

Using Zoom video conferencing in a more secure way

Guidance for meeting hosts and participants using Zoom for the COVID-19 response

From: **Cabinet Office** and **Government Digital Service**

Date: **2 April 2020**

GDS guidance, based on consultations with GSG and the NCSC, is that Zoom may be used at OFFICIAL for cross-government COVID-19 meetings. Follow this guidance if you're an end user and you want to use the Zoom video conferencing tool for that purpose.

If you're an administrator follow the separate Zoom administrator configuration guidance to set up the tool correctly for use within your public sector organisation. Zoom should not be used where existing videoconferencing services (e.g. Hangouts or Teams) would work instead.

Using Zoom in a more secure way

You must only use Zoom to communicate OFFICIAL information. Never use Zoom to share SECRET or TOP SECRET information.

You must also make sure you're using Zoom securely by:

- making sure you [use a strong and separate password](#) for Zoom accounts
- stopping any conversations that may contain information above OFFICIAL
- checking meeting invitations are only sent to those who are invited
- checking that only verified people ask to join or have join a meeting
- only host a Zoom meeting with a paid-for Pro or Business account
- never host a Zoom meeting from a free account
- use your name or role, not your e-mail address or other identifying info, when you log into Zoom (your name can be changed by right-clicking on your ID in the Participants panel and clicking "Rename")
- making sure all participants use their real names or applicable role when using Zoom)
- using the [waiting room function](#) to control access to meetings if you need assurance on who is present
- monitoring attendance at throughout the meeting
- being careful if you share screens and making sure your email, open documents are not shared
- stopping any meetings if you become unsure about who else is present and taking a roll call if necessary
- sending participants back to the [waiting room](#) during the meeting until identity concerns are resolved
- being mindful of your audience and tailoring content when attendees include external parties who may not have non-disclosure agreements and could make information public

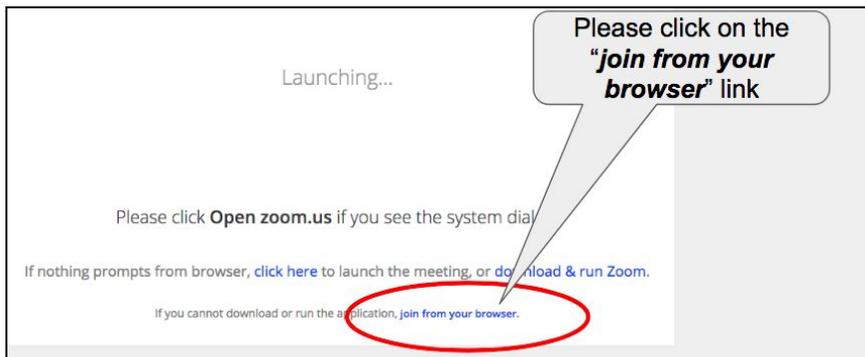
Setting up and accessing Zoom meetings

There are multiple ways to setup and access meetings using Zoom. You can follow guidance to:

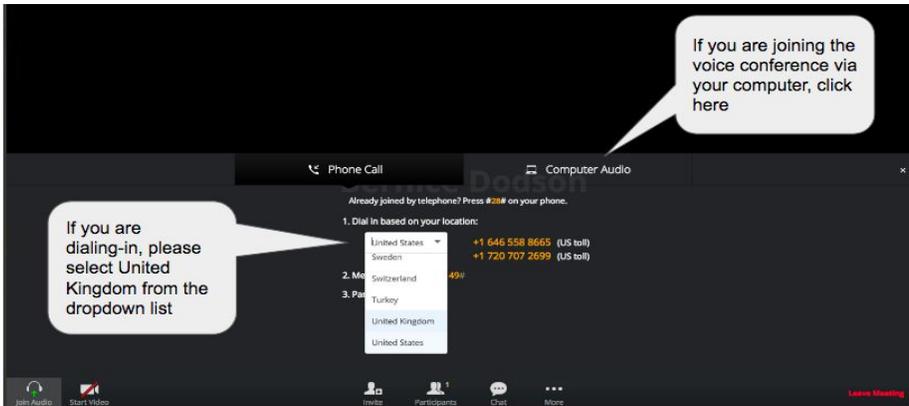
- [access Zoom from a desktop](#)
- [access Zoom from a mobile device](#)
- [join a meeting by phone](#)
- [create an instant meeting](#)
- [create a waiting room](#)
- [schedule a meeting](#)
- [test audio](#)
- [test video](#)
- [share screens](#)

