

ZOOM Performance Tips (August 9, 2020)

ZOOM works best with a stable and reasonably fast internet connection, the goal is clear audio and video.

Before starting or joining a ZOOM Meeting

1. Consider rebooting your computer an hour or two before a ZOOM meeting. This may lead to computer performance improvements and a better ZOOM meeting experience.
2. Consider rebooting your internet router an hour or two before a ZOOM meeting. This may lead to internet speed and stability improvements, essential for the best ZOOM meeting experience.
3. Check the strength of your Wi-Fi signal and if necessary, consider moving your ZOOM laptop/tablet/phone as close to your router as possible.
4. If your computer or laptop is close to the router, consider using an ethernet cable to connect your computer to the router, instead of connecting on Wi-Fi.
5. Make sure there are no automatic program or operating system updates scheduled during the meeting time-period.

Performance suggestions during a ZOOM meeting

During a meeting, if your audio or video sometimes 'hangs' for a few seconds and does so repeatedly, consider these ideas:

1. Stop Video in ZOOM so you can see and hear the meeting, but no one will see your image. This saves bandwidth and may improve seeing the video and the audio quality.
2. Consider leaving the meeting and rejoining, this can make a big difference. Even if you are the Host, you can leave the meeting (press END and then pick Leave Meeting) and then rejoin, this works because the meeting will continue without the host once it has been started.
3. Move your ZOOM laptop/tablet/phone as close to your router as possible.
4. If the computer or laptop is close to the router, try using an ethernet cable to connect to the router instead of connecting on Wi-Fi.
5. Consider calling into the ZOOM meeting on your phone using a ZOOM dial-up number. This is guaranteed to work for getting quality audio. Then try to use ZOOM for only video but make sure to Mute the microphone and turn down (or off) the computer speakers to avoid any feedback issues. If necessary, upgrade your phone plan to include unlimited Canada long distance so you can call a Toronto ZOOM dial-up number at no extra cost.

This dial-up approach guarantees meeting participation, even if you may not be able to see the video if the internet performance is poor. This approach is also good for other meeting participants since they will hear you clearly and you will hear them. Good audio is more important than video.

This dial-up approach is also an idea for a guest speaker who has any concerns about their local internet connection, or is having trouble during their presentation, a good back-up plan. Some speakers may be interested in connecting on the phone for higher quality audio. If you have a copy of their slides, you can always show them while they talk via dial-up, a reasonable back-up plan.

General performance suggestions outside meetings

1. Test your internet speed (>5 Mbps is preferable but even slower may work, >50 Mbps is good)
 - a. Reboot your router
 - b. Reboot your computer
 - c. Test your Wi-Fi internet speed: <https://fast.com/>
 - d. Connect your laptop to your router using an Ethernet cable, then Test speed: <https://fast.com/>
2. Compare your tested internet speeds with whatever speed you are paying for with your internet provider. If the Mbps performance is significantly below what you are paying for, contact your internet provider. Tell them your two internet speeds from above and ask them to diagnose the problem. Every few months, or when needed, test your actual speed against what you signed up for and hold your provider accountable to deliver it!
3. Rebooting the router should be done every month or two whether you are having issues or not. Anytime your internet seems slow, follow steps 1-3 above and if its still slow, call your provider and report the Mbps you are getting.
4. If your router is the property of your internet provider and is more than 2 or 3 years old, ask that they provide a current router (routers have improved a lot). Anything over 50 Mbps is best if possible, but the faster the better.
5. Ask your internet provider if they have a faster speed plan you can upgrade to. Upgrade to the fastest plan available, its well worth the investment, particularly these days. Push for a free upgrade or a discount on their best plan, worth a try! Are there other internet providers in your area who offer a better performance service? Speed is king!
6. To reduce bandwidth demands, in Video Settings, turn off 'Enable HD'. Also, do not use a Virtual Background.
7. If you use a VPN (Virtual Private Network) for routing the internet, disable it for ZOOM meetings.
8. If you are stuck with an awfully slow internet service (< 5Mbps), some suggestions include:
 - a. Shut off Wi-Fi on all other devices except the one being used for ZOOM.
 - b. Put all other devices using your Wi-Fi in airplane mode for the duration of the ZOOM meeting.
 - c. Others who need to be online can turn off their Wi-Fi and hotspot their device to their cell phone instead, which uses their cell phone data (beware cell data charges, check your plan)
 - d. Do anything you can so that the only connection to your internet service is the ZOOM device.