Touchstone is the MIT implementation of the Shibboleth SSO, an open source web single sign on application developed by Internet2. It allows login using various methods, including username and password and MIT certificate, and also allows users in the InCommon Federation or Touchstone Collaboration account to authenticate to a variety of web services securely.

Prior to the implementation of Touchstone, most websites used pure certificates to login. While certificates are an extremely secure method of authentication, certificates are frustrating in various ways, and part of Touchstone’s purpose is to help work around these frustrations.

When a website works with Touchstone, you can log in with any of:

- your MIT certificate
- or your MIT kerberos username/password
- or with a Collaboration Account, if the website supports it.