Joining a Zoom meeting with your computer

1. Click on the Zoom conference link in the invite (it will look like this: <https://zoom.us/j/123456789>)
2. Click on the “**Join from your browser**” link at the bottom of the screen:



3. Add your **name** and **department** and click “**Join**”, you may be prompted for a password which you should enter. If you do not know the password, you should ask the meeting organiser for it.
4. To access meeting audio, select either your location from the drop-down list to get a dial-in phone number and meeting ID or click “**Computer Audio**”.



We recommend using **Computer Audio** with a headphone and mic or USB headset as this gives better sound quality compared to dialling in with a phone. If you are joining the meeting by phone, you may have to tell the organiser your phone number in advance so they can identify you on the call.

Joining a Zoom meeting with your telephone

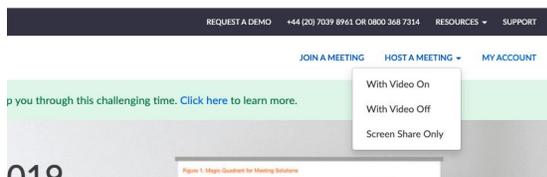
You can [join a Zoom meeting by phone](#), you may have an invitation with telephone dial-in information.

1. Your meeting host should have shared a local number (like an 0800 or 020 number) to call through the meeting invitation. You can [find a full list of Zoom dial-in numbers on the website](#).

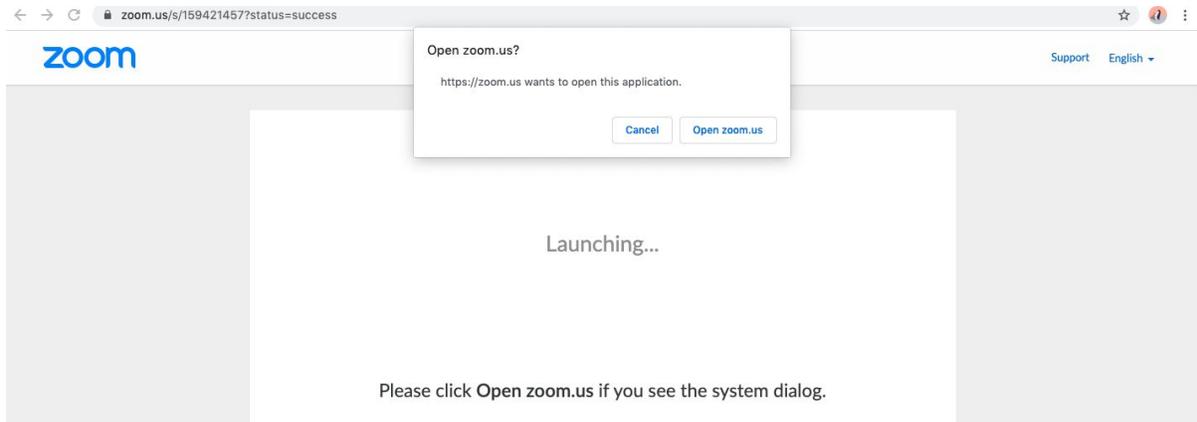
2. You will be prompted to enter the **Meeting ID**. This is a 9, 10, or 11 digit ID provided to you by the host, followed by #. If you cannot find the Meeting ID, contact the meeting organiser.

