

ZOOM Etiquette

Isn't technology amazing? Using ZOOM video conferencing has made it possible to attend a class from the comfort of our own homes. Many of us have become friends over the years so we have missed seeing each other face-to-face.

Thing is, you're on camera now. You may not be aware of what other participants see or hear on their end. We are still learning how to use this tool and communicate with consideration for others. Many members use a computer and laptop monitor in gallery view and see everything in everyone's rooms...simultaneously.

With that in mind, here are some tips and tricks that can help all of us be savvy ZOOM users:

- * Learn how to use the chat feature. This is where you can type a comment, ask a question to the moderator, or raise your hand to be in line to speak. If you think you may forget what you want to say, keep a pad and pencil handy to jot it down until the moderator calls on you. This is just like passing around the microphone in the classroom. Patience and courtesy please.
- * If you join the call late, no need to explain or apologize; you're forgiven. Again just like in the classroom, it is not necessary to interrupt who is speaking. Make sure your mute feature is on; we will see you joined us.
- * Continuously check that your mic is on "mute." When even one person's background noise is audible, to the rest of us, it can sound like a jaunt to the barnyard and louder than you think. Some of us have to have our volume up so we can hear better.
- * Keep your camera at eye level no matter the device you are using. If you sit about 4 feet from the lens we will see your face, if you raise your hand, etc. When your camera is too low, we see body parts that you probably wouldn't want to expose or angles most us would not consider flattering. We now understand what it's like to be celebrities!
- * If you can, have a light source on your face. A lamp works well if not too close or just sitting near a window where light is cast on your face. We want to see what you look like!
- * While you are on camera, be aware we see *everything*. Personal grooming is a no-no. Drinking a beverage is OK; making food or eating a meal is discouraged. Touching the face frequently is too much motion for those seeing you and very distracting.
- * Speaking of moving your device or being in motion while conferencing – that's really hard on the eyes. It can be very dizzying on a monitor so close your view to others if you want to move around. And remember if your camera is on, you may have just positioned it somewhere you will regret.
- * The conference host would like to think the session is interesting and you are engaged as a participant. If you did not get enough sleep the night before or need to take a break, it is okay to leave the conference. If we can see your eyes are closed too long, someone may panic and call 911!

These reminders should take you back to the social manners we grew up with as children attending school. It is all about remembering we can be SEEN AND HEARD so let's be the best we can for each other! ZOOM may be the only way we can conduct classes this year.

Did we say mute enough? 😊