

INTRODUCTION TO ZOOM

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What is Zoom?

Zoom is a web-based video conferencing tool with a mobile app that allows users to meet online, with or without video. Zoom offers quality video and audio on cell-phones, electronic notebooks and computers. Think Skype on steroids!

Is Zoom secure?

There were big problems with security with Zoom meetings when it first started up, but this has changed. The company has implemented a host of security and privacy measures that were fully implemented at the beginning of May. These include encryption for all users, obligatory passwords, a waiting room, limited screen sharing, other host selectable features that limit certain risky behaviors during a meeting. There are also additional behind the scenes security measures and active security monitoring. The current security risk to your device and privacy is thus extremely low.

What device is best to use?

In general, a computer with a direct internet connection will give the best audio and video. If you use an electronic notebook or cell phone, use a Wifi connection, not the cellular connection. The quality will depend on the strength of the Wifi signal (the stronger the signal the better) and the data streaming capacity of your device. Some older devices can't stream fast enough, resulting in breakup of the audio and video signals. This can also happen when there is a temporary "bandwidth" problem due to heavy internet usage on your provider network.

How do you join a Zoom Meeting?

The meeting host will set up the video meeting for a particular time and date. Zoom will provide a URL (internet address) for joining the meeting and a password, which the host will then email to you before the meeting. You need to have the Zoom application on the device that you are using to join the meeting. This is not a big deal. You can download the app for your device before the meeting by going to <https://zoom.us/download>. Alternatively, when you click on the meeting link and enter the password, Zoom will ask if you want to download the app for your device. Once you have the app installed, you will be asked if you want to open "zoom.us.app". When you click "Allow", the Zoom app window will open and ask if you want to use your device audio. Unless instructed otherwise by the host, you will want to do this or you won't be able to hear anything. Depending on how the host set up the meeting, your video may be turned on automatically when you join or you may have to turn your video on in the Zoom app. (You can join a test meeting to see what it's like by going to <https://zoom.us/test>.)

What does the Zoom video look like?

There are two video layouts: "Active Speaker" and "Gallery". "Active Speaker" will display a large video window for whoever is speaking and display small video windows for others at the top or side of the screen. The large window will shift to whoever is speaking if multiple people have their microphone on and speak. This is the default setting and is the best layout for viewing a presentation. If you click on "Gallery View" in the upper right hand corner of the

Zoom window, the screen will show small video windows of all the participants. This is a good setting for interactive meetings between participants. On a computer, there is also an option to view the video layout in “Full Screen” mode. Clicking on the icon with the 4 arrows in the upper right hand corner of the Zoom window will expand the window to fill your screen. You can exit the full screen mode by pressing the icon again or using the ESC key on your keyboard.

What do you need to do when you are connected to a meeting?

The functions accessible from the Zoom window are the same for all participants, but may look different depending on whether you are on a computer, e-notebook, or cell-phone.

If you are on a computer, moving your mouse over the bottom of the Zoom window will show a menu bar. The main functions you need to know about are on the left end: The microphone and video icons. Clicking on the microphone icon will mute and unmute your microphone. It is good policy to mute your microphone if you are not speaking and during presentations, so that the background noises around you do not get picked up and transmitted to everyone. If you click on the arrow next to the microphone, there are other options available (change microphone, test microphone, etc.). The Video Icon, is for turning your video camera off and on. When you turn it off, others will see a black box with your name. Clicking the arrow gives you additional video options. When viewing a presentation, you will usually want to turn your video camera off (so people don't see you sip your cocktail, blow your nose, nod off, etc.).

Note: The meeting host has the ability to mute all microphones if some participants don't mute themselves during a presentation. No one can unmute themselves when this happens, so it pays to be attentive to requests to mute your microphone.

In the middle of the menu bar there are several other selectable icons: a “List of Participants”, “Chat”, “Share Screen”, and “Record”. The meeting host controls whether participants can use these functions and the default for each is off. For FSQ meetings, only the host and presenters will be able to share their screens, and recording of meetings will not be allowed (because of a clause in presenter's contracts). FSQ meetings will, however, have the chat function enabled for participants. Clicking on the chat icon opens a small chat window where you can type and send a message to all of the participants or a select participant. The message text shows up in the chat window. This is a good way to let people know if you have a question or are having a problem. Word of caution: Chat messages are saved after the meeting, so if you are concerned about privacy, you should be careful about using Chat. At the top of the chat window there are 4 buttons. Only two are of interest to participants: “Mute Me” and “Raise Hand”. If you click on “Raise Hand”, a small hand appears next to your name on the participant list, indicating that you want the attention of the host.

How do you leave a meeting?

If you need to leave the meeting before its end, click on the red “leave” button on the right of the lower bar. Otherwise, when the meeting is over, the host will close the meeting.

If you still have questions, signup to attend one of the Zoom practice sessions that will be scheduled prior to the August guild meeting.