Video Conferencing Tips for Interviewers and Interviewees

Whether you're a hiring manager conducting an interview, or a candidate being interviewed, follow these tips for a successful video meeting.

More than ever, video conferencing platforms have become vital to moving business and the interview process along. There are several platforms one may use for video conferencing. These tips will be using Zoom as the chosen platform. Zoom has emerged as one of the top video-conferencing providers. It is the app of choice because it's free, it's reliable and easy! Follow the below tips to improve the quality of your video meetings.

First, a few links to get Zoom:

Zoom website - https://zoom.us
Zoom meeting support - https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us

Tip #1 - Lighting

Lighting is the key to a great video session. Proper lighting will make you clear on your video stream while allowing "virtual backgrounds" to work better. Always make sure there is MORE light in front of you than behind you. If needed, bring in a desk lamp to light the side of your face. Open a window slightly to add more light to the other side of your face or add a light like below. Ensure you have more lighting on your face than on the background. The goal is to showcase your smiling face versus appearing as a shadowy figure!

Need a cool light to clip on your desk? Check this one on Amazon – it is the one we use; it's USB powered and clips on your desk:

Tip #2 - Check Your Headroom

In the TV world, the space above your head to the top of the video frame is called "headroom." Too much headroom can be distracting, so here's a simple way to set up: Once you can see yourself on camera, put two to three finger-widths of space at the top of your head to the top of the frame.

This improves your appearance and lines up your eyes to an appealing level – the design industry calls it the "Rule of Thirds." Notice your eyes are on the upper third of the video screen.

Do this:

Tip #3 - Turn Off the Things That Go "Ding"

If you have emails, instant messenger, instant Messages, or other apps that "ding" open on your desktop, be sure to turn them off before your video calls. The "ding" notifications on your computer can be heard and possibly broadcasted during a Zoom call. Play it safe and turn them off.

Tip #4 - Audio and Video

- Use sound judgment to ensure both your appearance and background are appropriate and not distracting. Next, turn ON your video. Video is crucial in building trust and engagement in virtual communications.
- Test your video and audio before your meeting at zoom.us/test.
- Look at the camera. This takes a bit of getting used to since you want to look at the other participant's faces (and your own face), but try to look at the camera when you're talking. This tactic will mimic the in-person feeling of eye contact. It's vital to gauge reactions by looking at your participant(s) on the screen while alternating, looking into the camera. This helps the audience feel like you're listening and talking to them.
- When possible, use a quality camera and headset instead of your computer's built-in camera. Zoom works fine with the built-ins, but the quality is sharper with higher quality hardware.
- Adjust your camera if it is too low or high. Your camera should be at eye level.
- If possible, connect to the internet via an ethernet cable. Zoom works well on wireless down to 3G, but the quality is best on a reliable wired internet connection, so wire in when you can. Otherwise, make sure you have serviceable Wi-Fi.

Tip #5 - Virtual Backgrounds

Using Zoom is a great way to showcase your brand and professionalism via a virtual background branded to your organization. Yes, you can certainly use your home office backdrop for team calls, but consider using this opportunity to further your brand, especially when conducting an interview for your company.

First, turn on "Virtual Background" in the "settings" of Zoom. Click the plus sign to upload a custom background. You can create custom backgrounds in Canva if using Zoom. If utilizing a different video conferencing platform, check if it supports Canva – not all do.
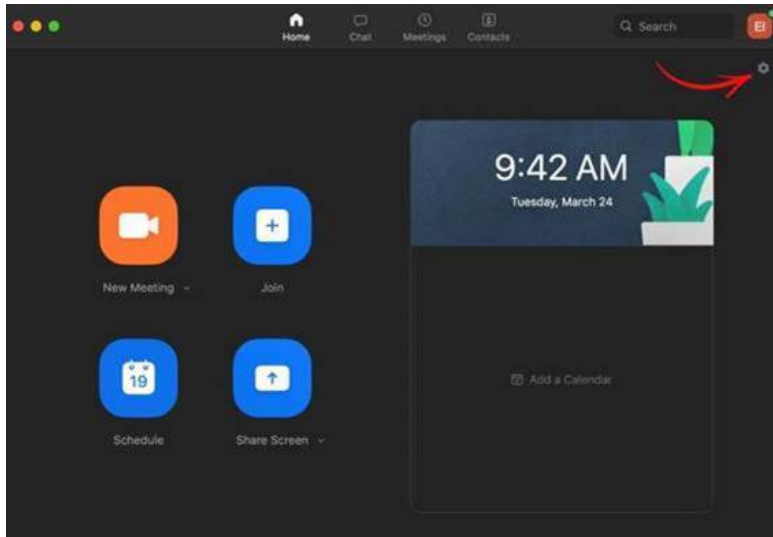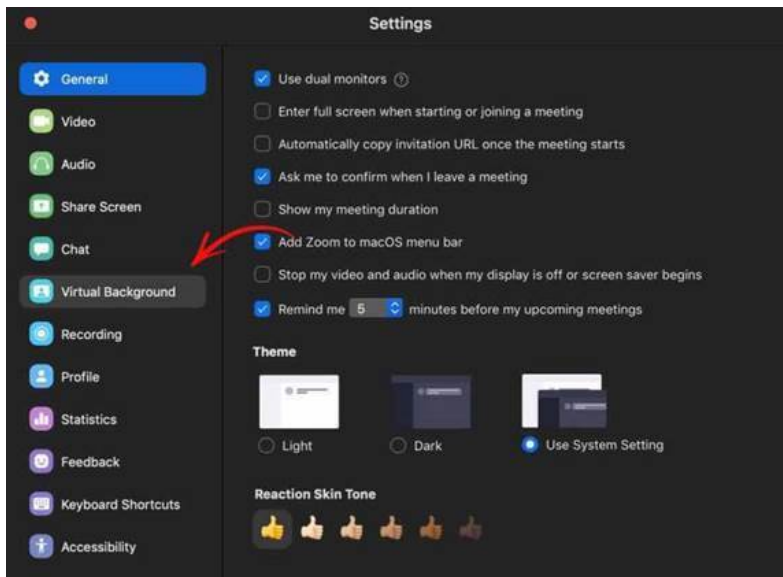
Here's what they can look like:

