Zoom Basics

- **What is Zoom?**

  Zoom meetings are audio and video meetings over the Internet. You can join from a computer or mobile device such as a tablet, pad or smart phone.

- **Do I need a computer? Do I need Internet access?**

  No, you can just call in with a telephone and participate without video.

- **Does it cost anything?**

  You can join a Zoom meeting hosted by someone else without creating an account, depending on how the meeting is set up. If the host requires it (a good idea for security reasons), there is a free plan. It lets you host up to 100 participants and take part in unlimited one-on-one meetings. However, each group meeting can only by 40 long at most. Paid plans are better for businesses and start at $15/month.

- **Is Zoom the best?**

  There are other video conferencing software packages available, such as Skype, WebX, Google Hangouts and Microsoft meetings, some of which are free or cheaper. There are pros and cons. Zoom has become the most widely used during the Coronavirus quarantine period.

- **Mobile device or computer?**
  - Not all Zoom meetings are equal - the desktop version has several features unavailable on mobile.

  - Beyond the most obvious downside to video conferencing on mobile -- the comparatively small screen -- Zoom for iOS and Android contains watered down and less intuitive versions of the chat and screen sharing facilities.

  - The mobile version also only allows four participants to appear on screen at once (as opposed to a maximum of 49 on desktop in gallery mode) and presenting complex charts and documents is made challenging by the small screen.

  - It's also worth noting that iOS and Android versions of Zoom differ slightly. Zoom for Android, for instance, does not support everyone's favorite virtual backgrounds feature.

- **What if I don't want to download software?**

  You can still join from the link, although with limited capability.

- **Do I have to use the video feature?**

  You have the option to use your computer or device camera to broadcast yourself or can just watch others and participate using your device's microphone.

- **How do I join a Zoom meeting on a computer or device?**

  The host provides a link to click on from your computer or device. The first time you do this, you will be prompted to download and install the Zoom software/app. It will guide you through creating a free account. Subsequently, the Zoom software/app will open automatically.

- **How do I join a Zoom meeting by phone?**

  The host will provide a phone number to call.

- **Do I need a password?**

  If the meeting requires a password, the host will have sent it to you, and you will be prompted to enter it.

- **How does my name get displayed?**

  The name you used when you set up your account will automatically be displayed.

- **How do I change the name displayed for a meeting?**

  Display the participant list by clicking "Manage Participants" in the menu on the bottom. Click on the "More" button next to your name and click on "Rename."

- **If I don't use video, what will be displayed?**

  If you choose not to use a computer or device camera, your name will be displayed instead. You can substitute an image such as a selfie by adding it to your profile. Click on your name in the participant list, and then on the "More" button next to your name. You will then have an option to upload a picture from your computer or device.

- **How do I mute / unmute myself?**

  The mute / unmute button can be found in the upper right corner of your "square" or in the menu. It can also be operated by a keyboard command, depending on your

hardware. The host also has an option to mute and unmute individual or all participants. It's a good idea to get familiar with this feature and mute yourself when you have background noise.

- **How do I ask a question?**

  Depending on the way the host has set up the meeting, you can just talk. If you are muted, unless the host has prevented you from unmuting yourself, click the unmute button.

- **How do I use the chat feature?**

  You can use the chat feature and type a message to individuals or the whole group. To display the chat feature, click "Chat" in the menu, or click on the three dots (…) in an individual's "square" to chat privately.

- **How do I see who else is participating?**

  The screen has options for how to view individuals using cameras. You can play around with the options by clicking "View Full Screen" or "Exit Full Screen" and clicking on Gallery view, and more. Options vary based on your device.

Zoom Tips

- **Use Mute**

  Put yourself on mute whenever you aren't talking. While the host can mute individuals, you may also want to get good at using the mute button for yourself, to avoid distracting the other participants with background noise. This is especially important if you have 2 devices signed in at once.

- **Connection Issues**
  - Avoid other activities that steal bandwidth. Close out of any programs that are running in the background.
  - Avoid activities on other devices that share your Internet connection, such as streaming video on a TV or downloading/uploading on another device.
  - Move your device closer to your router. Make sure your cables are secure.
  - In general, wired connections are better than Wi-Fi connections, and Wi-Fi is better than cellular.
  - Have your Internet Service Provider check your connection. Consider upgrading your connection speed.

- **Audio and Video**
  - Test your audio and video as you join.
  - Use a USB-connected headset.
  - Position your webcam properly.
  - If you have an older webcam or microphone, consider upgrading your hardware.
  - To improve video speed, disable HD video in your Zoom settings.
  - Consider participating using audio and not video.
  - Join meetings in quiet areas.
  - For an extra-large experience, hook up to your TV!

