BILL'S HOME TECH
Home & Small Business Tech Solutions

BILL'S COMPLETE MANUALS

Zoom

Joining, hearing, seeing, sharing and hosting — explained in plain English, one step at a time

For doctor visits, clubs, church and family calls

Take your time — you can't break it

Written for you by Bill — Bill's Home Tech

(330) 200-8042 · BillsHomeTech.com

For the Zoom Workplace app on phones, tablets and computers · facts current November 2026

What's Inside

This is your Zoom manual. Read it in any order and at your own pace. If you only want to join a meeting tonight, start with Part 2. If something isn't working, jump to Part 8. And if a Zoom message ever makes you uneasy, Chapter 21 is the one to read first.

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PART 1

Getting Started

What Zoom is, why so many doctors, clubs and families use it, what the new name "Zoom Workplace" means, and how to get the real app onto your phone, tablet or computer.

CHAPTER 1

A Note from Bill

Hello, and welcome. If you're reading this, chances are somebody has sent you a Zoom link — your doctor's office, your church, a book club, or a grandchild who lives three states away — and you'd like to join without fumbling in front of everyone. Or maybe you've joined a few times already and you're tired of hearing "You're on mute!" Either way, you've come to the right place.

I'm Bill. With 30+ years of professional experience, I've helped a lot of people get comfortable with their technology, and I wrote this manual the way I'd explain Zoom if I were sitting beside you at the kitchen table: slowly, in plain English, one tap at a time. Any word you might not know, I'll stop and explain right then.

What Zoom does, in one sentence

Zoom lets a group of people see and hear each other on their phones, tablets or computers, as if they were sitting around the same table — even when they're miles apart.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What this manual does for you

By the end you'll be able to join any Zoom meeting — from a link, with a number, from a web browser, or by plain old telephone. You'll know how to mute, see everyone at once, turn on captions, show something on your screen, host your own family call, put Zoom on your TV, see your doctor by video, and spot the fake Zoom messages scammers send. And you'll know how to fix the common problems yourself.

The big promise: you can't break it

Here's the most important thing to know before we start. **You cannot break Zoom, your device, or anyone's meeting by pressing buttons.** The worst that can happen is you leave a meeting by accident — and then you simply tap the same link again and you're back. Everyone who uses Zoom has talked while muted, or shown the ceiling by mistake. It's part of the fun, and nobody minds.

One more thing: Zoom changes the look of its buttons now and then. If your screen doesn't match these pages exactly, don't worry. The buttons nearly always have the same names — **Mute**, **Video**, **Share**, **Leave** — they may just have moved a little.

And if you'd like a hand, I'm a phone call away at **(330) 200-8042**. I serve Portage County, Ohio, and help folks on the phone or in person. No question is too small.

— Bill

CHAPTER 2

What Zoom Is, and Its New Name

Zoom is a **video meeting** service. Instead of phoning one person, you join a "meeting" — a kind of virtual room — that someone has set up. Everyone who has the link or the meeting number can come into that room, and you all see and hear one another. When the meeting's over, the room closes.

Where you'll run into Zoom

- **Doctor visits.** Many clinics use Zoom for video appointments (Chapter 20).
- **Clubs, classes and support groups.** Book clubs, garden clubs, exercise classes and caregiver groups often meet on Zoom.
- **Church and community.** Services, Bible studies, township meetings and library talks.
- **Family.** Birthday calls with the whole family at once, from different houses and different states.

The one big difference from a phone call

With a phone call or FaceTime, you *call* someone. With Zoom, you usually **join a meeting** that someone else has set up. They send you an invitation — by email, text, or through a patient website — with a **link** to tap, or a **Meeting ID** (a long number) to type in. Most of the time, your whole job is simply to join at the right time.

> **GOOD TO KNOW**
>
> **You're usually the guest, not the host**
>
> The person who sets up the meeting is called the **host**. Everyone else is a **participant**. Most people only ever join meetings other people run. That means you don't have to learn scheduling or hosting unless you want to — and if you do, Part 5 covers it.

"Zoom Workplace" — the new name on the app

If you go looking for Zoom in the app store, you'll find it listed as **Zoom Workplace**. That's the name Zoom now uses for its app, and Zoom's own help pages call it the "Zoom Workplace desktop app" and the "Zoom Workplace mobile app." It's still the same Zoom. Joining a meeting works exactly the same way; the app simply has extra tools for businesses that you can ignore.