How to Set a Virtual Background in Zoom

Step 1: Open the Zoom app and click the **Settings** button in the top right corner.
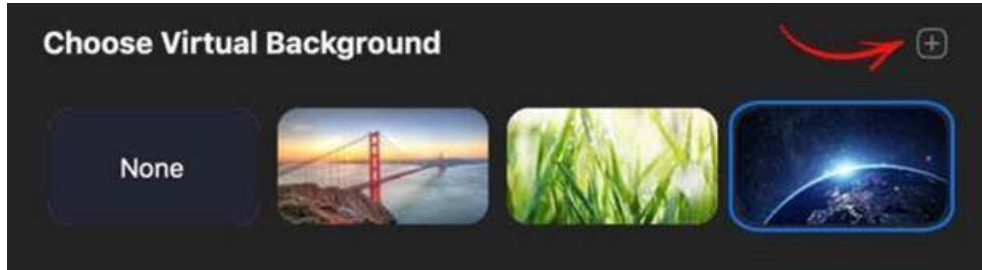

*Open Zoom and click **Settings**.*

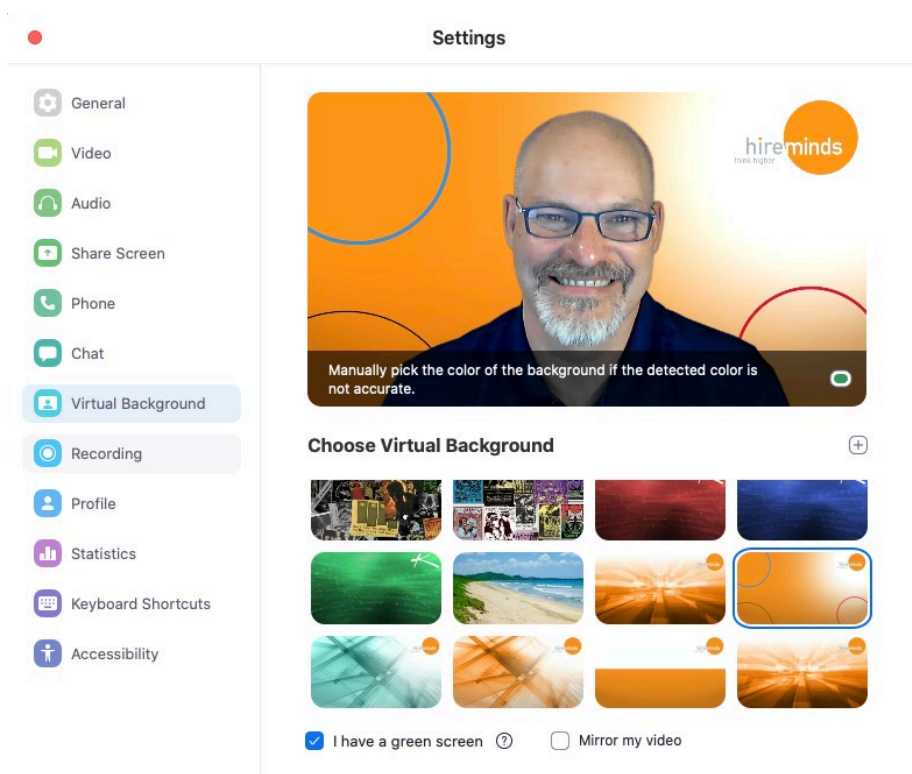**Step 2:** In the Settings panel, select **Virtual Background** from the menu on the left.

*Select **Virtual Background**.*

Step 3: Select an image to use as your Virtual Background.

Select an image or upload a custom image.

In this case, we uploaded a custom branded background. Once applied, the background image fits in behind you.

Tip #6 – Hair, Makeup & Clothing

When video conferencing, be sure to check your appearance before each video meeting – remember your audience. Double-check your hair, makeup, and clothing choices. If using video conferencing for an interview, confirm the companies dress code and dress as you would if going in for an in-person interview. When on video, bold, solid colors look best while vivid colors will "pull you forward" visually in the frame. Dress from head to toe if there is any chance you might stand up before the conclusion of the interview.

Final Thoughts:

- Here are a few final thoughts for both interviewers and interviewees:
- Both parties should have a copy of the interviewee's resume on hand as well as something to take notes
- Test all technology before the interview begins – not 5 minutes before!
- Have a glass of water and a cough drop close by – just in case!
- Speak clearly, no chewing gum, and don't forget to smile!