

## Using Zoom: A Beginner's Guide

While our office is closed during Disability Equality Scotland will continue to move as much of what we can online – from meetings, to training sessions and our events. To do this, we will be using the video conferencing service Zoom.

For those who are new to Zoom, please find below a brief introduction to it, where I will walk you through the basics of setting it up and using the software, as well as providing some information on accessibility and security features. If you have any trouble with this, please get in touch and I will try to advise, or take a look at the [Zoom Help Centre](#).

### Getting Started

Using Zoom is very similar to using Skype. We prefer Zoom because it seems to handle weak internet connections better than Skype and allows for a lot of useful functions.

To use Zoom you will need:

- A video webcam, either built into your device or a separate webcam (most modern computers, smartphones and tablets have this built in)
- A microphone, either built into your device or in the webcam (most modern computers, smartphones and tablets have this built in)
- A broadband internet connection
- The Zoom software installed on your device (Zoom can be downloaded on Windows, Mac, iOS and Android.)

To download Zoom on PC or Mac, follow this [link](#). To download it on iOS, find it in the Apple App Store, or for Android, find it in the Google Play store.

We also encourage you to [sign up for a free Zoom account](#). This makes it easier to schedule and join meetings or webinars, as some require you to have an account for security reasons. Once you have signed up, login to your Zoom account on a web browser through this [link](#), where you can change account settings as well as schedule and join meetings.

Once you have successfully installed Zoom, you might find it helpful to get used to the software by joining a [test meeting](#), where you can click around, try screen sharing, muting your audio, recording the session and using the chat box without anyone else on the call.

## Scheduling a Meeting

To learn how to schedule a meeting, [follow this link to a short instructional video](#).

As host of the meeting, you can set the date, time, attendees, as well as security precautions, for example setting a password to enter the meeting, or individually admitting people from the virtual 'waiting room' (you can see who is in the waiting room by clicking 'Manage Participants' along the bottom bar while in the meeting).

It should be noted that with a free Zoom account, meetings with multiple participants are limited to 40 minutes (when your time is up, you can simply restart a meeting if need be).

## Joining a Meeting

To join a meeting, you have been invited to, you can either:

- Enter the 9 to 11-digit meeting ID included on the invitation (as well as the password, if requested)
- Clicking the internet link included on the invitation, which will open a web browser that will prompt you to open Zoom. Here, you may not need to enter a password.

If you are having trouble with either your audio or video while on the meeting, the microphone and camera icons on the bottom left allow you to adjust these settings. When you would like to leave the meeting, click 'Leave Meeting' on the bottom right. If you are the host, it will say 'End Meeting' - but be careful, if you leave, that will end the meeting for everyone else.

Top tip: when you are not speaking, it is best to temporarily mute yourself, especially if where you are has a lot of background noise. This avoids disrupting the meeting for others.

## Joining a Webinar (Internet Seminar)

Similar to joining a meeting, to join a webinar, you will either be sent an invitation to join or you will have registered to join yourself. From this, you join by the same steps as above.

For webinars, however, the default settings are that you join only as an observer, with your microphone and webcam switched off. You can signal that you want to speak by clicking 'raise my hand' or typing in the chat box (if that function is enabled by the webinar host).

## Zoom and Accessibility

Zoom contains a number of features to make the software more operable and perceivable for users with visual impairments. It supports common screen readers such as NVDA, JAWS, VoiceOver, and Android Talkback. Additionally, visual interfaces are designed with adequate colour contrast, size, and usage of colour to ensure clarity for users with various vision needs.

Unfortunately, if someone is presenting content via the 'screen sharing' function, the content is displayed as a video and is therefore not readable by screen readers. In this case, it is recommended that the presenter distributes any content they intend to present beforehand with all attendees.

The Zoom Application on Windows, iOS, and Android support the high contrast settings defined in the system preferences. The Zoom Application for macOS supports Dark Mode.

Sign language interpreters may join a Zoom meeting just like any other video participants. Participants may use Zoom's pinning feature to keep the interpreter's video thumbnail stationary.

Zoom also supports live captioning, although this is not automatic, so you will still need a designated electronic notetaker. When enabled, captions will appear on participants' screens similar to closed captioning.

Learn more about Zoom's accessibility features [here on their website](#).

## An Update on Security

Following security complaints that some Zoom users have reported in recent weeks, Zoom have responded by publishing a [security guide](#) for hosts to keep their meetings safe from unwanted users, as well as improving default security settings for users.

As such, Disability Equality Scotland is continuing to use Zoom as normal, albeit making sure to follow best practice to keep our meetings and webinars secure. We continue to act fully in line with our own [Privacy Policy](#), following GDPR processes to make sure your data is safe while interacting with us on Zoom. If you have any further concerns, or would like to know more about how we manage data, please feel free to email us at [admin@disabilityequality.scot](mailto:admin@disabilityequality.scot).

For more information on keeping your meetings safe, please take a look at [Zoom's Privacy and Security Guidance](#) on their website.

I hope this guide has helped you, and if you have any more questions, please get in touch or take a look at the [Zoom Help Centre](#).