The company changed its own name too. It used to be called Zoom Video Communications; since November 2024 it has been **Zoom Communications, Inc.** You'll see that name under the app in the app store, which helps you tell the real app from a copycat.

GOOD TO KNOW

Is Zoom free?

Joining a meeting is always free. You never pay to attend. Zoom charges the people who **host** long or large meetings. The free host plan, called **Basic**, limits each meeting to 40 minutes. That's why some club meetings suddenly end at 40 minutes — nothing is wrong on your end. Chapter 16 explains the plans and prices.

CHAPTER 3

Getting the Real Zoom App

You can join many Zoom meetings from a web browser without installing anything (Chapter 6). But the app is smoother, and Zoom itself says the app gives the best sound and picture. You only install it once.

On an iPhone or iPad

1. Open the **App Store** (the blue icon with a white letter A).
2. Tap **Search** and type **Zoom**.
3. Look for **Zoom Workplace**. Under the name, the maker should say **Zoom Communications, Inc.**
4. Tap **Get**, then confirm with Face ID, Touch ID or your password. It installs on its own.

On an Android phone or tablet

1. Open the **Play Store** (the colorful triangle).
2. Tap the search bar at the top and type **Zoom**.
3. Choose **Zoom Workplace** from Zoom Communications, Inc. and tap **Install**.

On a Windows PC or a Mac

1. Open your web browser and type **zoom.us/download** into the address bar at the top yourself — don't click a download link from an email.
2. Under the Zoom Workplace desktop app, click **Download**.
3. Open the file that downloads (usually in your Downloads folder) and follow the prompts. When it's finished, a Zoom Workplace window opens.

> **HEADS UP**
>
> **Get Zoom only from these three places**
>
> The App Store, the Play Store, or Zoom's own website that *you* typed in. Scammers send emails and pop-ups saying "You must install Zoom" or "Your Zoom needs an update" with a download link that installs something harmful instead. Chapter 21 shows you how to spot them.

Do you need a Zoom account?

To **join** most meetings, **no**. You tap the link, type your name, and go. Some meetings — a few classes and workplaces — require you to sign in. If you'd like an account (you'll need one to host your own meetings), it's free: open the app, tap **Sign up**, and follow the steps with your email address. You can also sign in with an existing Google, Apple, Microsoft or Facebook account if that's easier.

What you want to do	What you need
Joining a meeting	No account needed in most cases. Free.
Hosting your own meeting	Free Basic account needed. Meetings limited to 40 minutes.
Long or large meetings	Paid plan for the *host* only (Chapter 16).
Your name in the meeting	Whatever you type when you join. Use the name people know you by.

TIP

Install it the day before

Don't wait until two minutes before your doctor's appointment to install Zoom. Do it a day or two ahead, then try the free test meeting in Chapter 8. On the big day you'll just tap the link.

PART 2

Joining a Meeting

The heart of it. Four ways in — a link, a Meeting ID, a web browser, or a plain telephone — plus the waiting room and the free practice meeting that takes the nerves out of it.

CHAPTER 4

Joining from a Link

Most Zoom invitations arrive as a **link** in an email or text message. A real Zoom meeting link looks something like **zoom.us/j/** followed by a string of numbers. Some organizations have their own version, like **yourclinic.zoom.us/j/** followed by numbers. Either way, the address ends in **zoom.us** just before the first single slash.

Joining from a phone or tablet

1. At meeting time, open the email or text and **tap the link**.
2. If your phone asks whether to open it in Zoom Workplace, tap **Open**.
3. Type your name if asked, then tap **Join** or **OK**.
4. If a passcode is needed and wasn't built into the link, type the passcode from the invitation.
5. Zoom asks to use your camera and microphone. Tap **Allow** for both — otherwise nobody can see or hear you.
6. You may see a preview of yourself with a **Join with Video** button. Tap it.
7. When asked how to connect your sound, choose the internet audio option (on many phones it says **Wi-Fi or Cellular Data**). Now you can hear and be heard.

Joining from a computer

1. Click the link in the email.
2. Your web browser opens a Zoom page and asks to open the Zoom Workplace app. Click **Open** (or **Launch Meeting**).
3. A preview window shows your camera. Check you look all right, then click **Join**.
4. Zoom asks about audio. Click **Join with Computer Audio**. (Zoom also offers **Test speaker and microphone** here — a good idea the first time.)

TIP

The two taps people miss

Almost every "I'm in, but nobody can hear me" moment comes down to two things: allowing the **microphone** when asked, and choosing to **join audio** (internet or computer audio). If the bottom-left button says **Join Audio** instead of Mute, tap it — you haven't connected your sound yet.

