

Quick Start: Look Your Best on Video Calls

While you shouldn't stress about how you look on a video call – after all, what you say is more important than your appearance – a little bit of prep work can make a big difference.

With Zoom and other technology, you can meet with anyone from anywhere. But just because you're joining a meeting from home or another remote location doesn't mean you can slack on professionalism – especially if you'll be on camera. Use these tips to appear more polished and make a great impression the next time you meet on Zoom.

Be aware of your surroundings

Strive to provide a plain background so viewers can focus on you instead of personal photos, wall art, or other distractions. To further avoid visual clutter, tidy up the areas of the room that will be seen on camera.

Make yourself "screen ready"

Take a minute to put on a nice shirt and comb your hair. If using a headset (which helps participants hear you better!), make sure it isn't tangling your hair up. You may discover that getting ready for your work from home day is energizing – and your coworkers will appreciate not having to see your bedhead.

Light up your face

Make sure the light is in front of you, not behind. If you're using a lamp, place it behind the screen. Turn off overhead lights, which can cast unflattering shadows. Natural lighting works well, too, but be sure you're facing the window. Another trick: turn up the brightness on your screen so it illuminates your face.

Position the camera at eye-level

Many people place their webcam too low, which creates an awkward angle. Set your device on a few books or a box so that you're looking slightly up to the camera for a more flattering angle.

Back away from the screen

Experiment moving your webcam a little closer to your face and a little further away to figure out what works best. Aim to make sure most of your upper body — not just your face — is visible in the camera area.

Create a video conferencing space in your home

Once you've figured out your background, lighting, and web camera placement, you may want to create a permanent space that you can always use for video calls. If you regularly participate in video calls from home, this will make your life much easier!

Need Help? For general support, check out the [Zoom Help Center](https://support.zoom.us). To get help via live Zoom chat, login to your webportal at harvard.zoom.us and click on the "Help" icon located in the bottom right hand corner.