Creating an instant Zoom meeting

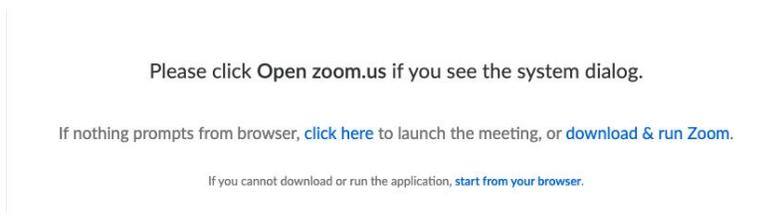
1. We recommend you [follow the guidance for the platform you'll be using Zoom on](#) as the guidance may vary depending on the devices you are using. The guidance below should be used as a starting point.
2. Get started by [logging into Zoom](#).
3. Select **"Host A Meeting"** to create a Zoom Meeting and **Select** one of the options:
 - "With Video On"
 - "With Video Off"
 - "Screen Share Only"



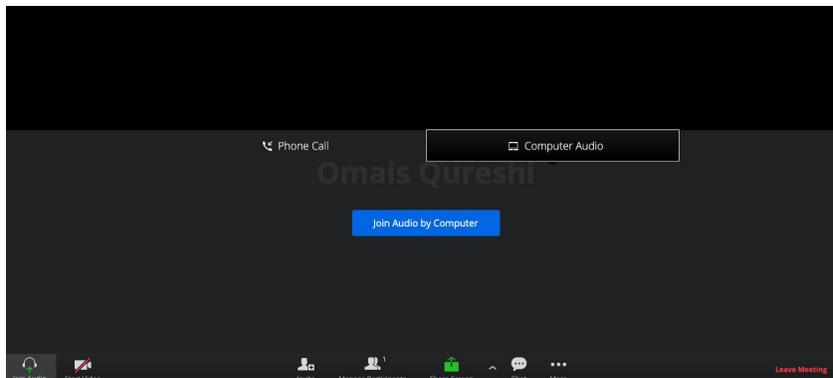
4. Select **"Cancel"** when the dialog box appears as you will be hosting the meeting using your browser.



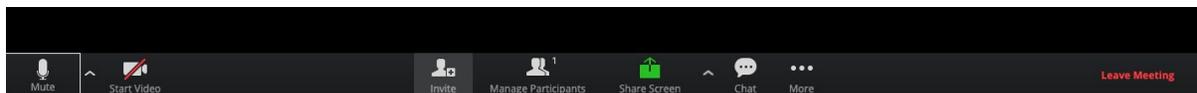
5. Select **“Start from your browser”**.



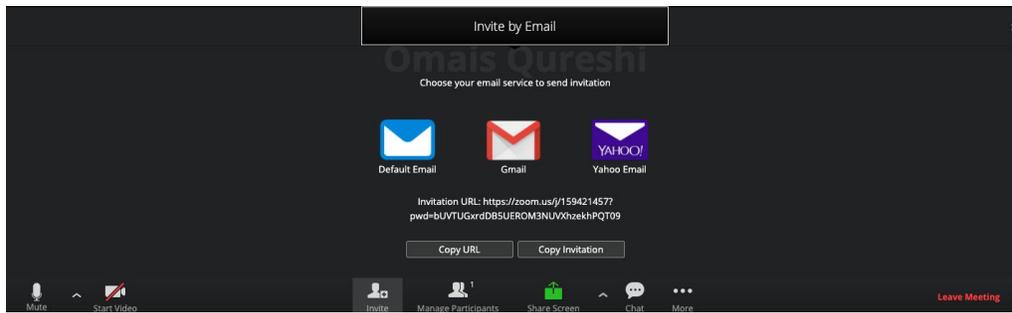
6. Select **“Join Audio by Computer”**.



7. Select **“Invite”** to retrieve your meeting invite information.



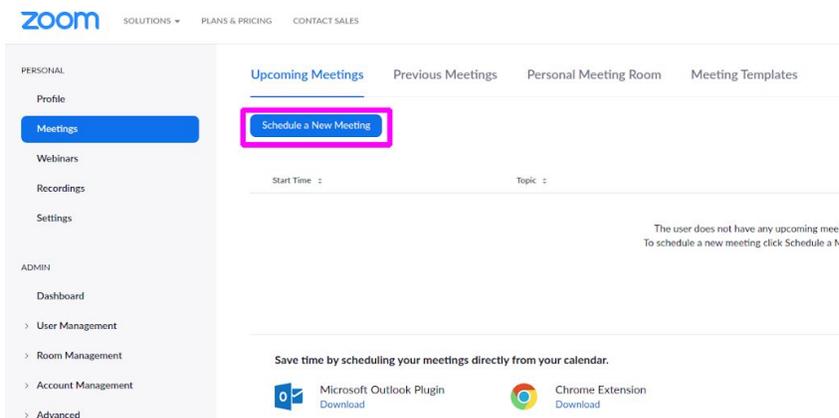
8. Select **“Copy Invitation”** to retrieve your meeting invite links and passwords. Do not click on any of the email types listed - Outlook, Gmail, Yahoo.



