

## Starting an online meeting

Over the years many online meetings have been created and run successfully, there are several platforms used – AA does not endorse any of these platforms, this is simply guidance on how to use them should any group wish to.

Of these the most common has been Skype, this instruction will deal purely with this platform. Instructions for other platforms will follow.

### How to set up a Skype for a meeting

Skype is available on many different systems and is probably available for your computer, tablet or phone.

Note that everyone taking part needs to set up their own Skype account, if they don't already have one, to be able to join the meeting.

It is possible, but difficult, to run a meeting from a mobile device or tablet, for this reason it is suggested that the person running the meeting (normally called the host) works from either a PC, laptop or Mac.

The technical organiser of the meeting (normally called the host) needs to have a good internet connection in order to hold the meeting. It is suggested that the meeting is held in voice only (no video) as this considerably reduces the bandwidth requirement and will allow those with slow internet speeds, or low monthly bandwidth requirements to take part.

While it is possible to run a meeting from a personal account, groups might want to set up an account for the group to be used exclusively for their meetings, this would aid both rotation and anonymity.

To run skype it will be necessary to have an account with Microsoft – who own Skype – this can be done at <https://signup.live.com/>

You may want to choose an appropriate name for this, like [Downtown.Friday@hotmail.com](mailto:Downtown.Friday@hotmail.com) and use the name *Downtown Friday* (although it could be pretty much anything – something reasonably unique will help people find it. Remember to keep a safe note of the name and password when you set up the account, you will need them later to access Skype.

Once you have done this, go to <https://www.skype.com/en/> and download and install Skype (if you already have and use Skype, simply log out of your account, and log in with the new account).

Open Skype and log in with the details used to create your group's Microsoft account, you are ready to host your first meeting!

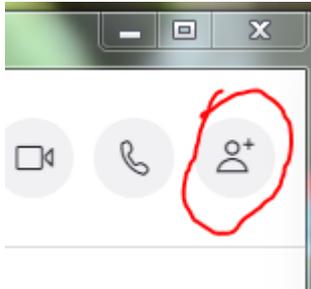
Note that it can take a while for new users to register on the system so that they can be found using the search facility. You might find it easier to wait for an hour or so after setting up the account before people start looking for you.

If you have the Skype contact details for those who will want to join the group you can send them a message so it is easier for them to find you, or they can search for the group's Skype name.

## Starting the meeting

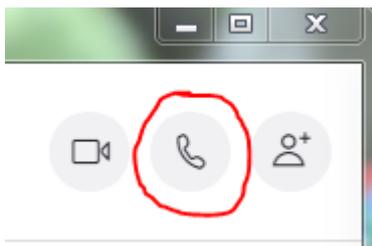
It is much easier if you have all the contacts that will want to join the meeting as contacts on Skype account before you attempt to start it, note however that it is possible to add people even when the meeting is in progress.

It is possible to start a call with several people at once, or simply add them one by one – to start a group call – (this is shown on a PC, a Mac may be slightly different). In the top right hand corner of the Skype screen there will be an icon of a head with a + sign next to it



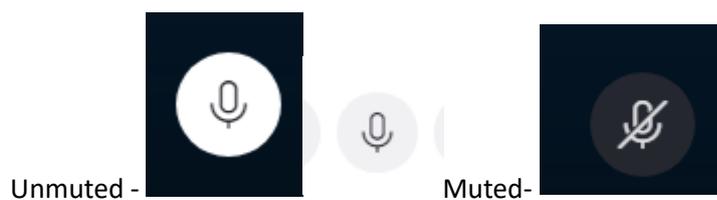
Clicking on this will present you with a list of contacts that already on your list, simply click on each one that you want to be in the call and click on the “Done” button. You are ready to start your first group call.

To start the call click on the handset icon in the top right hand corner



Skype will attempt to call all those in the list and add them to the call.

It is suggested that when anyone is not speaking the mute their microphone to remove any background noise from their environment.



## Cleaning up at the end of the call.

Once the call is over it is important to clean up afterwards, otherwise it is very easy for anyone in the group to accidentally call the group back later. To do this right click on the group at the top of the Recent Chats list – and chose “Manage group” go to the bottom where you will see each member that was on the last call and put your mouse over their name, you will see an option to “Remove” and remove each contact from the call.

Each group will need to work out its own protocol, but written material can be copied and pasted into the “Chat” box and shared with all.