



## Panning in on Zoom



I've had several people enquire about Zoom, so thought that would make for a nice, timely topic. If you are not familiar with Zoom and would like to enjoy time with your singing friends while still remaining safe at home, this article is for you. If you are already using Zoom, this article

is still for you, because I've discovered a few little-known features that might be quite beneficial to extend your online meeting possibilities.

Zoom is one of the leading video conferencing platforms, and it is the service that BHS, the FWD, and many chapters are using to hold online meetings and even rehearsals. The best part about Zoom is that in most cases it is totally free. You can host an infinite number of meetings with as many as 100 people; one caveat is that a meeting having greater than two people is limited to 45 minutes unless the person hosting the meeting has a paid subscription. So, what many chapters are doing is having one person with a paid subscription designated to set up and host the meetings, and all the other members can participate with free accounts.

In order to use Zoom you will need either a PC or Mac computer, a tablet, or a Smartphone. If you will be using Zoom with others nearby it is best to use either a headset or ear pods. While a webcam is not necessary it will certainly improve the experience for everyone attending the video conference – even if you haven't shaved in two months and desperately need a haircut. It should be noted that some features are not available on tablets or smartphones -- particularly Android – but none that would preclude their use.

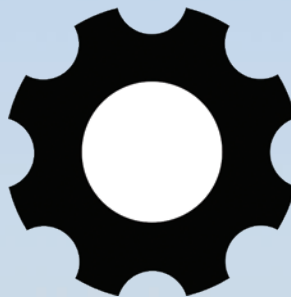
### Getting started

1. Follow this link: <https://zoom.us/support/download> On your computer (Mac/PC) it will automatically start downloading the program, or it will provide

you with the correct link for your mobile device.

2. Follow the prompts and install the app.
3. Register with your email address or using Facebook or Google.

### Setting up



Open the Zoom app by clicking its icon, a white video camera against a light blue background.

After signing in, go to the Settings/Preferences in the top right corner of your initial screen. It looks like a little cog wheel (which has become the universal standard for Settings) and only

appears on the Home screen. There are a number of options to set up prior to starting your first meeting.

**General** – these are settings to customize some of the basic application features.

**Video** – this allows you to set and adjust your camera.

**Audio** – use this to select your microphone and speakers and to test and adjust the volume levels.

**Chat** – various settings to customize the chat windows to your liking.

**Virtual Background** – this is entirely optional, but you can have some fun making it look like you are at the beach or anywhere but your home office; you can even use your own photos.

**Recording** – these are some of the options in case you want to record your meeting.

**Profile** – This is where you can set your name and a picture of yourself – preferably a headshot. As an added benefit, your profile picture will display in your box when your video (camera) is turned off.

**Keyboard Shortcuts** – while you can edit many of these settings, they are probably best left alone, so just treat this as documentation and learn how you can tap a few keys instead of using your mouse/trackpad to get some things done.

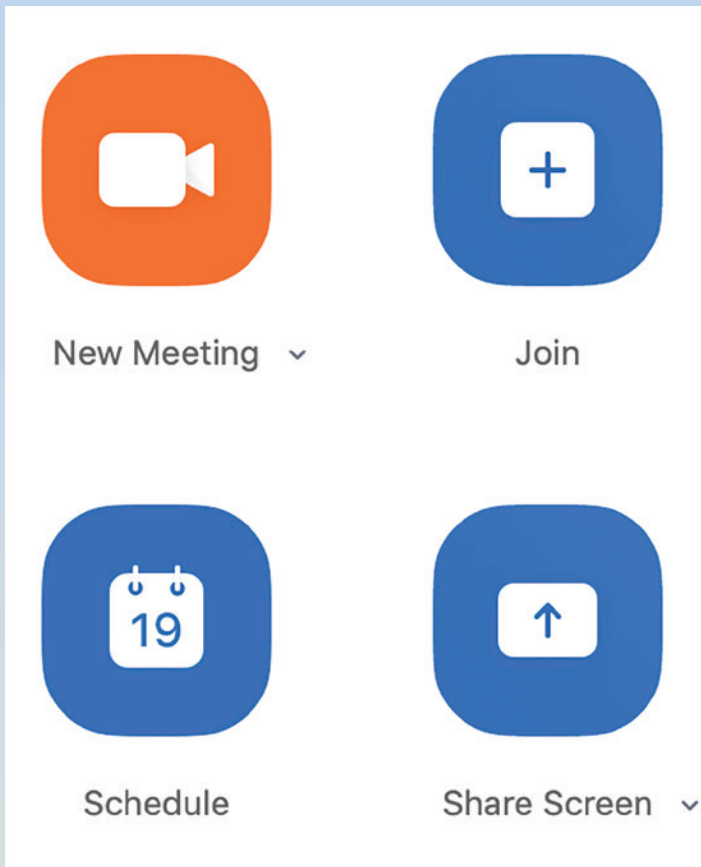
**Accessibility** – you'll find settings for Closed Captioning as well as text size here.

### Home



There are four main functions in the Home screen: New Meeting, Join, Schedule, and Share Screen. Note that New Meeting and Share Screen both have a little down arrow next to the caption; those arrows indicate additional options are available by using

right-click/two-finger-tap.



meeting. Channels can be public or private.

