

Platforms

Common ones include:

- Google Hangouts
- GoToMeeting/GoToWebinar
- Zoom
- Webex



The platform, the level of the subscription, and the features you select depend upon what you need/want to accomplish. Check out Consumer Reports for comparisons. Many platforms have free versions or trials to test.

Meetings

- Interactive
- Equal participation & Exchange
- Smaller groups
- Fewer controls and security features

Webinars

- Presenter focused
- More passive audience
- Larger groups/classes
- More controls and security features

Audio/Sound

Headsets or microphones are usually better quality will improve audio output. They can reduce ambient noise and are less likely to pick up your computer or laptop fan. Adjust your settings and make sure that you select the correct speaker and microphone under the audio settings for the meeting platform. Built-in microphones can work, but they pickup laptop and room noises more. If connections are poor, using your phone for audio can improve poor audio as a last resort.

Lighting/Camera

Position the camera at eye level; try using a box to adjust the placement if it is too low.

Pay attention to the lighting position. Place a good light in front of you and behind the camera.

Selfie lights can improve lighting if it is necessary and cannot find a lamp or window that works.

Tools/Connection

Wired Connection instead of Wi-Fi if possible, otherwise stay close to the wireless router.

Close all unneeded applications like email, music, and browsers. They can take up bandwidth and be disruptive with sound notifications that are audible to other attendees.

Test connections speed - www.speedtest.net or search “speed test” on Google or Bing.

Security

- Lock meetings.
- Password for meetings as an extra precaution.
- Do you know everyone? Consider Webinar subscriptions instead of meetings.
- Make sure you are using a secure connection – Wi-Fi with password – it is encrypted. Or, try using a VPN if possible.

Etiquette

- Mute when join. Unmute when want to start talking.
- Arrive early to adjust audio, camera, notes, and presentation.
- Present a professional appearance.
 - Dress, Smile, Don't eat.
- Limit Distractions – phone.
- Be aware of your background and surroundings.

Presentations

Consider dual monitors if you have the option. This can allow you to manage the meeting controls, your presentation, and see your notes more easily. Use handouts. Record and share the recording when possible for attendees that are not able to join the live event.

Suggested Resources

- Lynda.com – tutorials on leading virtual meetings – access from www.orpl.org with your library card and PIN
- [Consumer Reports](#) – reviews and comparisons on meeting platforms and tips on meetings. – access from www.orpl.org with your library card and PIN
- Training and tutorials from your chosen platform.
- Meeting tips in general:
 - [Ted Talk: Steven Rogelberg, The Power of You to Truly Make Meetings Work](#)
 - [Ted Talk: David Grady, How to Save the World or at least yourself from bad meetings](#)