- **Tweak Your Defaults**
  - <u>Mute your audio and turn off your camera.</u> Diving for the mute audio and camera buttons as soon as you enter a meeting can get old. Turning those off by default by going to Settings >

Audio > Mute microphone when joining a meeting, and then Settings > Video > Turn off my video when joining a meeting.

- o <u>Display Names</u>. This is less important when you're chatting with people you know well, but this setting will ensure you never accidentally forget the name of the person you're talking to. Go to Settings > Video and check "Always display participant's name on their videos."

Virtual Backgrounds

- **What is a Virtual Background?**

  Virtual backgrounds can be used to hide the chaos and clutter of your home. Virtually transport yourself to the beach, outer space or anywhere else you can imagine. There are specific hardware requirements, , but most modern PC setups should be able to manage -- but the virtual background works best with a green screen and uniform lighting.

- **How do I add a Virtual Background?**

  You can set up your Virtual Background from the Settings Menu. You will be prompted to download a virtual background package – just once – and you can try out different screens or add your own image/video instead. A live preview will show how you will look in front of the background.

  To choose your own custom background, click on the + icon next to Choose Virtual Background. The option will let you upload your own custom video or photo for use as a virtual background. If you have a video of an aquarium, you can conduct your meeting in front of what would appear as a live fish tank, as an example. Zoom recommends that these images have an aspect ratio of 16:9 and a resolution of 1920 x 1080 px.

  When you're in a meeting, change the background by clicking in the menu on the arrow next to the video camera and go to "Choose Virtual Background."

  The background will appear smoother if you're sitting in front of a solid color background (green screen). It doesn't have to be green – click the color box and then click your real background to match.

  Using a live background will reveal some artifacts around the edges, which can look choppy if you're moving around a lot during video calls. Additionally, virtual backgrounds shouldn't be used if you're planning on demonstrating or pointing to things with your hands — hands get canceled out with the use of virtual backgrounds.

  Once you've enabled and selected a virtual background, while in a meeting, you can toggle them off/on next to the "Stop Video" tab.

More Features

- **React with Emojis**

  Send a thumbs up or a clapping emoji to communicate without interrupting the meeting. Click the Reactions tab at the bottom of the meeting screen and choose the one you want. Emoji will disappear after 5 seconds.

- **Learn Keyboard Shortcuts**

  For those who don't like clicking around their screen, Zoom has a ton of helpful keyboard shortcuts to help you navigate the app on your desktop without using your mouse. A full list of the keyboard shortcuts can be found by navigating to the Zoom settings menu and choosing Keyboard Shortcuts on the left pane. Some useful ones:

  - Mute or unmute audio: Alt + A

  - Start or stop video: Alt + V

  - Pause or resume screen sharing: Alt + S

  - Pause or resume screen recording: Alt + P

  - Switch camera: Alt + N

  - Raise or lower hand: Alt + Y

- **Switch between Gallery and Speaker Views**

  Gallery view lets you see everyone in the meeting at once, instead of just the person speaking. To turn that on, click the tab that says "Gallery view" in the top right corner. If the meeting has 25 or fewer attendees, you'll see all their screens displayed on one page. If there are more, you'll have the option to move between multiple pages. Change it back by clicking "Speaker view: in that same top right corner. If your CPU supports it, you can change your video settings to display up to 49 participants per screen in gallery view.

- **Hide Nonvideo Participants**

  On a larger call, your screen can get cluttered with participants, which can be distracting, especially if some don't have their cameras on. Hide the participants who aren't using video by going to Settings > Video > Meetings, and check Hide nonvideo participants.

- **Share Your Screen**

  Share your screen with other participants by clicking the Share screen icon on the toolbar at the bottom of the meeting screen. You'll have the option to share your entire desktop, or just one of the windows you have open. Press Pause Share to temporarily stop, and when done, click the red Stop Share button at the top of the screen. *Note: Check the documentation for more features related to Screen Sharing.*

- **Use the Whiteboard**

  This is a useful option if you are canvassing ideas or soliciting feedback and it comes with different annotation options, including text boxes, arrows, and more. The "spotlight" is a form of highlighter which can be used to bring user attention to an area or point. *Check the documentation for more features related to Using a Whiteboard.*

- **Turn on the beauty filter**

  This filter aims to smooth over your appearance, making you look dewy and well-rested. If you've ever used beauty mode on your phone's selfie camera, you know what you're getting. To turn it on, click the up arrow next to Start Video. Click Video Settings, and under My Video, check the box for Touch Up My Appearance.

- **Add a Profile Picture:**

  If you'd prefer not to be seen at all (and you're not planning to speak in the meeting you're attending) you can use a screenshot of yourself in a Zoom meeting as your profile picture.