If nothing happens when you tap the link

- **The app isn't installed.** Zoom's web page offers to download it, or to join from your browser instead (Chapter 6).
- **The host hasn't started yet.** You'll see a message that you're waiting for the host to start the meeting. That means you connected fine — just wait.
- **The link is broken across two lines** in an older email program. Copy the Meeting ID from the invitation and use Chapter 5 instead.

HEADS UP

Only tap links you were expecting

A Zoom link from your doctor's office for the appointment you booked is fine. A surprise "Zoom meeting invitation" from a stranger, or from a company you don't do business with, is a common scam opening. If you weren't expecting it, don't tap it — see Chapter 21.

CHAPTER 5

Joining with a Meeting ID and Passcode

Sometimes you aren't given a link — just a **Meeting ID** (usually 9 to 11 digits) and maybe a **passcode**. It's printed in a church bulletin, read over the phone, or written on an appointment card. This way works just as well.

On a phone or tablet

1. Open the **Zoom Workplace** app.
2. Tap **Join** (you don't need to sign in to do this).
3. Type the **Meeting ID**. Leave out any spaces or dashes; Zoom adds them.
4. Check the name box shows the name you want people to see, then tap **Join**.
5. If asked, type the **passcode** and tap **Continue**.
6. Then the same camera and audio steps as Chapter 4: allow the camera and microphone, join with video, and join the audio.

On a computer

1. Open the Zoom Workplace app.
2. Click **Join** on the Home screen.
3. Type the Meeting ID and your name, then click **Join**.
4. Type the passcode if asked, and click **Join with Computer Audio**.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **Passcodes are normal and a good thing**
>
> Zoom passcodes keep strangers from wandering into a meeting. They're usually a short mix of letters and numbers, and capital letters matter. If the passcode doesn't work, check for a mistyped letter, or ask the host to send the full link, which often has the passcode built in.

Write it down

For a meeting that happens every week — Tuesday Bible study, say — the Meeting ID and passcode often stay the same each time. Write them on a card by your computer, or save them in a note on your phone. Then joining is a ten-second job.

CHAPTER 6

Joining from a Web Browser (No App)

Can't install the app — say, on a library computer, or a work laptop that won't allow it? Zoom has a **web app** that runs right inside your web browser, like Chrome, Edge, Safari or Firefox. It does fewer things than the full app, but it's perfectly good for joining a meeting.

From an invitation link

1. Click the meeting link.
2. When the page asks you to open or download the app, click **Cancel** on that little pop-up.
3. Look near the bottom of the Zoom page for **Join from your browser** and click it.
4. Type your name, allow the camera and microphone when your browser asks, and click **Join**.

If you don't see a "Join from your browser" choice, the host's settings may not offer it. In that case, use the app or join by phone (Chapter 7).

With just a Meeting ID

Type **join.zoom.us** into your browser's address bar yourself, enter the Meeting ID, and follow the prompts. When it offers to open the app, you can choose to continue in the browser instead.

GOOD TO KNOW

Browser permissions

The first time, your browser pops up a small box asking whether this site may use your camera and microphone. Click **Allow**. If you click Block by mistake, look for a little camera or lock symbol at the left end of the address bar, click it, and change the camera and microphone to Allow. Then reload the page.

TIP

Doctor visits often use the browser

Many clinics send a telehealth link that opens Zoom right in your phone's or computer's browser, so patients don't have to install anything. If your clinic's link does that, that's normal and safe — as long as it came from your clinic (Chapter 20).

CHAPTER 7

Joining by Telephone (Dial-In)

Here's something many people don't know: you can join most Zoom meetings with an **ordinary telephone** — even a landline. You won't see anyone, but you can hear everything and talk. It's a wonderful backup when the internet is down, your tablet's battery is dead, or you simply prefer the phone.

Find the numbers in your invitation

Look in the invitation for a section that says something like **Dial by your location** or **One tap mobile**. You'll see a list of phone numbers, the **Meeting ID**, and sometimes a numeric **passcode** just for phone callers. Dial-in only works if the host's meeting allows it, so if there are no phone numbers in the invitation, ask the host.

Dialing in, step by step

1. Dial one of the phone numbers listed. A Zoom voice answers.
2. When asked, type the **Meeting ID** on your keypad, then press # (the pound key).
3. It asks for a **participant ID**. If you don't have one, just press # again to skip it.
4. If asked, type the numeric **passcode** and press #.
5. You're in. You'll hear the meeting, and others see you listed by part of your phone number.

