

Attending an MCLL Online Study Group

Getting Set Up at Home

Videoconferencing is possible on any computer equipped with a camera and microphone, either a desktop or laptop, or with a tablet. A good setup will ensure the other participants can clearly see and communicate with you. MCLL uses Zoom videoconferencing software, and each session will have a host, who will start it and provide technical assistance.

- A tablet should be raised on a stand or solidly supported in the “landscape” (sideways) position.
- Test your computer setup by joining a Zoom test meeting at: <https://zoom.us/test>
- The first time you run the test, you’ll need to download and install the Zoom application. Once you do this and Zoom is running on your computer, click on “Join.”
- If you see yourself on the screen, then Zoom is working properly. If not, then email the person named as host for your Study Group and describe the problem, or call if it’s urgent.
- Adjust your camera or chair so your head is centered on the screen, as if sitting across from someone at a table. Avoid high or low camera angles.
- Lighting should be strongest from in front of you. Reduce light from the side or behind so the camera clearly shows your face.
- Test the sound by clicking the ^ next to the Mute icon and pick: “Test Speaker & Microphone”. Adjust your speakers or headphones and mic levels to ensure you can hear and be heard clearly.
- If the background on your screen looks cluttered or messy, adjust it or move to a better location.
- For help with joining a Zoom meeting, there are useful step-by-step tutorials and videos at this link: <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us>

The “Joining a Meeting” and “Meeting Controls” videos are helpful to get started.

- You can also make your own free Zoom account, then you can start a meeting and try everything.

Joining an MCLL Meeting

- Before the first session, the host for the Study Group will email you a link to your Zoom meeting. At least ten minutes before the scheduled time, click on the link and wait to be admitted. The moderator will have joined the meeting earlier, but if you try to join a meeting after it’s started, you might not get in. Use the same link for all the study group sessions.
- If, after clicking the link to the Zoom session you see the message "This link needs to be opened with an application," make sure that the words "Zoom Meetings" are highlighted in blue and then click on "Open link."
- Once you’re admitted to the meeting, click on “Join with Audio”. Make sure the Zoom window is in Full Screen view.
- You may need to click the camera icon at the bottom left of the Zoom window to start your video.
- During a discussion, choose “Gallery View” to see all the participants at once. For a lecture, choose “Speaker View” so the lecturer’s face fills your screen.
- If your phone rings, your dog barks or there’s loud music next door, **mute yourself immediately**.
- If you want to speak during a discussion, raise your hand in front of the camera. However, please don’t speak until called on by the moderator. **Don’t forget to unmute yourself before speaking**.
- Try to look at the camera when speaking, this will give everybody virtual eye contact.
- To see the Taskbar (Dock on a Mac) to switch applications during a meeting, pick “Exit Full Screen”.

Making a Presentation

Presentations are done the same way as at MCLL, whether showing PowerPoint, videos, photos or other content. You can display web pages and stream videos, but locally stored videos and DVDs work best. What Zoom does is show what's on your screen to all the attendees.

- To display your screen to the group, click the green "Share Screen" icon at the bottom.
- Double click on one of the displayed application windows to share it. The "Screen" option will share whatever displays on your screen, the others will always display the specific application window.
- To stop sharing, move the mouse pointer to the top of your screen and pick "Stop Share". To switch applications, hover on the green area to show the control icons and click "New Share".
- When sharing a video, click on "Optimize for video" and "Use computer audio". They will turn back off when sharing static content.
- To see the Taskbar (Dock on a Mac) to switch applications, pick "Exit full screen" before sharing
- Usually you can switch applications while sharing, but with PowerPoint you may need to stop sharing, switch applications and share again.
- There are useful videos and instructions about screen sharing at the Zoom web site.

Internet Connection Problems

If you have difficulties with Zoom, including poor video quality, here are some steps to try:

- You need a good Internet connection. To test your Internet speed, go to www.speedtest.net . Zoom recommends at least 1.5 Mbps download and 1.2 Mbps upload. If you don't meet these values you may experience poor quality video.
- If you're using Wi-Fi try moving closer to the router or connect directly to it by cable. You can also try connecting the cable from the modem directly to the computer.
- If all else fails, leave the meeting and rejoin it by re-clicking on the link that you received by email. This will often allow you to continue in the meeting.
- If you are still experiencing problems with Zoom, then call or email the person named as host for your Study Group and describe the problem.