

# How to Look Good on Zoom

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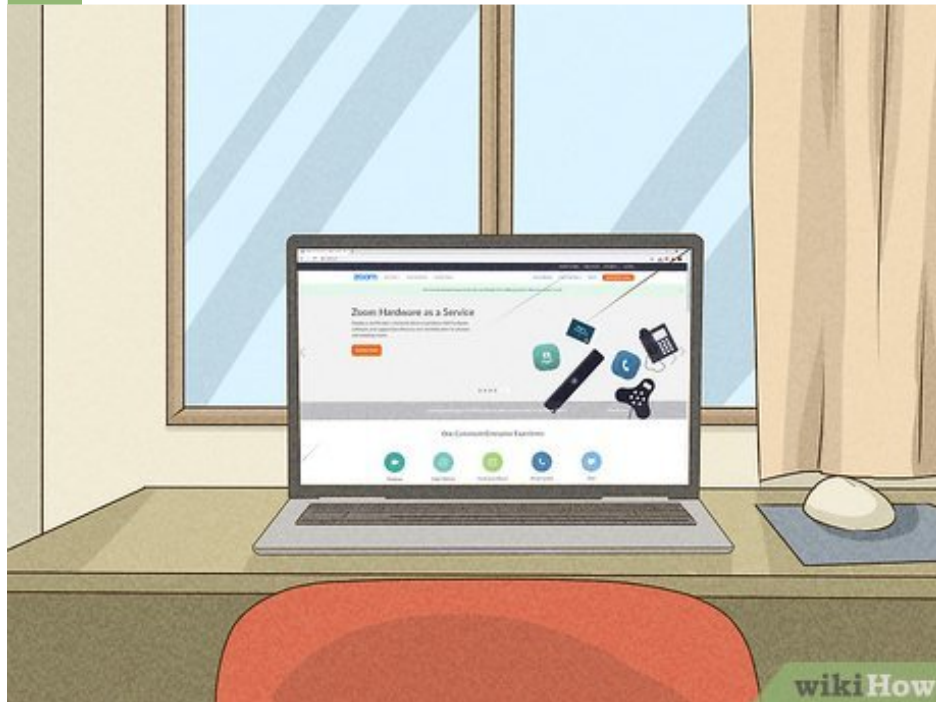
Co-authored by Shelley Golden 🌱 and 12 contributors

Last Updated: January 11, 2021

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Zoom calls have become the bread and butter of many workplaces, classrooms and families. Zoom is a really convenient replacement for face-to-face contact, but it's important to still look as polished and professional as possible. Before you join your next call, take a few minutes to optimize your setup so you can look your best during your next Zoom meeting!

## Method 1

### Setting Up Your Camera and Lighting



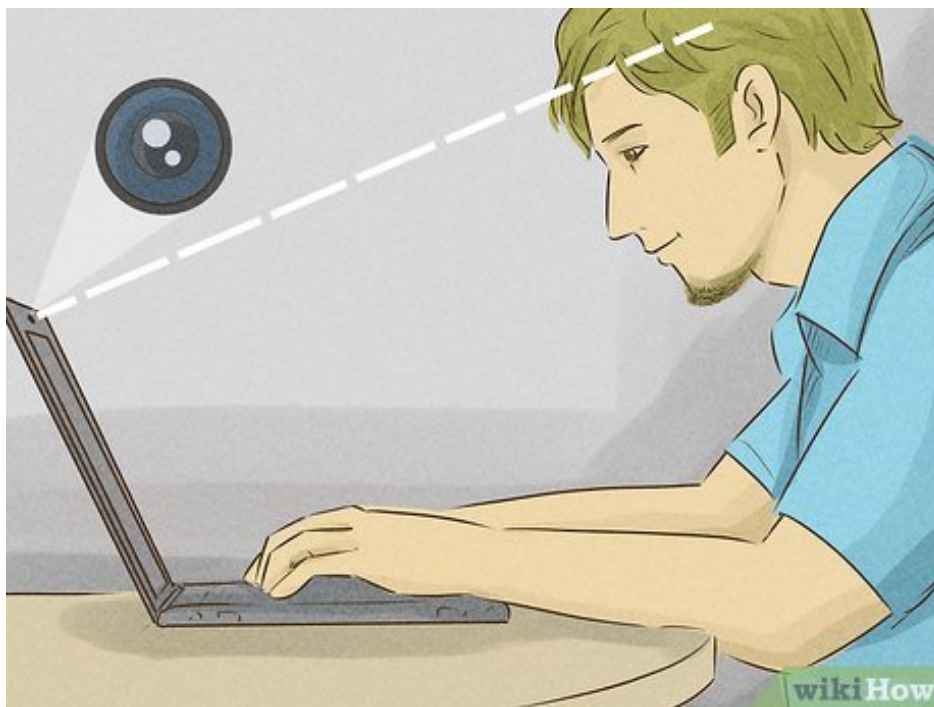
**1** **Flip your seating arrangement so the window light is facing you.** Check the lighting situation in the room where you usually attend your Zoom meetings. Are you facing the window, or is your back to it? Whenever possible, try to switch your setup so that you're facing the window head-on. This gives you a lot of natural light, and will help you look really sharp on camera.<sup>[1]</sup>