**Join a Channel** – use this to join channels that others in your organization have set up.

**Add an App** – there are hundreds of applications that can be integrated with Zoom to further enhance your meeting capabilities. One such application is Trello which can be very useful for running your chapter board and committee meetings like clockwork. The best thing to do is explore and see what’s out there.

## Chat



Zoom provides a chat feature that can be used during video meetings, but it also has chat capabilities that are independent of meetings. The latter can be initiated by clicking the second icon at the top of the Zoom window which says “Chat”.

It can be used to send messages and files to contacts or groups. You’ll want to spend a little time building your contacts before using this feature.

## Meetings



The third icon at the top of the Zoom window is ‘Meetings’. This lists all of your upcoming and recorded meetings. If you are the host, you may edit the meeting options, copy the invitation to send to others, and start the meeting at the appointed time.

There is one additional option called ‘Join from a Room’. Most likely this is something you will not use unless you are in a physical conference room that is set up for Zoom Rooms, so for the most part you can just ignore it.

## Security

There are several things you can do to ensure privacy and safety during your Zoom meeting. These are all controlled when you schedule your meeting.

**Meeting ID and Password** – by default Zoom will generate a unique meeting id and password to protect your privacy. If you prefer to use your own personal ID or not require a password you can disable these options as you set up the meeting.

The other security options are all hidden, and can be revealed by clicking the little down arrow under ‘Advanced Options’.

**Waiting Room** – when enabled, your meeting participants will automatically be placed in a waiting room. This gives you, as host, the option to select which person

New Meeting ▾

Join

Schedule

Share Screen ▾

**New Meeting** – initiates an “instant” meeting. Options include starting with video on, and using your personal meeting ID rather than one that is randomly generated.

**Join** – allows you to join a meeting to which you have been invited.

**Schedule** – allows you to schedule meetings in advance and send the meeting information to those who should attend.

**Share screen** – this is one way to initiate the sharing of your computer screen which could be the entire screen or a specific program window. One important option that comes into play if you are sharing something that itself has audio, e.g., an audio or video clip, is the ability for Zoom to use the computer sound directly rather than having it come through your microphone.

## Contacts



To manage your contacts, click on the fourth icon at the top of the Zoom app which says ‘Contacts’.

Click on the plus sign and select ‘Add a contact’. Once you have your contacts set up you can click on their name to start a chat or meeting.

**Create a Channel** – Channels can be used to place your contacts into one or more groups, and you can use groups to easily start a group chat or group

you want to admit. From a security standpoint I can see where this gives an added layer, but in practical use I find it annoying and so disable it regularly. By the way, if you forget to disable it when you set up the meeting you can disable while the meeting is in session by clicking 'Safety'.

**Enable join before host** – allows others to join the meeting before you do. Since a meeting can run up to 24 hours it's not like the meter is running, so unless that bothers you I suggest setting that option to enabled.

**Only authenticated users can join** – this requires all participants to have registered for and be logged into their Zoom account before they are allowed to join. The way I see it, a hacker can create a Zoom account just as easily as you can, so I'm not sure what this buys you, so I suggest it be disabled.

## Alternative Hosts

When scheduling a meeting it is possible to designate by email address one or more people who can host the meeting on your behalf. While this sounds great, the reality is that those persons need to have paid Zoom subscriptions. Although that's a bit of a bummer, it does not mean that you, the designated host, need to be at every single meeting. The workaround is to have the alternate host join the meeting with you a couple minutes early, select them from participants, right-click and choose 'Make Host'. Once that completes you may leave the meeting and let the alternative host take over.

## In a Zoom Meeting

When you are in a Zoom meeting a control board appears at the bottom of the screen. If you are the host you will have more options than do the regular participants. The buttons are (left to right):

**Mute** – disables/enables your audio (microphone).

**Stop Video** – disables/enables video (camera).

**Security** – disables/enables various options participants have during a meeting (host only).

**Participants** – lists participants (host can manage).

**Chat** – opens a message box to send private or public (everyone) messages

**Share Screen** – introduces various options to display information from your device to the other people in the meeting. A reminder that if you are presenting anything with sound playback, during the share screen dialog be sure to check the box for 'Share computer sound' in the lower left corner of the screen. Other sharing options include a **Whiteboard** and sharing your iPhone/iPad via Airplay or by cable connection.

**Record** – initiates recording of the meeting. While this is typically done by the host and shared later in the cloud, visitors may also record, but can only store the file on their own device.

**Breakout rooms** – this allows the host to divide participants into multiple mini-meetings while still having the main meeting in session. Hey music team: that sounds like sectionals to me!

**Reactions** – places a thumbs up or applause emoticon on the meeting window to display for a few seconds.

## Zoom in vivo



The cover for this issue of *Westunes* was created from screen shots taken while attending a weekly Zoom meeting held by the Masters of Harmony.

## Conclusion

As usual, I've given you a lot to digest. But really the best way to develop expertise on using Zoom is to roll up your sleeves and dig in. Please keep in mind that Zoom, like most good software, is constantly evolving, so what I've described here may be a little different in the future.

If you still want to learn more about Zoom and all its potential, here are a couple of links.

Zoom support during the COVID-19 pandemic – more tips, training and resources. <https://us02web.zoom.us/docs/en-us/covid19.html>

Virtual meeting equipment – a small investment to improve virtual meeting quality for you and others <https://www.johnarthurbooks.com/virtual-meeting-equipment/>