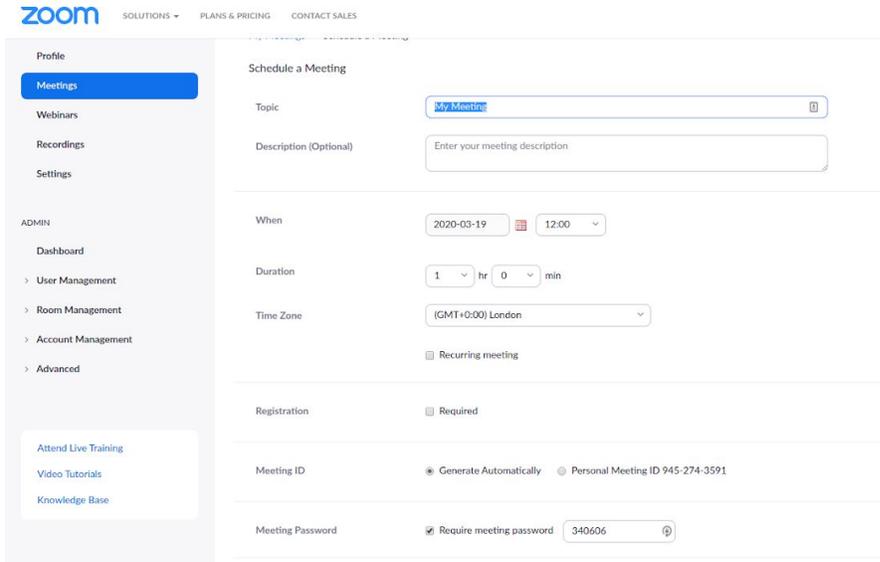
9. Your meeting links, password and other joining information has now been copied to your clipboard. You can send the Zoom conference joining information using email or other messaging platforms.

Scheduling a future Zoom meeting

1. We recommend that you [follow the guidance for the platform you'll be using Zoom on](#) as the guidance may vary depending on the devices you are using. The guidance below should be used as a starting point.
2. Get started by [logging into Zoom](#).
3. [Start at the meetings page](#) and select **“Schedule a New Meeting”**



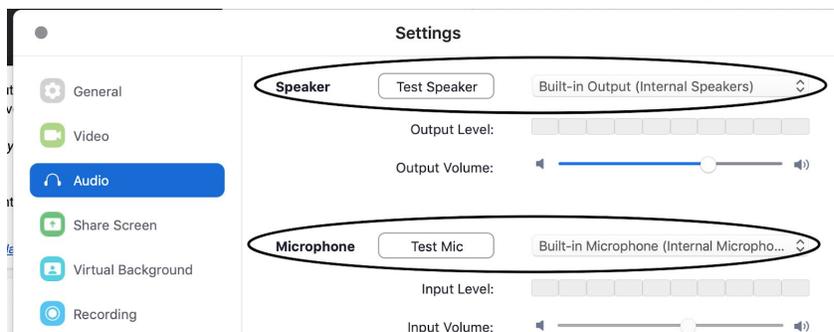
10. Set up your meeting with a title and description. Remember that Zoom displays time and date in the US format by default (month-date-year). To change this setting, [go to your profile](#) and then **“Date and Time”** settings using the **“Edit”** button on the right.



- Meetings require a password by default. We do not recommend including the password in calendar invites, as users' calendars may be visible to others in their organisation and this password would allow any user to access the call.