- If your back is to the window, the sunlight could make your video look especially harsh.



**2 Place a couple lamps behind your computer if you're not near a window.** Don't worry if your home doesn't have a lot of natural light. Do the best that you can with what you have, and set up desk lamps behind your laptop or tablet. This will help you stay illuminated on camera without overwhelming any other members of the video call.<sup>[2]</sup>

- It's best to have two additional lamps at 10:00 and 2:00 angled toward your face—not behind your computer.<sup>[3]</sup>
- Smaller lamps works best for this.



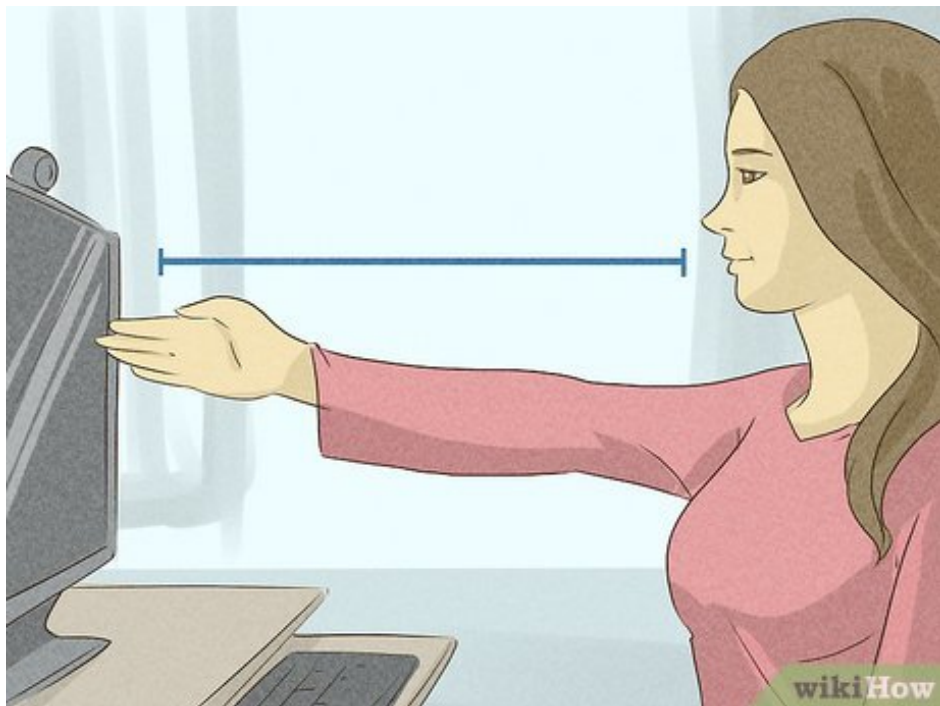
**3 Center your camera at eye level.** Line up your laptop, tablet, or phone camera so it's roughly in line with your eyes. If the camera is too low, you won't be displaying a very flattering view to the other members of the call. Instead, stack books or other sturdy items beneath your webcam or tablet until your camera is at the right angle.<sup>[4]</sup>

- If your camera is too low, it may look like you have a double-chin to the camera.