The keypad buttons that matter

Press	What it does
***6**	Mute or unmute yourself. Press it once to mute, again to talk.
***9**	Raise or lower your hand, so the host knows you'd like to speak.

TIP

"One tap" numbers on a smartphone

The "One tap mobile" lines in an invitation have the Meeting ID already tucked onto the end of the phone number. On a smartphone, tapping one of them dials the number *and* enters the Meeting ID for you.

GOOD TO KNOW

What phoning in costs

The regular numbers in the invitation are ordinary phone numbers. Calling them is like any other call on your phone plan — free on most plans with unlimited calling, but it may count as long distance on some landline plans. Toll-free numbers only appear if the host pays for them.

Using a phone for sound and a tablet for the picture

If your tablet's speaker is too quiet or its microphone echoes, you can join on the tablet for the picture and dial in on the phone for the sound. In the app, tap **Join Audio** and look for **Dial In** (on a computer, the **Phone Call** tab). Zoom shows a number, the Meeting ID and your own **participant ID**. Dial in and enter that participant ID when asked, and Zoom links your phone's sound to your face on the tablet.

CHAPTER 8

The Waiting Room and the Free Test Meeting

Two things take the nerves out of Zoom: knowing what the "waiting room" is, and practicing beforehand in Zoom's free test meeting.

The waiting room

Many hosts turn on a **waiting room**. When you join, instead of going straight into the meeting, you see a screen saying the host will let you in soon. That's exactly like the waiting room at the doctor's office — you're checked in and you've done everything right. The host admits you when they're ready. People in the waiting room can't see or hear each other, and nobody in the meeting can see you yet.

You might also see a message that you're **waiting for the host to start the meeting**. That means you connected successfully but the host hasn't opened the room yet. Just wait; it'll change on its own.

> TIP
>
> **Join five minutes early**
>
> It's a kindness to yourself to join a few minutes before the start. You'll have time to get through the waiting room, allow the camera, and settle your glasses before anyone's watching.

Practice in Zoom's free test meeting

Zoom runs a private test meeting just for checking your camera, speaker and microphone. Nobody else is in it, and you can try it as often as you like.

1. Open your web browser and type **zoom.us/test** in the address bar.
2. Click **Join**. Let it open the Zoom Workplace app (or join from your browser).
3. Follow the prompts. Zoom plays a ringtone — say yes if you hear it.
4. Speak a few words. Zoom plays them back — say yes if you hear yourself.
5. You land in a meeting where you're the only one. Look around the buttons, then click **Leave**.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why practice is worth ten minutes

The test meeting checks that your camera, speaker and microphone work — the three things that go wrong most often. Fix them in private, and your real meeting starts smoothly. It won't test your internet speed, but it catches nearly everything else.

FROM BILL

A practice run with a real person

If you have an important Zoom coming up — a doctor visit, a grandchild's graduation — I'm glad to do a practice call with you beforehand, so on the day you just tap the link and visit. That's $49 remote · $99 in your home. Call (330) 200-8042 or book at billshometech.com/book.

PART 3

Inside the Meeting

The row of buttons, mute and unmute, seeing everyone at once, keeping one face big, captions, chat, and raising your hand. Learn these and you'll feel at home in any Zoom.

CHAPTER 9

The Buttons Along the Bottom

Once you're in, a row of buttons — the **meeting controls** — sits along the bottom of the screen (on some phones, partly along the top). If they've faded away, tap the screen once, or move your mouse, and they come back.

Button	What it does
Mute / Unmute (a microphone)	A red line through it means you're muted and nobody hears you. Tap to switch. Chapter 10 has the details.
Start / Stop Video (a camera)	A red line through it means your camera is off. Tap to show or hide your face.
Participants (little people)	The list of who's in the meeting. The host uses it to admit people and manage the meeting.
Chat (a speech bubble)	Type a message to everyone, or to one person (Chapter 13).
Share (a green box with an arrow)	Show your screen, a photo or a document to everyone (Chapter 14).
Reactions (a smiley face)	Send a thumbs-up or clap, or **Raise Hand**. On a phone, it may be under **More**.
Captions or Show captions (CC)	Turn on words on the screen (Chapter 12). Often under **More**.
More (three dots)	Everything that didn't fit on the bar, including settings.
Leave (red)	Leave the meeting. Tap it, then confirm. You can rejoin with the same link.

