of adding any of the Groups already established, or I can also choose to load students one at a time. If I selected my Active group all the students in that group would now be preloaded, ready to be ticked or deleted. At this point you can also add as many extra students as you like that have been entered into the system or even add new students to the system.

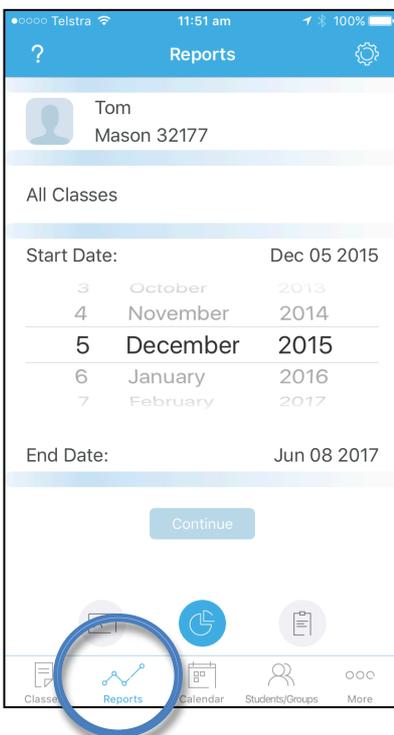
It's now a matter of going through the list of students, ticking attendees and deleting those not at that specific class.

The green tick to the right of Class 2017 indicates attendance has been taken for that selected date.

AM gives you a choice of three options for attendance - a tick, a cross or an exclamation mark. The AM system has its own interpretation for these categories but I prefer to apply a different yardstick. The tick is self-explanatory, I use the cross to record if someone other than myself has taken the class, this is a good way to keep track of senior grades who are looking to have instructing experience. At the moment I use the '!' to track those students who are injured but still came and watched the class.

Class/Student Reports

When you want to run a report the search function gives you the opportunity to set the start date and the end date is automatically set to today's date, but can be modified to suit another search date.



Student Report

For students you do a Student Report, in the report section load the student's name and then search the required date range. For example, if I've kept a note of their last grading in their profile, I can load that as the first date and then run the report with today's date and have an instant calculation of all the training they've done in that time period. The report will examine all classes in the Class list or you can select individual classes.

Class Report

Class Report works in a similar manner but reports everyone who attended that class and tends to be a much larger report. It searches via a date range, just as the Student Report does and you choose to search All Classes or an individual class.

The example below is a total by student of all the 2017 classes attended.

Class 2017		✓	✗	!	Tue 01/03/17	01/
Andrew Ayton 33027	6	0	0			
Anthony Briggs 32901 \$	32	0	0	✓		
David Rees 32900 \$	20	0	0			
Elliot Beniada 30232	13	1	0			
Fabiano Morais 32939	6	1	0			
Gary - IM 19/6 Morton	12	0	0			
Graham Coombe 32657	35	5	1	✓		
Grant Read 31748	31	6	0			
Harry Read 40514	4	0	0			
James Read 40513	6	0	0			
Jonathon Marinatos 32802	39	0	0			
Julia Foenander 32988	15	0	0			
Kevin Moroney 80858 \$	22	0	0			
Mike Smith 32575	43	0	0	✓		

Backing Up

Version 2 now backs up automatically to the clouds, if you subscribe to this service. I have AM on both my iPhone, where I log the attendance in the dojo and on my iPad, which I use to review the data when at home.

NOTE: You do not need to be online to log information into AM and it will immediately backup the new data when it recognises a wifi or mobile connection.

As soon as I open the iPad the new data is available and conversely anything amended on the iPad is immediately available of the iPhone. This is a wonderful new addition to the app.!

I would still advise to routinely create a Class Report for the whole year (to date) and export that as a .csv file, which you can store safely. Then you will have a backup that doesn't rely on the app, if it should fail for some reason. You can open the .csv file in Excel, or similar, so the records are always safe and accessible in one form or another.

To export reports as a csv file use the Send button top right of the report screen.

Using the App to Add Training Records to the National Database



The app makes it very easy to total training records by a time period. When uploading training records to the national database I enter in the first and last date of a month and have an instant monthly tally for all students during that period. It takes me no time to update the national database records. I do this once a quarter, or sooner if a grading is coming up, so the state representatives have a chance of verifying training records.

You'll notice the 'X' column in the Class Report above has results four students, these designate the nights they taught the class. The national database doesn't distinguish these variances so I total the green and red columns for that student.

(If you don't already have access to load training records on the national database, let me know and I can send them to you. Loading the records can be done using just a web browser. One person per dojo, nominated as the Dojo Manager, may be given access.)

Please feel free to contact me if you would like any further information: jrockstrom1@gmail.com