Testing your audio

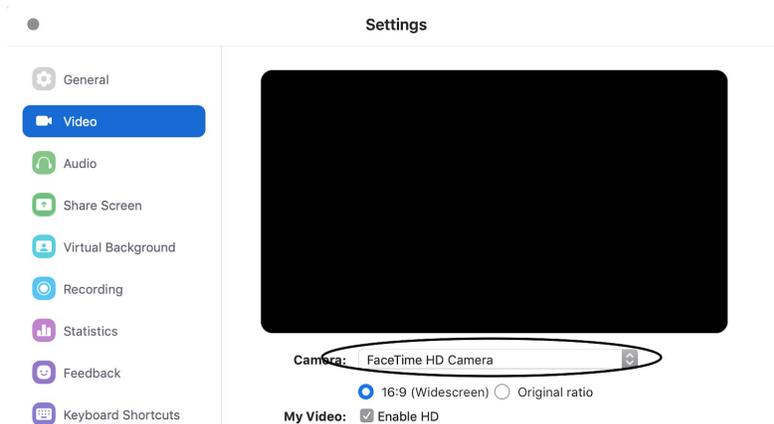
- Click on **"Settings"** or **"Preferences"** on the Zoom app.
- Click on the **"Audio"** tab. Here you can test your microphone and speaker setup.



- Select **"Test Speaker"** or **"Test Mic"** to test the speaker or microphone.
- If the test does not work, you can use the dropdown menu to select a different device (like external microphone) and test this.

Testing your video

1. Select "**Settings**" or "**Preferences**" on the Zoom app.
2. Select the "**Video**" tab. You can test or change your video camera setup here.



3. Select the dropdown "**Camera**" to switch between cameras that you have connected to your computer or to use an external camera.
4. You may find your image is mirrored in the preview. It will not be mirrored for other participants but you can disable the setting by unticking the "**Mirror Video**" checkbox.

Sharing your screen

1. Select the "**Share Screen**" button located in your meeting controls.



2. Select the screen you want to share. You can also choose to share a single application that is already open on your computer (for example, a presentation), a whiteboard, or a connected iPhone or iPad.



3. Select "**Share**" and Zoom will automatically switch to full screen to optimise the shared screen view. To exit full-screen, click "**Exit Full Screen**" in the top-right corner or press the "**Esc**" key.

Presenting during a Zoom meeting

1. Adjust your lighting and background

Try not to sit directly near a bright light source. Experiment with moving lamps and your camera until you can see your face lit brightly. If possible, try to provide a plain background to reduce distractions. On some devices, Zoom can blur or change your background. To do this go to “Preferences”, then “Virtual Background”.

2. Practice speaking to the camera and not the screen

It can feel natural to look at the person on the screen, but you should look at the camera if you are speaking or presenting so your audience feels like you’re talking directly to them.

3. Mute your microphone when not speaking

Zoom has a “Mute Microphone” option that cuts down on ambient feedback for the audience. You should mute yourself when listening to a presenter or if you’re in a noisy environment.

4. Be thoughtful about security

This tool is only suitable for communication at OFFICIAL, up to and including OFFICIAL material. It must not be used for SECRET or TOP SECRET communication. Please follow standard security practices: make sure you are not overlooked when using this tool whilst working remotely, do not use it in public, and keep sensitive details to a minimum. Ensure that the recipient of the call is following the same guidelines, and if you are not content, do not continue the call. If you are hosting a call, make sure only trusted parties join the call.

Privacy notice

This privacy notice is for participants in Cabinet Office Zoom video conferencing meetings. If you are not part of the Cabinet Office, you should refer to your department's privacy notice.

Video conferencing

Cabinet Office uses video conferencing technology to allow colleagues, stakeholders and visitors to connect and collaborate.

The personal data we collect from you to facilitate the meeting may include:

- name
- email address
- job title
- business address
- telephone number

The personal data the video conferencing tool will collect from you, in order to function properly, will include:

- name
- IP address
- location

The personal data that will be transmitted by the video conferencing tool from your device (e.g. mobile phone, tablet, laptop, etc.) will include:

- image/video (if your device camera is switched on)
- voice (if your device microphone is switched on and you participate)

The legal basis for processing this data is Public Task.

Video conference recording

The video conference may be recorded for the purpose of accuracy of the minutes being taken. The following information will be collected:

- image/video (if your device camera is switched on)
- voice (if your device microphone is switched on and you participate)

The legal basis for processing this data is Consent.