GOOD TO KNOW

Phones show fewer buttons

A phone screen is small, so Zoom tucks several buttons under **More** (three dots). If you can't find Chat, Reactions or Captions, tap More first. On a computer, if your window is narrow, the same thing happens — make the window bigger and the buttons reappear.

Keeping the buttons from disappearing

On a computer, the buttons hide after a few seconds of stillness; just move the mouse and they return. On a phone or tablet, you can keep them showing all the time: tap **More**, then **Settings**, then **Meeting settings**, and turn on the option to always show the meeting controls.

Leaving properly

1. Tap the red **Leave** (or **End**) button.
2. Tap **Leave Meeting** to confirm.
3. If you're the host, you'll see **End Meeting for All** as well. That closes the meeting for everybody, so choose it only when you're done.

> **TIP**
>
> **If the meeting just closes on its own**
>
> When the host ends the meeting, your screen simply goes back to the Zoom home screen. Nothing's wrong. If it ended at exactly 40 minutes, the host is on the free plan (Chapter 16); they may start a new meeting, and you just tap the new link they send.

CHAPTER 10

Mute and Unmute

"You're on mute!" is the most famous sentence of the Zoom age. Let's make sure you're never on the wrong side of it.

Knowing whether you're muted

- **Muted:** the microphone button has a red slash and usually says **Unmute**. Nobody can hear you.
- **Not muted:** the microphone is plain and says **Mute**. When you talk, you'll see a little green bar move inside it — that's Zoom hearing you.
- **Not connected at all:** the button says **Join Audio** or shows headphones. Tap it and choose internet or computer audio. You can't mute or unmute until you've joined the audio.

When to mute

In a big meeting — a church service, a class, a talk — stay muted until you want to speak. Every open microphone picks up dogs, dishes and the television, and Zoom may switch the big picture to whoever is making noise. In a small family call, it's fine to stay unmuted the whole time.

The quick ways to unmute

On	How
Phone or tablet	Tap the **Unmute** microphone button.
Computer	Click the **Unmute** microphone button. Zoom also has keyboard shortcuts for mute; they're listed in Zoom's Settings under **Keyboard Shortcuts** if you like that sort of thing.
Telephone dial-in	Press ***6**.

GOOD TO KNOW

When the host mutes you

Hosts can mute everyone at once — common at the start of a big meeting. If you find yourself muted and didn't do it, that's why. Usually you can unmute yourself when it's your turn. If the host has turned that off, raise your hand (Chapter 13) and they'll ask you to unmute.

HEADS UP

Muted isn't the same as private

Muting stops your sound, but if your camera is on, everyone still *sees* you. If you need to step away, sneeze or answer the door, stop your video as well as muting.

CHAPTER 11

Seeing Everyone: Gallery View and Speaker View

Zoom can show you the meeting two main ways, and switching between them is one of the nicest things you can learn.

View	What you see
Speaker view	One big picture of whoever is talking, with the rest small or hidden. Good for a talk, a sermon or a doctor.
Gallery view	Everyone in a grid of equal tiles, like a page of school photos. Perfect for family calls, so you can see every grandchild at once.

Switching on a computer

1. Look for the **View** button, usually in the top-right corner of the meeting window.
2. Click it and choose **Gallery** (or **Speaker**).

Shortcuts: on Windows, **Alt + F2** switches to gallery view. On a Mac, **Command + Shift + W** flips between speaker and gallery views.

Switching on a phone or tablet

Look for a **View** or **Switch to Gallery** button near the top of the screen. Gallery view on a phone needs at least three people in the meeting (on an iPad, two is enough). In the app's settings — tap your profile picture, then **Settings** — you can choose how many faces fit on one screen.

Keeping one person big: pinning

In a busy family call, Zoom jumps the big picture to whoever's talking. If you'd rather keep your grandchild big the whole time, **pin** them. Pinning only changes *your* screen — nobody else sees any difference, and nobody's told.

1. **On a computer:** move your mouse over the person's picture, click the three dots in its corner, and choose **Pin**.
2. **On a phone or tablet:** press and hold your finger on the person's picture, then tap **Pin**. (This needs at least three people in the meeting.)
3. To undo it, do the same again and choose **Remove pin** (or **Unpin**).

TIP

Hide yourself if your own face distracts you

Lots of people find it unsettling to watch themselves. Zoom lets you hide your own picture from *your* screen — look for **Hide self view** in the three-dot menu on your own picture. Others still see you; you just don't see yourself. Look for **Show self view** to bring it back.

