

# The Dos and Don'ts of Virtual Meetings

*We're all getting to know the benefits, challenges and pitfalls of videoconferencing a little bit better these days. A virtual meeting is a fantastic alternative to meeting face-to-face, especially while we're staying home to stay healthy.*

Meeting on-camera can also make for [unintentional comedy gold](#) when things go off the rails. If you don't want to be [that guy](#), take a look at our list of mistakes that are easily avoided and best practices to keep your virtual meeting on track.

- DON'T be in the dark, or so bright that it blinds everyone else. The experience of a video call is that others can see your face and gauge your reactions, so don't take that away from your meeting partners with a bad video image.
- DO practice [good lighting](#) while you're on camera. A room with good natural light or a desk lamp casting soft light on your face should do the trick. Also, make sure lights behind you are dimmed or turned off, to avoid looking like a shadow of your self.
- DON'T let your background get more attention than you. You want to avoid [busy or messy backgrounds](#) and high-traffic areas, to minimize any unexpected guest appearances. Pro tip: generally speaking, nobody wants to see your bathroom.
- DO check the angle of your webcam and what's showing up behind you. Take a moment to clean up what's on the floor or arrange that shelf more neatly. It's fine to have something interesting in the background. Just make sure it isn't too interesting.
- DON'T leave your microphone open when you aren't talking. Nobody wants to hear the commentary from your TV or the sound of you chewing that last bite of burrito. The background noise is an unwelcome distraction to the purpose of your meeting.
- DO be aware that you're being heard, and make sure you mute your mic when it's someone else's turn to talk. It shows respect for the person talking and allows everyone to focus on what they're talking about. Also, remember to turn that mic back on when you have a comment!



- DON'T forget that you're on camera. As we get used to being "live" it's easy to forget that you're more visible than usual during a virtual meeting. Try not to fidget or look distracted while you're supposed to be paying attention.
- DO be an engaged and attentive participant in the meeting. It's OK to multitask a bit during the meeting (we all do it), but try not to make it too obvious. Make sure that anything you're doing is something you don't mind your professional colleagues and customers seeing.
- And finally, DON'T participate in a virtual meeting from a bathroom, public rest room, or lavatory of any kind. Just don't. Please. We all thank you in advance.

Armed with this knowledge, DO be a productive, engaged, and only lightly-multitasking part of your virtual team. You'll be a webcam star before you know it.