

Best Practices for Securing Your Virtual Classroom & Meetings

OVERVIEW

Zoom has helped thousands of schools and teachers around the world quickly shift to remote virtual learning, and we want all of them to have the same productive environment as their traditional classroom settings.

Zoom comes pre-stocked with numerous security features designed to control online classrooms, prevent disruption, and help educators effectively teach remotely. Here are some best practices for securing your virtual classroom or meetings using Zoom.

Lock your virtual classroom

Did you know you can lock a Zoom session that's already started, so that no one else can join? It's kind of like closing the classroom door after the bell. Give students a few minutes to file in and then click Participants at the bottom of your Zoom window. In the Participants pop-up, click the button that says Lock Meeting.

[How to lock your classroom](#)

Control screen sharing

To give instructors more control over what students are seeing and prevent them from sharing random content, Zoom [recently updated](#) the default screen-sharing settings for our education users.

Sharing privileges are now set to "Host Only," so teachers by default are the only ones who can share content in class.

However, if students need to share their work with the group, you can allow screen sharing in the host controls. Click the arrow next to Share Screen and then Advanced Sharing Options. Under "Who can share?" choose "Only Host" and close the window. You can also change the default sharing option to All Participants in your Zoom [settings](#).

[How to manage screen sharing](#)

Enable the Waiting Room

The [Waiting Room](#) feature is one of the best ways to protect your Zoom virtual classroom and keep out those who aren't supposed to be there.

When enabled, you have two options for who hits the Waiting Room before entering a class:

1. All Participants will send everyone to the virtual waiting area, where you can admit them individually or all at once.
2. Guest Participants Only allows known students to skip the Waiting Room and join but sends anyone not signed in/part of your school into the virtual waiting area.

The virtual Waiting Room can be enabled for every class (in your settings) or for individual classes at the scheduling level.

*Update: Starting March 31, the Waiting Room feature will be automatically turned on by default. Visit our [support page](#) for more information on adjusting **your Waiting Room settings**.*

Lock down the chat

Teachers can restrict the in-class chat so students cannot privately message other students. We'd recommend controlling chat access in your in-meeting toolbar controls (rather than disabling it altogether) so students can still interact with the teacher as needed.

[How to control chat access](#)

Remove a participant

If someone who's not meant to be there somehow manages to join your virtual classroom, you can easily remove them from the Participants menu. Hover over their name, and the Remove option (among other options) will appear. Click to remove them from your virtual classroom, and they won't be allowed back in.

[How to remove a participant](#)

As part of our [in meeting security features](#) to help you keep your meetings secure, the meeting host can report a user during a meeting. The host is able to select which users they would like to report, include any written details, and add attachments. This report is automatically sent to the Zoom Trust and Safety team to evaluate any misuse of the platform and block a user if necessary.

[Enabling the Report feature](#)

[Using the Report feature](#)

Security options when scheduling a class

The cool thing about Zoom is that you have these and other protection options at your fingertips when [scheduling a class](#) and before you ever have to change anything in front of your students. Here are a few of the most applicable:

- [Require registration](#): This shows you every email address of everyone who signed up to join your class and can help you evaluate who's attending.
- [Use a random meeting ID](#): It's best practice to generate a random meeting ID for your class, so it can't be shared multiple times. This is the better alternative to using your Personal Meeting ID, which is not advised because it's basically an ongoing meeting that's always running.
- [Password-protect the classroom](#): Create a password and share with your students via school email so only those intended to join can access a virtual classroom.
- [Allow only authenticated users to join](#): Checking this box means only members of your school who are signed into their Zoom account can access this particular class.
- [Disable join before host](#): Students cannot join class before the teacher joins and will see a pop-up that says, "The meeting is waiting for the host to join."
- [Manage annotation](#): Teachers should disable participant annotation in the screen sharing controls to prevent students from annotating on a shared screen and disrupting class.

Note: For schools scheduling classes through an LMS, some of these settings might appear a little differently. Visit support.zoom.us if you need assistance.

Additionally, teachers have a couple in-meeting options to control your virtual classroom:

- [Disable video](#): Turn off a student's video to block distracting content or inappropriate gestures while class is in session.
- [Mute students](#): Mute/unmute individual students or all of them at once. Mute Upon Entry (in your [settings](#)) is also available to keep the clamor at bay when everyone files in.
- [Attendee on-hold](#): An alternative to removing a user, you can momentarily disable their audio/video connections. Click on the attendee's video thumbnail and select Start Attendee On-Hold to activate.

Get Zooming securely

You can also check out this video on securing your virtual classroom from the Zoom team:

[Zoom 101: Securing your Meetings & Virtual Classrooms](#)

Additionally, we've compiled several great resources to help teachers and administrators — even the most technology-challenged ones — get quickly trained on Zoom and pick up some best practices for [educating over Zoom](#).

We invite you to learn about the additional benefits [Zoom's Education plan](#) can provide for virtual learning and remote education.