Zooming in less-than-ideal circumstances

Last Modified on 03/18/2024 10:20 am EDT

Sometimes, you have to join a Zoom meeting from a place with wifi, noise, or visual issues. Nevertheless, there are steps you can take to minimize these types of problems.

Limit wifi or data usage

Hosting or participating in Zoom meetings can difficult if you're in a space that has a poor wifi network or where you can't use data. When in this situation, it's usually best to see if you can change locations or networks. If that's not possible, however, you can do the following:

- If using wifi, try moving closer to your network's router. Also, consider plugging in an ethernet cord if you have one.
- Turn off other applications and devices that are using your Internet connection.
- If you share an Internet connection with others or have better bandwidth at certain times of day, try to schedule video-intensive calls for times when you'll have maximum bandwith.
- Turn off your video.
- Make sure HD video is disabled. In the desktop app, go to **Settings > Video** and make sure the **HD** box is unchecked in the **Camera** menu.
- Mute your audio when you're not talking.

There are also collective steps all meeting participants can take to limit how the data used during a meeting. If you're hosting a meeting where participants are struggling with using wifi or data, suggest everyone do the following:

- Turn off their video. Reducing video usage is the easiest way to reduce the amount of data used in a meeting.
- Keep screen sharing to a minimum. This can be done by sending participants any PowerPoints or documents outside Zoom. Participants can then open and view these files on their own computers or by using collaborative document-editing tools like Word Online or Google Docs.
- Record meetings and share them in downloadable formats. That way, participants can watch them later without having to stream.

Reduce background noise

Even if you have sufficient wifi to participate in a meeting, you may still struggle to do so because of background noise. In such a situation, try the following fixes:

- Use headphones.
- Use a headset or smartphone that has a noise-canceling microphone.
- Go to **Settings > Audio** and check **Zoom background noise removal.** Depending on your preference, this can be set to **Auto**, **Low**, **Medium**, or **High**.

Also, make sure to mute your audio when you aren't talking so that any background noise doesn't prevent others from being heard.

Reduce video issues

Although wifi and noise issues are the most common for Zoom meetings, you sometimes may have to deal with video issues. **In general, the best advice is to stop your video feed and only use audio.** Still, the following fixes are available:

- Change your position of your lighting so that you are illuminated from the front rather than the back. Zoom has more guidance on the best lighting concepts to use.
- Clean up the space where you're taking the call so that it isn't cluttered and you can have privacy from others.
- Set a virtual background. Zoom allows you to change your background image for a personal touch. Remember though: Virtual backgrounds require more advanced hardware and internet connections. Don't use them if they're going to create Internet or data issues!

Questions?

If you have any additional questions or problems, don't hesitate to reach out to the **Help Desk**!

Phone: 610-526-7440 | Library and Help Desk hours
Email: help@brynmawr.edu | Service catalog
Location: Canaday Library 1st floor