



## Making the most of the virtual classroom

Every classroom—especially a virtual one—can put pressure and strain on students. We want to ensure that everyone has what they need to relieve some of that stress, while getting the most out of the Zoom learning experience. Below are a few simple guidelines for the virtual classroom that are easy to follow and will help everyone be active participants in their education this year.

### 1. A word on mutual respect

We are all working toward the same thing: a productive learning environment for everyone. Always keep in mind that you can do a lot for your virtual academic experience (and that of your fellow students and professors) by following the guidelines below. Let's help each other out.

### 2. Try to keep your video feed on

For professors to be able to give students the help and guidance they need, they have to know that you're engaged and actually there. Your video feed helps professors see how you are participating and interacting with the course. Try to keep your video on as much as possible! If you have privacy concerns, you can leave your video feed off, but be sure to let your professor know first.

### 3. Keep it distraction-free

Do your best to ensure that your space is distraction free, both for you and for your classmates. Traffic-facing windows, active TV screens, friends and family flitting in and out of view, etc. pull focus away from the learning experience. When you can, use headphones, virtual backgrounds and turn off phone notifications. We understand that roommates and excited pets can be unpredictable, so do the best you can.

### 4. Use the mute button

A good rule of thumb is to put yourself on mute the moment you've signed into your virtual classroom. You want to eliminate as much background noise as possible and everything from ceiling fans to dishwashers to passing sirens will be picked up by your microphone.

### 5. Remember to raise your hand and be patient

Your professors are excited to hear your thoughts, ideas and questions. Use the "Raise Hand" button (located at the bottom of the Zoom window) when you've got a question to ask or a contribution to make. Your professor will call on you when the time is right so be patient, then unmute yourself and speak when they give you the signal. Remember to put an ending on your question or statement ("Thanks" or "That's all")

work great) then mute yourself once again (remember rule number 4!).

#### **6. Zoom Chat is your friend**

It's your place to comment and ask questions without interrupting anyone, and it's a great tool for collaborating with classmates to clarify your thoughts. **NOTE: comments made in the Zoom chat are public and recorded. Be respectful, be encouraging, show decorum, and don't type anything you wouldn't want people to see.**

#### **7. Breakout rooms are your friends too**

It can be a little daunting having to interact with strangers over a screen, but breakout rooms are where those strangers become friends, and where the subject you're learning comes to life. Keep your video feed on, be present, participate, start conversations and collaborate. In an online world, community can be hard to build; virtual breakout rooms are a great place to start.

For more information on Zoom including troubleshooting, tips and how-tos, check out the [UBC Zoom Student Guide](#).