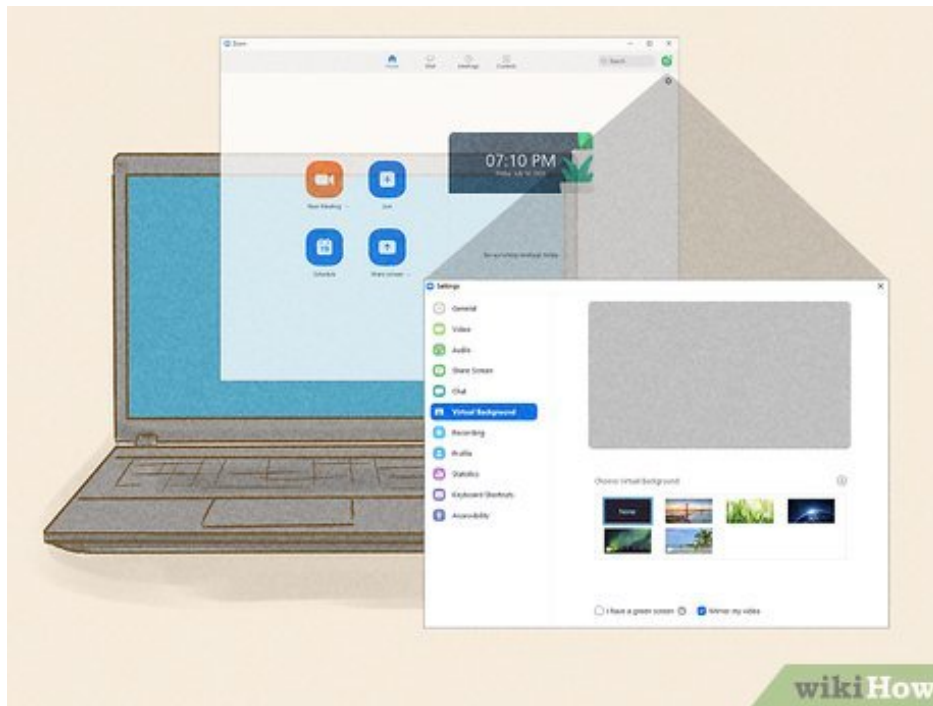
**4** **Seat yourself in front of a plain background.** <sup>[5]</sup> Find a space in your room that doesn't have a lot of distractions, like piles of paper or other junk. Instead, try to frame yourself in front of a plain wall with minimal art, or something simple, like a bookcase. Simple backgrounds will help you look even more professional on camera. <sup>[6]</sup>

- For instance, try to set up your camera in front of a plain wall without any major distractions, like a TV.



**5** **Sit at least an arm's length behind the camera.** Keep in mind that a lot of cameras have a wide-angle lens, which isn't very flattering when you're sitting up close. Instead, back yourself up from the camera so your entire face is captured onscreen. <sup>[7]</sup> Ideally, you want to keep yourself centered in front of the camera without being too zoomed in. <sup>[8]</sup>

- Have your eyes in the top third of your screen, with a small bit of open space above your head. Your armpits should be at the bottom of the screen. <sup>[9]</sup>



**6 Use a virtual background if your space is cluttered.** Visit the “settings” section of your Zoom program and tap or click on “Virtual Background.” Pick out 1 of the generic stock photos offered by Zoom, or upload your own picture to use as a background. Ultimately, choose a picture that enhances your video without being a distraction.<sup>[10]</sup>

- For instance, you can pick out a picture from a family vacation, or any other nice photo that you think would work well as a background.
- A background picture of a garden or park would be a better background than a crowded beach or another busy photo.



**1** **Get dressed and ready for the day like you usually would.** Follow your morning routine as though you're attending an in-person meeting. Take a shower and get dressed in an outfit that you'd wear for work, like a nice blouse, polo shirt, dress shirt, or blazer. Avoid the temptation to stay in your pajamas all day—as comfortable as they may be, they won't look very professional for your Zoom call.<sup>[11]</sup>

- You don't have to get completely dressed up! What matters most is that you're dressed professionally from the waist-up, where people will see you.



**2** **Wear shirts with bright, solid colors that show up well on camera.** <sup>[12]</sup> Search through your closet for a nice-looking shirt that's a bold, solid color, like blue, red, green, teal, or something else. Avoid clothes that are really dark, like black, or have a lot of funky patterns, like zebra stripes or floral designs—these don't show up well on camera, and won't make you look very sharp.<sup>[13]</sup>

- For instance, a black shirt or leopard-print blouse won't look very flattering on camera.



**3 Blot away any oil so you don't look sweaty.** Grab a sheet of blotting paper and soak up any sweaty sections of your skin. Try to blot away as much sweat as possible so your complexion doesn't look shiny during the call.<sup>[14]</sup>

- You can find blotting paper online or at most stores that sell beauty products.



**4 Even out your complexion with a tinted moisturizer if you'd like.** Rub a pea-sized amount of moisturizer over your cheeks, forehead, nose, or any place where your skin looks uneven. Check that the product is thoroughly rubbed in before your video call starts, so you look as professional as possible.<sup>[15]</sup>

- You can get tinted moisturizer from your local beauty shop or drug store.



