Participating in a Zoom meeting in the Windows or Mac app

Instead of just attending a Zoom meeting, participate in it so your thoughts are shared with others and the discussion is richer. This guide shows you how to participate the Zoom meeting using the Zoom app in Windows or on a Mac.

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This guide is published by virtual presentation expert Dave Paradi of ThinkOutsideTheSlide.com. His articles and videos on virtual presenting have been viewed over 3.5 million times and liked over 14,000 times on YouTube.

This guide is provided so that you can get the most from the virtual meetings you attend.

If you are a presenter in virtual meetings, you can get notified of new articles and videos at https://www.ThinkOutsideTheSlide.com/vpnotify.

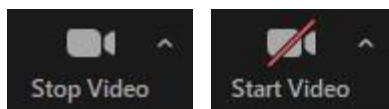## Audio and Video

Selecting the camera to use

The up arrowhead beside the camera icon in the Zoom window allows you to select the camera you want to use in Zoom.
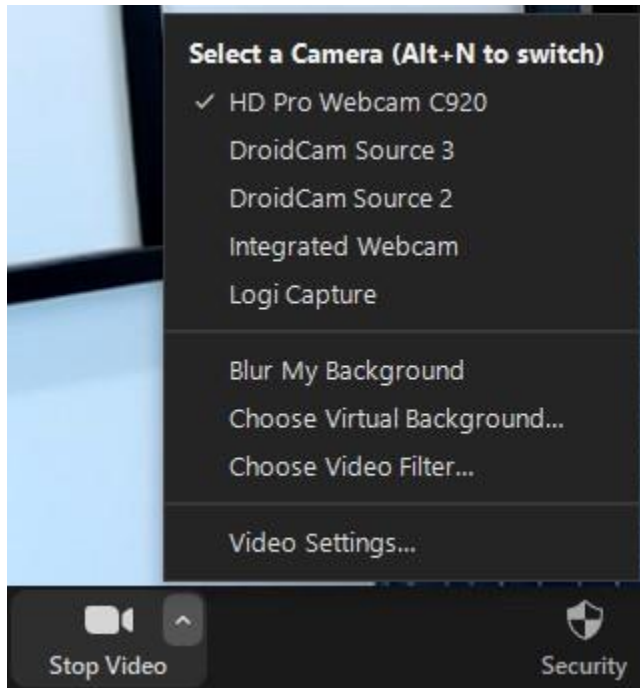
From this menu you can also blur your background to hide the room behind you.
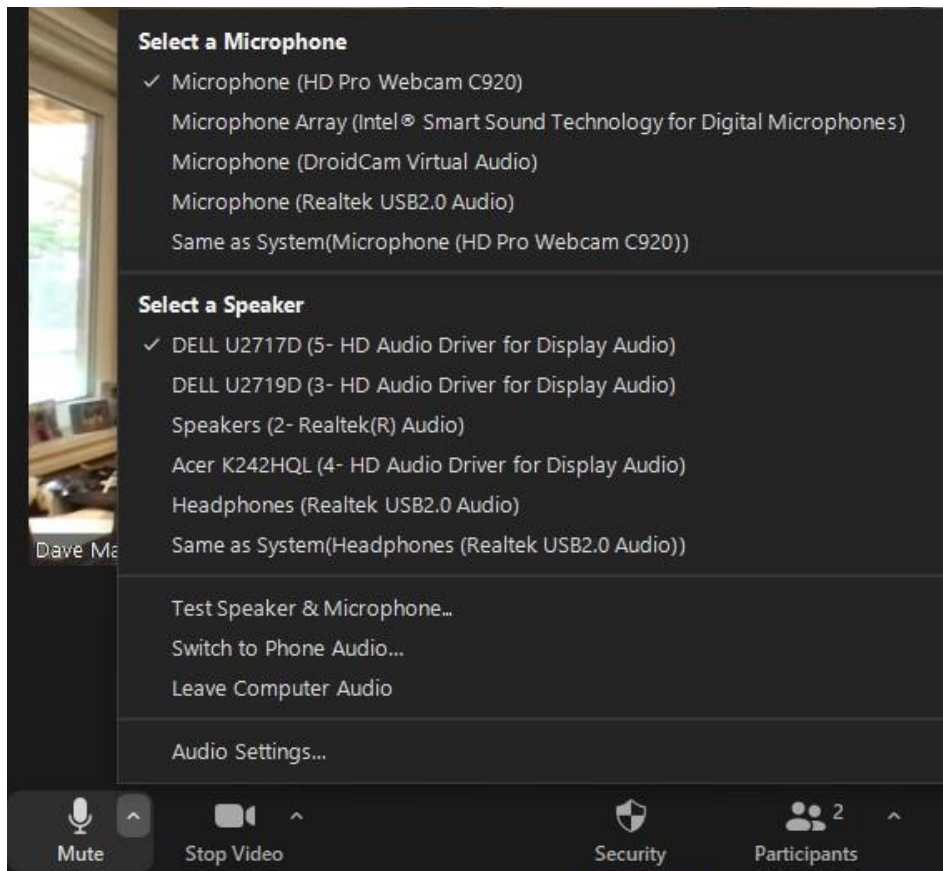
Turning the camera on/off

The camera icon in the Zoom window allows you to turn the camera on or off. The icon shows you the current state of the camera and what clicking the icon will do.

You can turn the camera on or off using the Alt+V keyboard shortcut in Windows or the Shift+Command+V keyboard shortcut on a Mac.

## Selecting the microphone and speakers to use

The up arrowhead beside the microphone icon in the Zoom window allows you to select the microphone and speakers you want to use in Zoom.

The microphone and speakers you select do not have to be from the same audio device.

