What is Zoom?

For those who weren't familiar with Zoom prior to practicing social distancing, it's a video- and audio- conferencing and [screen-sharing](#) tool that allows [up to 1,000 participants](#) to conference remotely at once.

Zoom's CEO, Eric Yuan, announced that Zoom will be removing the 40-minute time limit for calls on the platform's free plan for K-12 schools in countries all around the world, including nearly 60,000 K-12 schools in the United States, which can be accessed for their teachers and students

To join a meeting, you can go to the [Zoom website](#) or click on the link in your meeting invitation, where you'll be prompted to run [the Zoom app](#), which you can install via the ZoomLauncher.zip file that automatically downloads. You can also dial-in by [phone via toll number](#). The Zoom app extension can be added to the chrome browser and is deployed to all Chromebook devices.

Tips for working from home

If you're Zooming daily for the foreseeable future, be mindful of what exactly your others can see. For starters: what's behind you. Know what falls within the field of view of your laptop camera — as in, make sure you're wearing pants.

Zoom also has a feature called [attention tracking](#), which lets the meeting host know if a participant doesn't have the meeting window in focus for more than 30 seconds and you just have Zoom meeting open in the background, others can tell if a participant is not paying attention, the host will see a clock icon next to their name in the Manage Participants panel.

Remember that you don't have to turn on both your audio and video. You will be prompted to first enable your audio, which thankfully means no accidentally turning on your video camera when you're not exactly camera-ready. To connect your video, you need to click the Start Video camera icon at the bottom of your screen. And be sure to [mute yourself](#) — so you are prepared for the call. To do this, click on the Mute microphone icon on the bottom left of your screen.

How to use Zoom for online classes

With time limits lifted on the Basic plans for K-12 schools across the world, it is easier than ever to conduct online classes. Teachers can use Zoom to schedule classes and meetings. [Breakout rooms](#) allow you to divide your Zoom conference into up to 50 separate sessions with audio, video, and screen-sharing capabilities, which is ideal for group work. To enable this, go to Account Management > [Account Settings](#) > Meeting > Breakout Room. The host of the main room can jump between breakout rooms to check in on the group learning.

Zoom also has collaborative features like [whiteboarding](#), [annotation tools for screen-sharing](#), [nonverbal feedback](#) to mimic raising your hand in class, and [local recording](#) so that students can easily revisit lectures.