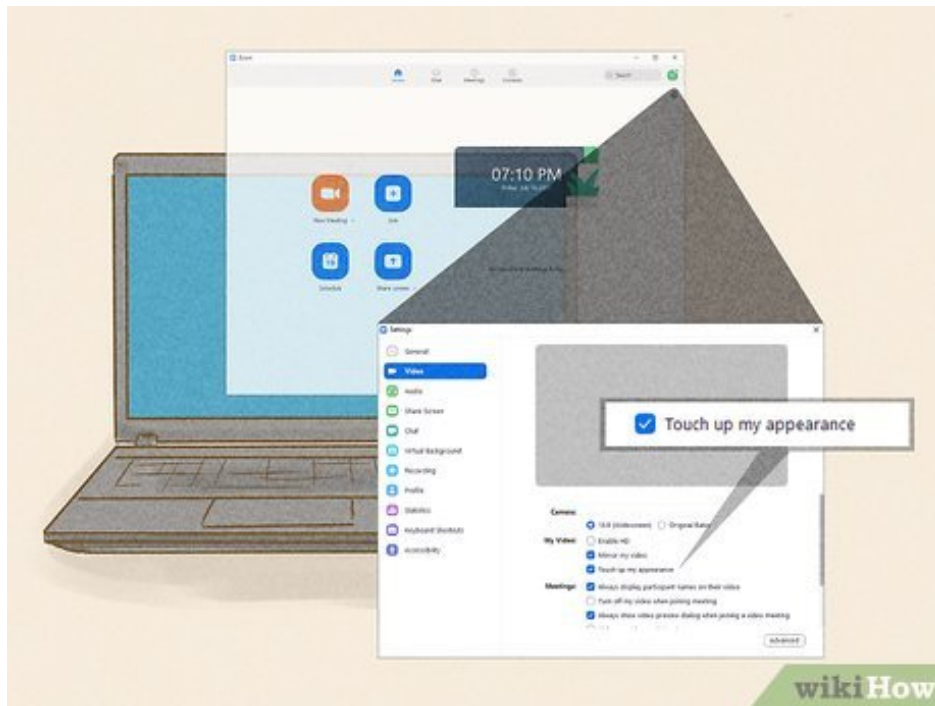
**5 Powder your face to prevent any obvious sweat.** Find a setting powder that matches your skin tone, so your complexion looks balanced out. Pat the powder all over your cheeks, chin, forehead, nose, or any area that looks especially sweaty or moist. For a really smooth look, apply the powder with a large powder brush.<sup>[16]</sup>

- You can find setting powder at your local drugstore or beauty shop.
- Powder is a great solution for anyone, even if you don't wear makeup usually.



**6 Swipe on some lip balm if your lips are chapped.** Lick your lips to see if they feel dry and chapped. If your lips are looking a little worse for wear, apply a coat of lip balm before you join your video call.<sup>[17]</sup>

- If you'd like to look extra classy, swipe on some lipstick or lip gloss as well.



**7** Select the “touch up my appearance” setting on Zoom for an easy option. Tap or click on the settings menu on your Zoom program. Select the “video” settings, and then pick the “touch up my appearance” button. This feature smooths out any obvious blemishes or marks, and helps add an extra layer of polish to your appearance.<sup>[18]</sup>

- This is a great option if you're in a rush and don't have time to apply any makeup.



**8** Preview your appearance before you go live. Toggle your settings so the Zoom interface shows you a small preview video before sending you into a call. At this point, take a few seconds to make sure your outfit looks good and your appearance looks sharp. If you're unhappy with your outfit, you can take a minute or 2 to make the necessary adjustments before you join.<sup>[19]</sup>

## Community Q&A

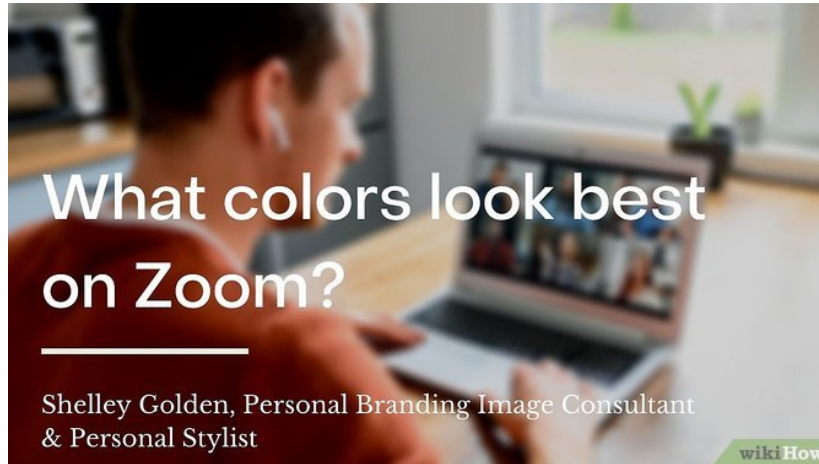


Question

What colors look best on Zoom?



