

Zoom settings, hints and tips

Before you create and run your first meeting, update your settings:

After you have signed-up and signed into your Zoom account it's worth taking the time to make sure you have it set up in the most appropriate manner for your meetings. There are many settings and they may look daunting. It's just a case of working through them one at a time. Care is needed when using Zoom for the first time because some defaults may not be desirable for your group's anonymity and security. So, consult the table below and change your settings to match these before scheduling and conducting your first meeting. They will then apply to any meeting you schedule.

From the Zoom home page

Profile - edit to make sure it contains your Christian name and surname initial; add a profile pic if you wish – this obviously helps others to identify you and put them at ease.

Settings

Name	Setting	Comments
Host video	Off	People will see your profile pic (if any) to start with. Just click 'start video' button when you're ready to participate
Participants video	On	You want to see who's joining
Audio type	On	Select 'Telephone and computer audio'
Join before host	Off	Mutually exclusive with 'Waiting Room'
Use personal meeting ID (PMI) when scheduling a meeting	Off	Don't use your personal ID to schedule general meetings
Use personal meeting ID (PMI) when starting an instant meeting	On	Use for casual, one-to-one chats.
Only authenticated users can join meeting	Off	See note 1. below
Only authenticated users can join meetings from web client	Off	See note 1. below
Require a password when scheduling new meetings	On	See note 1. below
Require a password for Personal meeting ID (PMI)	On	Select 'All meetings using PMI. See note 1. below
Embed password in meeting link for one-click join	Off	If set to 'ON' then people can join just by clicking the link. If set to 'OFF' everyone will have to enter the password to join. See note 1. below
Require password for participants joining by phone	On	See note 1. below

Mute participants on entry	On	Participants can unmute themselves when ready
Upcoming meeting reminder	On	Always handy to have a reminder
Require encryption for 3 rd party endpoints	On	This doesn't currently work! Zoom 5.0 on 30 May will fix. Good security practice.
Chat	On	Tick the box 'Prevent participants from saving chat'.
Private chat	Off	Safeguarding, and keeps people's attention on the meeting.
Auto saving chats	Off	Don't want to save anything
Play sound when participants join or leave	Off	Just annoying!
File transfer	Off	Keep participants attention focused on the meeting. And for security reasons.
Feedback to Zoom	Off	Maintain personal anonymity
Display end-of-meeting experience survey	Off	Maintain personal anonymity
Co-host	On	Always good to have a co-host or two for larger meeting management. Co-hosts are assigned once the meeting is running, from the desktop client.
Polling	Off	Not sure this is any use to us
Always show meeting control toolbar	On	Tool bar appears at the bottom of the window. Handy for quick access to meeting control functions
Show Zoom windows during screen share	On	For use with screen sharing below
Screen sharing	On	Who can share? Select 'Host only' option. See note 2. below
Disable desktop/screen share for users	On	Don't want them displaying anything that might be dodgy/distracting!
Annotation	Off	Not needed
Whiteboard	Off	Not needed
Remote control	Off	Not desired
Nonverbal feedback	On	Bit of fun, clapping hands, thumbs up
Allow removed participants to re-join	Off	See note 1. below
Allow participants to rename themselves	Off	Not needed, Host can rename if they ask
Report participants to Zoom	On	See note 1. below
Hide participant profile pictures in a meeting	Off	Everyone should see who is in the meeting
Breakout room	On	Can be useful to 'screen' unknown participants See note 3.
Remote support	Off	Only turn on if you know what you are doing
Closed captioning	Off	N/A

Save captions	Off	N/A
Far end camera Control	Off	Definitely not!
Group HD video	Off	Could give performance problems if on
Virtual background	Off	Bit of fun but can be distracting. Can screen your background if it's sensitive.
Identify guest participants in the meeting/webinar	Off	N/A
Auto-answer in group chat	Off	N/A
Only show default when sending meeting invites	Off	N/A
Use HTML format for email Outlook plugin	Off	N/A
Allow users to select stereo audio in their client settings	Off	N/A
Allow users to select original sound in their client settings	Off	N/A
Select data center regions for meetings/webinars hosted by your account	On	Select 'Europe' check-box only.
Waiting room	On	Useful to screen participants before allowing into the meeting. Having one or two co-hosts can help with this.
Show a "join from browser" link	On	Limited function but useful if some of your users do not have the skills to download, install and run apps
Allow live streaming meetings	Off	N/R
When a cloud recording is available	Off	N/A
When attendees join meeting before host	Off	N/R
When a meeting is cancelled	Off	Notifies everyone but only if they are in your Zoom contacts list.
When an alternative host is set or removed from a meeting	Off	N/R
When someone scheduled a meeting for a host	Off	N/R
When the cloud recording is going to be permanently deleted from trash	Off	N/A
Blur snapshot in iOS task switcher	On	Added security / anonymity is using Apple portable devices
Invitation email	N/R	Will only work if people are in your Zoom contacts. Not recommended as you'll be forever maintaining this as well as your other contact lists.

