



Teaching with Zoom: A Faculty Guide

[What is Zoom?](#)

[How do I host my class using Zoom?](#)

[What equipment do I need to get started?](#)

[What do I need to tell my students to get them started?](#)

[What if something goes wrong?](#)

[What do I do at the beginning of class?](#)

[What do I do during a Zoom class?](#)

[Whiteboard](#)

[Screen Annotation](#)

[Polling](#)

[Chat as Backchannel](#)

[Breakout Rooms](#)

[Sample Class Agenda](#)

What is Zoom?

Zoom is an easy-to-use video conferencing platform that provides high definition, interactive collaboration tools, and telephone conferencing to use for communication and collaboration.

Teaching with Zoom you can:

- [Share your screen](#) to show slides or other materials and ask students to share their screens to present
- [Annotate and mark](#) on the screen, or draw on a whiteboard
- [Break your class into groups](#) for discussions or projects using the Breakout Rooms feature
- [Use the chat feature](#) to answer questions or share learning resources
- [Record your class](#) so students can review materials
- [Poll your students](#) to check for understanding



- [Host](#) virtual office hours
- [Meet](#) with students
- [Engage](#) with small groups or project teams

[Frequently Asked Questions about Zoom](#)

How do I host my class using Zoom?

Zoom makes holding live (synchronous) classes and meetings online possible. As an easy-to-use video conferencing platform, Zoom provides high-definition, interactive collaboration tools and telephone conferencing to use for hosting your classes.

Steps to create a session for your class(es):

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362413-Scheduling-meetings>

For more information, view the [Zoom guide for faculty](#).

When the Zoom app creates the session, copy the URL. This URL can be mailed to students using their student email. (You can mail an entire class by typing the class number into the TO field in email.) You can paste the session URL into your syllabus. You can paste this session URL into a Canvas Announcement. You can even create a calendar invite to share with students that include the session URL. (Find the instructions for how to link Zoom session info to Google calendar here: [Google Calendar add-on – Zoom Help Center](#))

Securing your Personal Meeting Link

It's recommended that you set sessions to not allow students to join the class before you and/or to create a waiting room for them. This also will prevent unwanted persons from accessing your class.

What equipment do I need to get started?

At the most basic level, all you and your students need to use Zoom is a telephone, *even a landline*. However, if you have access to a computer or mobile device you can use the full capabilities of Zoom.

The following equipment will enhance your experience but is **not** necessary:

1. Web camera (Turn it on!)

A camera will increase your connection with your students by allowing you to see each other face-to-face. You will still be able to participate in the other features of the Zoom class.

2. Headset with a microphone

This will let you hear and be heard more clearly. This does not need to be fancy equipment, it can be the same as the headphones you might use with your phone.

3. Dual monitors

If you have two monitors you can have your video feed on one screen and your shared screen on the other. If not, it will look similar to picture-in-picture on your TV.

4. Charger

Charging your device during your class will ensure you do not have an unexpected power outage interrupting your instruction.

You can learn more about this topic here: [Setting up Zoom Meetings & Hardware Training](#).

What do I need to tell my students to get them started?

Below is a sample message that can be sent to students who contact you directly with questions about accessing the course. You should also send an email to students prior to the start of the class: [sample letter](#)

Post Zoom link in these place - you can use them all:

- Email,
- Class syllabus,
- Calendar invite,
- Canvas announcement

What if something goes wrong?

It might.

And it's going to be okay.

Here are the top three problems that make up the majority of Zoom issues and how you can address them before they happen:

- I can't see.
 - [Testing Your Video](#)
- I can't hear.
 - [Testing Your Audio](#)
- There's background noise or feedback.
 - [Solutions for Audio Echo](#)

Your best first stop for tech support?

Your students.

Let's put that critical thinking to work.

If you're still experiencing trouble, contact your Department Chair so they can refer you to someone to help you.

When contacting support, please be prepared to provide:

- A summary description of the problem
- Detailed, step-by-step instructions to reproduce the problem

Tips:

- Test your [audio, video](#) and equipment **well before the start of class and do not conduct these tests from a classroom**. If you experience a low bandwidth signal, shutting off your video will help.
- [Share your screen](#) to show slides or other materials and ask students to share their screens to present.
- [Annotate and mark](#) on the screen, or draw on a whiteboard.
- [Break your class into groups](#) for discussions or projects using the breakout rooms feature.
- Use the [chat feature](#) to answer questions or share learning resources.
- [Record your class](#) so students can review materials.
- [Poll your students](#) to check for understanding.
- [Host](#) virtual office hours. meet with students and engage with small groups/project teams

What do I do at the beginning of class?

Just as in an in-person class, it is important to have procedures to get started and set expectations with your students.

At the beginning of class, remind your students of basic Zoom etiquette:

- ask them to turn on their cameras
- look at the camera to make eye contact when they're talking
- mute their mics when they aren't contributing

[How to mute all participants at once](#)

Assign students roles to help you host the meeting so you can focus on teaching such as:

- Technology Troubleshooter - Help others with their technology
- Chat Monitor - Monitor the chat window for questions or shared resources
- Note Taker - You can have a student typing closed captions for the class if there are students who need accommodation. [Getting Started with Closed Captioning](#)
- Note Taker's Note Taker - If you are having a student do live closed captioning, ask another student to share their notes with the Note Taker so they don't miss out on learning.