Muting/Unmuting the microphone

The microphone icon in the Zoom window allows you to mute or unmute the microphone. The icon shows you the current state of the camera and what clicking the icon will do.
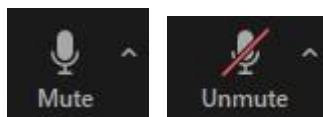
You can mute or unmute the mic using the Alt+A keyboard shortcut in Windows or the Shift+Command+A keyboard shortcut on a Mac.
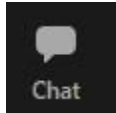
If your mic is muted, you can temporarily unmute the mic in Windows or on a Mac by holding down the spacebar. When you release the spacebar the mic returns to being muted.

The settings for volume of the speakers is controlled by your computer and not by Zoom.
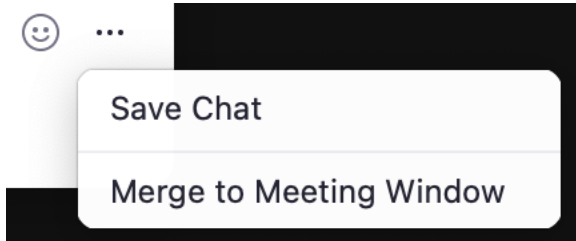
Chat

How to open/close the chat pane

Click on the Chat icon to open the chat pane on the right side of the Zoom window.

The chat pane can be undocked from the Zoom Window by clicking on the down arrowhead in the top left corner the Chat pane. Click on the Pop Out item to make the chat pane its own window. This menu is also how you close the chat pane.


Once undocked, you can now resize and move the chat window on your screen. You can close it using the "X" in the top right corner in Windows and top left corner on a Mac. To return the chat pane to the Zoom window, click on the three dots in the chat window and select Merge to Meeting Window.

Chatting with other attendees

When the chat pane/window is open, you can chat with one attendee or everyone. At the bottom of the chat pane/window, use the drop down list to select who you want to send the chat message to.
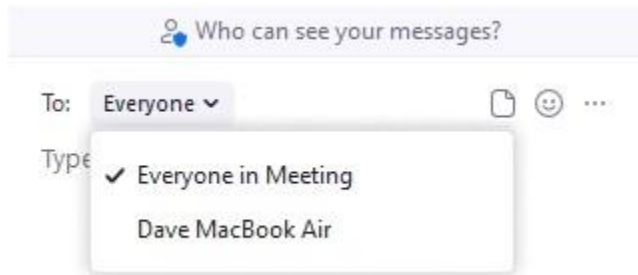
If someone sends you a direct message the chat will default to sending the next message just to that person. It is important to check who the message will be sent to each time.

In the message area, type your message. To add a new line, use Shift+Enter in Windows or Control+Return on a Mac. To send the message press the Enter key in Windows or the Return key on a Mac.
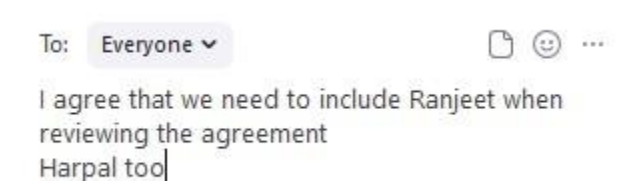

You can insert emojis in your chat message by using the emoji button in the chat area.

To send a file in the chat, click on the file button to the left of the emoji button. Select the file using the file selection dialog. As soon as the file is selected it is posted to the chat. If you need to add a description of the file, it is usually best to add that to the chat before adding the file.

Reactions

How to open the reactions pane

Click on the Reactions icon to open the Reactions pane.
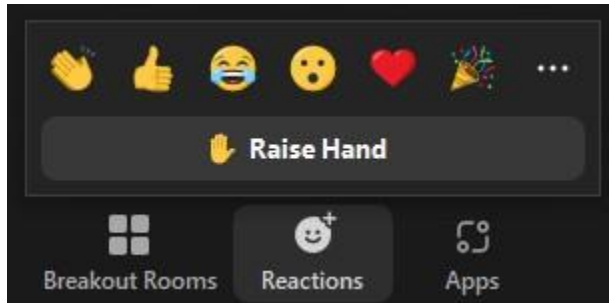
Using an emoji reaction

You can use one of the common reaction emojis shown, such as applause, thumbs up, or heart. The meaning of the emoji is shown in a tooltip when you move your cursor over the emoji. Using an emoji indicates how you feel about what was just said in the meeting and can provide encouragement to others. If you want more emojis to select from, click the three dots to open a full emoji pane.


This is also where you can change the skin tone of the emojis if you have not already set it in the Zoom settings.

Once you click on the emoji it appears on top of your video to the other participants, usually in the top right corner of your video. It will disappear automatically approximately 10 seconds later.

Using the raised hand

The Reaction pane is also where you can use the Raise hand option to indicate that you want to contribute to the discussion. When you click on the Rase Hand button a raised hand icon is displayed on your video tile to indicate to other participants that you have something to contribute.
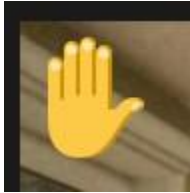
To lower your raised hand, click on the Lower Hand button on the Reaction pane. Your raised hand is not automatically lowered so you need to lower it.
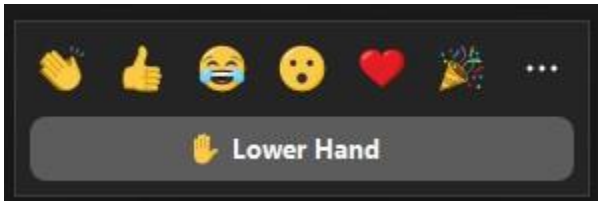
Meeting organizers may also use the raised hand option as a way to have the meeting attendees vote on a question.