Schedule privilege	N/R	This is where you assign another person to schedule meetings on your behalf
--------------------	-----	---

Notes:

1. The host will need to maintain vigilance to screen attendees especially those that are not AA or newcomers. Particular sensitivity is needed with the latter as this could put people off and that's the last thing we want.

"Zoom-bombing" is where people outside of AA join meetings to disrupt them by showing pornographic images and shouting racist slogans for example. This is rife among Zoom meetings and it can be a distressing experience for participants unless you take the proper precautions as outlined in the settings above! Since our meeting join codes are published on our website, anyone can join from anywhere if the settings above are not used. We need to err on the side of the newcomer but again need to watch out for anyone who is not who they seem to be.

Meetings can be locked by the host once started or individuals excluded as well to prevent disruption.

The settings are my suggestions borne out of experience of many Zoom meetings and talking to lots of other hosts and users. I suggest that each Group modifies these settings and decides on the use of One-click links, Passwords, Waiting Room, Locking or Exclusion to suit their own Group Conscience.

2. Screen sharing is a powerful function that allows the host only (as recommended in the settings) to share their screen content with everyone else. If you arrange to have a copy of the Preamble, Promises, Yellow card etc. on your computer desktop then you can use the share function to display these documents at the appropriate time in the meeting for someone to read out.
3. The 'Breakout room' is an excellent facility which could help with the situations outlined in Note 1, but you have to admit the person into the meeting first. The host can identify an unfamiliar face and use the private message facility to ask them tactfully if they are new to AA or just this meeting. If they are a newcomer the Host can ask if they would like to talk privately with someone who will explain how the meeting runs and a bit about AA. The host can then create a breakout room and assign the newcomer and one or two others to it. They can talk privately outside the meeting in the breakout room and re-join the main meeting afterwards.

General guidance, preparation, etiquette and what to expect - parts of this are on the Southdown website – <http://www.aa-gb.org/southdown>

- Whichever conferencing tool you use you should edit your profile to contain your christian name and surname initial. This helps with identification and is less likely to be misconstrued when Hosts are admitting people into meetings. An appropriate profile picture also help too.
- Always schedule meetings and use the unique meeting ID generated. It's the bit that starts <https://...> Don't give out your personal meeting ID for general meetings. Send this, the 9 or 11-digit meeting ID and password to everyone who wants to attend.
- When you host a meeting make sure someone else is actually running it i.e. the Secretary / Chair, so you can concentrate on controlling things.
- It is suggested you start the call up to 30 minutes in advance of the meeting start so you can get organised and help those having problems. It can be like a 'chat room' at this time if you allow it. During this time participants can get tea/coffee go to the loo etc.!
- Advise participants to close all other internet applications on their devices as they impact the quality of the meeting call. If their connection is dropped, they should click on the "JOIN" link again.
- Please turn off or silence mobile phones if you are not using them to attend this meeting.
- Advise participants to sit with any light in front of them otherwise they will be in silhouette.
- Once the meeting starts then as far as possible it will be conducted as if everyone is in a room together i.e. only one person is speaking at any one time. It is customary for everyone to mute their microphones unless they are going to speak. This reduces noise which gets worse the more participants there are. If several people try to speak at once the audio feed gets really muddled. You will normally have a function to mute everyone except the current speaker. If participants wish to speak get them to raise their hand. Zoom has a 'raise hand' option and a hand icon will appear in your window. Or you can just ask them to unmute when they want to speak. You'll need to manage this.
- This obviously affects the feel of the meetings we are used to when we are in the same room. We'll have to get used to it.
- If there are many participants or the meeting quality suffers - e.g. audio or video dropouts, you should try to compensate by turning off the video feed for everyone.
- Meeting Hosts usually stay online after the meeting has finished to assess how it went, have a conscience meeting etc.