**Shelley Golden**  
Personal Branding Image Consultant & Personal Stylist  
Expert Answer



Helpful 0 Not Helpful 0

Question

How do I look good on Zoom calls?



**Shelley Golden**  
Personal Branding Image Consultant & Personal Stylist  
Expert Answer

Sit somewhere you have a window facing you or use a couple of lamps to ensure you have good, even lighting in your Zoom call. Then, choose an outfit with bright, solid colors, which will help you stand out on the call.

Helpful 20 Not Helpful 8

Question

What if your virtual background looks glitchy? What do you do?



**Vatsalya Gupta**  
Community Answer

Download a green screen for that. It makes the background clear and also better.

Helpful 31 Not Helpful 13

Question

What if my school has said to be in uniform?



**Blue fire45671**  
Community Answer

Then you should just dress and follow your usual routine to get ready. If you like, you could add a personal touch like a scarf or a necklace if it's allowed.

Helpful 20 Not Helpful 9

Question

What if you cannot face a window?



**Blue fire45671**  
Community Answer

If you can't face a window, then you could face another source of light, like a lamp.

Helpful 15 Not Helpful 6

Question

What if I myself doesn't look good on the camera?



SmartOwl01  
Community Answer

Go to "Video Settings". Use the button saying "Touch up my appearance" and pull the line as far to the right as you can.

Helpful 6 Not Helpful 4

Question

I don't know what is wrong but I look normal in my camera but in Zoom, my video appears black. I look very black. What to do ?



Gabrielle Harding \_ Student - AlstonRidgeMS  
Community Answer

Go to a place where the light is facing you. Being in front of the light can be a cause of this.

Helpful 5 Not Helpful 2

Question

What if I'm trying to impress a boy in my Zoom class?



SmartOwl01  
Community Answer

You might want to lay off the makeup. You can impress a boy by not caring how you look like on the outside. It's inside beauty that really matters. Also, pretend like he isn't in the class and act like you normally would with your friends.

Helpful 17 Not Helpful 10

Question

I have a huge window in front of me in my Zoom meetings, and the lighting is very good, but I can barely see because of the light. And I am always squinting, what should I do?



Joe momma  
Community Answer

Maybe drape a very thin sheet or curtain over it but not to the point where you can't see any light. You won't be squinting and you will still have some natural light.

Helpful 1 Not Helpful 1

Question

What if I cannot find up the "touch up my appearance" or " virtual background"?



KathylsLiterallyClever  
Community Answer

The "touch up my appearance" button is only on computers. Go to "test audio" and click "video" below "general". There is a scroll which can touch up your appearance.

Helpful 3 Not Helpful 4



Tips

- If the light in your room is unflattering, try placing yellow and fuchsia post-it notes over your lamps to make your skin tone look more natural.[20]
- Always keep yourself muted unless you're sharing something in the meeting. You never know what kind of background noise will pop up![21]
- Upgrade your webcam if it's built into your computer. If your camera has 720p quality, you'll be better off purchasing a USB webcam that plugs into your computer or laptop. This way, you can look really crisp and professional in your video calls.[22]

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## About This Article



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Personal Branding Image Consultant & Personal Stylist

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This article was co-authored by **Shelley Golden**. Shelley Golden is the founder of Shelley Golden Style based in the San Francisco Bay Area. With over 20 years of fashion and visual arts experience, Shelley has worked for The International Academy of Merchandise and Design in Chicago, the Wellesley Historical Society, and at Bloom formerly: Image For Success. Shelley is a certified Color Consultant from The Image and Color Institute International and a Color Specialist Member of Color Designers International (CDI). Shelley holds a BS in Textile and Business from Arizona State University and was rated a Top Pro of 2018 by Thumbtack. This article has been viewed 49,966 times.

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Co-authors: **12**

Updated: **January 11, 2021**

Views: **49,966**

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