

Zoom: some hints

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Enable the Closed Captions Feature

[Enable the Closed Captions feature \(link is external\)](#) on your account for any meetings that will require closed captions. Closed captioning services will be identified based on accommodation requests. In addition, please be familiar with how to [assign a participant to type closed captions \(link is external\)](#) should a request arise.

“Spotlight” ASL Interpreters

If using an ASL interpreter and recording a session, please make sure the meeting host “Spotlights” the ASL provider’s video so that the ASL is captured in the recording.

Slow down your pace

The speed of online conversations can be challenging to follow, especially when they involve speaking and text simultaneously. Consider asking participants if they have preferences for one form of involvement in the Zoom meeting over another before beginning your session.

Enable “Always Show Meeting Controls”

Individual meeting participants can enable this feature on their Zoom client. By selecting the “Always Show Meeting Controls” checkbox, the controls at the bottom of the zoom screen will remain up. This improves the user experience as you don’t have to worry about the bar appearing and disappearing upon hover (especially if you are new to Zoom and don’t know how to make the bar at the bottom show up after it has disappeared).

From within the Zoom Client:

1. Select the “Home” tab.
2. Select the Settings “Gear” icon. A settings pop-up window will open.
3. Select the “View Advanced Features” (Windows) or “View More Settings” link (Mac) under General settings. The Zoom website will open. Login if you are prompted with the login screen. The Meeting Settings page will open.
4. Navigate to the In Meeting (Basics) section of the Meeting Settings page.
5. Enable the “Always show meeting control toolbar” setting.

Enable the “Mute Participants Upon Entry” Feature

In your meeting settings, select the “Mute participants upon entry” checkbox (located under Meeting Options when scheduling a session). Participants will have to unmute their mics to participate. This feature will ensure less disruptions at the start of a meeting or class.

Communicate Keyboard Shortcuts

Send out the [Zoom Keyboard Shortcuts \(link is external\)](#) ahead of time. These instructions are valuable for anyone using keyboard only navigation or assistive technology. In addition, it could be helpful to anyone who may have had their mouse stop working unexpectedly.

Remember to describe images and other visual content that’s displayed

Describing visual content that is displayed will help anyone with a vision or cognitive disability, as well as someone that may have needed to call in due to a local internet outage.

Provide instructions on how participants can ask questions

There are a couple ways people can ask questions. First, participants can [use non-verbal feedback \(link is external\)](#), such as raising their hand and unmuting when called upon. In addition, they can post a question in the chat feature. The recommendation is to use both features, but to always repeat questions that are provided through chat. By repeating the questions, you will help anyone that can’t access the chat during the session (people using assistive technology will have too much screen reader interference if they enable chat) and you will improve the captioning quality of any recorded sessions.

Send any resource links you post in Chat via email as well

It’s okay to use the Chat feature. However, keep in mind that anyone using assistive technology may not be able to copy or activate the links. It’s recommended that you send any resource links you’ll be sharing either prior to or after the session. You can also speak out the URL when posting it in Chat. If your resource link is long, consider using a URL shortener, such as bit.ly or Tiny URL, to help with communicating the link verbally and so that the link is cleaner for anyone copying it from the chat box. You can set up your Zoom account to [auto-save Chat \(link is external\)](#) in your account settings.

Limit use of the Zoom polling feature

Currently, the Zoom polling tool has significant barriers for both presenters and participants with some disabilities.

Describe what you are annotating if using the Whiteboard feature

Similar to using a white board in a meeting room, you should always describe what you are writing on the board for anyone with a disability or anyone that is using their phone due to internet connection issues in your virtual room.

Recording Your Zoom Session

There are a few reasons to consider [recording your zoom sessions locally \(link is external\)](#) to your computer for distribution after a meeting or class:

1. Occasionally, due to local outages, employees may not be able to access a live Zoom session.
2. Currently, there are several [countries or regions where international participants are unable to access live Zoom sessions \(link is external\)](#) for regulatory reasons.
3. In addition, other unexpected distractions may come up that cause your meeting participant to miss portions of your meeting.

Note: If you record your sessions to the Zoom cloud, you may experience a significant delay in accessing them at this time (as of March 20, 2020). Currently, the best approach is to record them to your local device.