[Select a Video Layout that is best suited for your class.](#) The more students can see you and each other, the more connected they feel as a class and the more likely they are to stay on task. You can view up to 25 students at a time in Gallery view.

Consider recording your class so that students can rewatch and review what they learned after class. [Guide for Recording in Zoom](#).

What do I do during a Zoom class?

[Credit to the University of Minnesota Information Technology Department](#)

No one wants to sit through a straight lecture session for 60 minutes, and in fact, such a class session design doesn't leverage the fact that you have all your students there and present. You can use the features of Zoom to guide different types of interactive activities. These activities offer variety to break up a long class session, and they offer different means of expression, a universal design principle.

Whiteboard

[Draw on the whiteboard](#), or [ask students to contribute to a whiteboard](#) as a means of engaging them differently in the discussion.

Note: whiteboard activity is completely inaccessible to people who use screen readers. If you use this feature, be prepared to read aloud all the contributions so that everyone can see and/or hear them. You'll need to take a screenshot of each whiteboard if you want to save it.

Screen Annotation

Zoom has basic annotation tools (text box, free form draw/pen, shapes, and highlighter) you can use to guide students around a visual display (such as a website) or explain a concept. Access these from the Share Desktop function.

Note: screen annotations are not accessible for screen reader users. If you use this feature, be sure to use accessible presentation best practices: say exactly what you're doing while you're doing it, e.g., "I'm drawing a big red circle around the login button on this web page."

Polling

[Set up polls](#) in advance and launch them at specific times during your class session, the same way you'd use clicker questions to introduce a new section of a lecture.

Chat as Backchannel

Backchanneling refers to having a synchronous conversation while something else is happening. For example, people sometimes live-tweet their reactions to a presidential debate as it is being broadcast. Using the [chat tool](#) as a backchannel can give students agency and encourage engagement by allowing more students to interact with the live activity, rather than just listening.

Some uses of backchannel:

- Emulate live-tweeting of guest lectures as a way to collect questions, which you then answer at the end of the session. Elect 1 student to monitor the chat and curate questions as they come in.
- Host a virtual fishbowl, in which a small group of students interact around solving a problem or discussing an issue. The other students react to their classmates' contributions via the chat backchannel.
- During your lectures, encourage students to log questions as small groups and elect 1 student to bring them forward for group conversation.

Notes:

- Backchannel activities can be overwhelming for some students, and are thus an accessibility concern. Therefore, it is recommended you offer this type of interaction as an option for students who thrive on this level of stimulation, but do not require it from all students.
- Backchannel can also be overwhelming for you to monitor while you're also trying to teach. Consider deputizing a student or TA to monitor the chat if you use this feature, to make it easier for you to focus on teaching.
- You can download the full chat history at the end of class, if you want to keep this record.

Breakout Rooms

You can use Zoom's [breakout rooms](#) functionality to have students do group work. As the instructor, you can "travel" from one breakout room to the next, broadcast messages to various rooms, and end the breakout sessions when it is time to regroup.

Sample Class Agenda

Plan for a synchronous course session just as you would plan for an in-person class. Here is a sample agenda for a 60-minute synchronous course session. You might want to share your agenda with students ahead of time, so they know what to expect.

Duration	Segment	Details	Prepare
5 min	Intro: Whiteboard activity	On entry into the virtual classroom, have students think about a question and write their contribution on the whiteboard.	Launch a whiteboard at the start of class so it's the first thing students see, and add visible instructions.
2 min	Poll	Use the polling tool to ask a question that engages and determines personal relevance for the topic of the mini-lecture.	Set up the poll question in advance.
10 min	Mini-lecture	Share screen, launch PowerPoint, and deliver mini-lecture. Use Annotation features in Zoom to mark up your PowerPoint slides.	Learn about screen-sharing a PowerPoint presentation . Have the PowerPoint file launched already so you can get to it seamlessly. Practice annotating slides in advance to add visual interactivity.
2 min	Poll	Ask 1 or more questions for understanding.	Set up the poll question in advance.

10 min	Breakout Room Activity	Assign students into individual breakout rooms, discuss for 10 minutes, and create a collaborative Google doc (which you will then collect in the Canvas site).	Practice hosting breakout rooms , both manual and machine-assigned.
10 min	Debrief	Ask each group to appoint a representative to summarize the main points of their discussion. Post these in the chat field, which you then read.	Ask a TA or student to monitor the chat field for you, and bring the most relevant points to the fore. Consider assigning that person co-host privileges .
2 min	Chat: Muddiest Point	Ask students to contribute to chat where they are still confused.	
5 min	Debrief	Clear up misconceptions that were unearthed in the muddiest point chat.	
5 min	Closing	Summarize the activity of the session, set up expectations for follow-up activities, and dismiss.	
	Post-session	You may choose to: ● Download a list of attendees ● Download the chat transcript	