As both the transmission and recording of the images and voice of individuals can reveal information about them, the following special category data may also be collected:

- Race and ethnic origin
- Religious or philosophical beliefs
- Political opinions
- Trade union memberships
- Biometric data used to identify an individual
- Health data
- Data related to sexual preferences, sex life, and/or sexual orientation

The legal basis for recording the data is Consent.

Why we need your data

We require your data in order to enable the attendance of meetings, and facilitate remote and flexible working.

What we do with your data

Participants' email addresses will be used to distribute meeting invitations and agendas, papers, meeting minutes and other records of the meeting. In exceptional circumstances we will contact members directly on urgent issues.

Names and departments/organisations will be recorded on minutes for those members in attendance.

Meetings may be recorded for minute taking purposes - recordings will be deleted once the minutes have been approved. Members are reminded of this at the start of the meeting and members can raise an objection if they do not wish to be recorded.

We will not:

- sell or rent your data to third parties
- share your data with third parties for marketing purposes

We will share your data if we're required to do so by law – for example, by court order, or to prevent fraud or other crime.

Video conference tools used (data processors)

- Zoom

Video conferencing activity processed by the data processor

The video conferencing tool will transmit meeting activity (such as joining or leaving), including activity related to third-party integrations, together with the date, time, person engaged in the activity, and other participants in the meeting with the date, time, duration, and quality ratings that you provide.

It will also route audio and video call content and screen sharing content between call participants.

Zoom

You can [read more about Zoom's privacy policy, and how it collects and stores data](#) as well as its [cookies policy](#).

How long we keep your data

We will only keep your personal data for as long as:

- the law requires us to
- we need for the purposes listed above

This means that we will only hold your personal data for a maximum of 7 years. We will only retain video recordings until the minutes have been transcribed and confirmed but not longer than 1 year.

Where your data is processed and stored

We design, build and run our systems to make sure that your data is as safe as possible at any stage, both while it's processed and when it's stored.

Your personal data may be transferred outside the [European Economic Area \(EEA\)](#) while being processed by Cabinet Office. If this happens, we'll make sure you're given the same level of technical and legal protection as you are within the EEA.

Who we share your data with

In some cases we might share your personal data with external organisations, such as building reception services, data processors who provide us with online surveys and IT software.

How we protect your data and keep it secure

We are committed to doing all that we can to keep your data secure. We set up systems and processes to prevent unauthorised access to or disclosure of the data we collect about you – for example, we protect your data using varying levels of encryption. All third parties that process personal data for Cabinet Office are required to keep that data secure.

Your rights

You have the right to request:

- information about how your personal data is processed
- [a copy of that personal data](#) - this copy will be provided in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format
- that anything inaccurate in your personal data is corrected immediately

You can also:

- raise an objection about how your personal data is processed
- request that your personal data is erased if there is no longer a justification for it
- ask that [we only process your data in certain circumstances](#)

If you have any of these requests, get in contact with our Data Protection Officer - you can find their contact details below.

If you gave your consent for us to collect and process your data, you have the right to:

- withdraw your consent - this can be done at any time
- request a copy of your personal data - this copy will be provided in a structured, commonly used and machine-readable format

The data controller is the Cabinet Office – a data controller determines how and why personal data can be processed. [Read the Cabinet Office's entry in the Data Protection Public Register for more information.](#)

Changes to this notice

We may change this privacy notice. When we make changes to this notice, the 'last updated' date at the top of this page will also change. Any changes to this privacy notice will apply to you and your data immediately.

If these changes affect how your personal data is processed, Cabinet Office will take reasonable steps to make sure you know.

Questions and complaints

Contact the Data Protection Officer if you either:

- have any questions about anything in this document
- think that your personal data has been misused or mishandled
- want to make a [subject access request \(SARS\)](#)

Data Protection Officer
Cabinet Office
70 Whitehall
London
SW1A 2AS

Email
DPO@cabinetoffice.gov.uk

You can also complain to the Information Commissioner, who is an independent regulator.

Information Commissioner's Office
Wycliffe House
Water Lane
Wilmslow
Cheshire
SK9 5AF

Email
casework@ico.org.uk

Contact form
<https://ico.org.uk/global/contact-us/email/>

Telephone
0303 123 1113

Textphone
01625 545860