CHAPTER 12

Captions: Words on the Screen

If voices on Zoom are hard to make out, **captions** are a gift. Zoom can listen to whoever is speaking and type their words across the bottom of your screen as they talk, a bit like subtitles on television.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

What captions do for you

You catch every word, even when someone mumbles, the sound is choppy, or a grandchild talks fast. They're also handy in a quiet house when you'd rather not turn the volume up. Zoom made its automatic captions available on free accounts, so it doesn't cost the host extra.

Turning captions on

1. **On a computer:** in the controls along the bottom, click **Show captions** (the CC button). If you don't see it, click **More** first.
2. **On a phone or tablet:** tap **More**, then **Show captions** (some versions say **Captions** or **CC**).
3. The words appear just above the buttons. To turn them off, choose the same button again.

If there's no captions button

The host controls whether captions are allowed. If the button is missing or grayed out, the host's settings may have it turned off, or set it so you have to ask. Sometimes you'll see a **Request** option that sends a polite request to the host. Otherwise, send the host a chat message (Chapter 13) or ask beforehand.

Making captions appear every time

On a computer, Zoom's **Settings** include an option to show captions automatically whenever the host has them turned on, so you don't have to click the button each time. It's worth finding if you rely on captions.

GOOD TO KNOW

Captions aren't perfect

Automatic captions are made by a computer, so they sometimes get names and unusual words wrong. Think of them as a helper, not a court record. Captions in other languages (translated captions) need the host to have a more expensive business plan or an add-on.

CHAPTER 13

Chat, Reactions and Raising Your Hand

Not everything in a meeting needs saying out loud. Zoom has quiet ways to join in.

Chat: typing a message

1. Tap or click **Chat** (on a phone it may be under **More**).
2. A chat panel opens. Type your message in the box at the bottom.
3. Check who it's going to — usually **Everyone**. You can change it to one person to send a private message.
4. Press **Enter** or tap **Send**.

HEADS UP

Check who you're sending to

A message meant for one person but sent to Everyone is the Zoom version of hitting "Reply All." Glance at the "To" box before you send. And remember the host may be able to save the chat.

Raising your hand

In a bigger meeting, **Raise Hand** politely tells the host you'd like to speak, without interrupting. A little hand appears by your name, and it stays until you or the host lowers it.

1. Tap **Reactions** (on a phone, you may need to tap **More** first).
2. Tap **Raise Hand**.
3. When the host calls on you, unmute and talk. Then tap **Lower Hand**.

Reactions

The same Reactions menu has quick pictures like a thumbs-up, clapping hands, a heart or laughing face. They float on your video for about ten seconds and vanish — a lovely way to cheer a grandchild's recital without unmuting.

TIP

On the phone? Use *9

If you joined by telephone, press ***9** on the keypad to raise or lower your hand.

PART 4

Sharing and Looking Your Best

Showing your screen, photos or a document to everyone, and the simple camera, light and sound fixes that make you easy to see and hear.

CHAPTER 14

Sharing Your Screen

Screen sharing means everyone in the meeting sees what's on *your* screen — a photo of the new puppy, a recipe, a website, or the error message you need help with. It's one of Zoom's best tricks.

On a computer

1. Click the green **Share** button in the meeting controls.
2. A window shows what you can share: your whole **Screen**, or a single program window (like your web browser or a photo).
3. Click the one you want, then click **Share**. A green border appears around what everyone sees.
4. When you're done, click **Stop Share** (usually a red button near the top of the screen).

> **TIP**
> **Share one window, not the whole screen**
> If you share your whole screen, everyone sees everything — including an email or bank statement that pops up. Sharing just one window (the photo, the web page) is tidier and more private.

On an iPhone or iPad

1. Tap **Share Content** (or **Share**) in the meeting controls.
2. Choose **Screen** to share everything on your screen, or **Photos** to share a picture.
3. For Screen, tap **Start Broadcast**. After a short countdown, everyone sees your screen. You can go to the Photos app or a website and they'll see it too.
4. To stop, go back to the Zoom app and tap **Stop Share**.

On an Android phone or tablet

1. Tap **Share** in the meeting controls.
2. Choose **Screen** (or Photos, or another option).
3. Android shows a notice that Zoom will be able to see your screen. Tap **Start now** (wording varies).
4. To stop, return to Zoom and tap **Stop Share**.

GOOD TO KNOW

If there's no Share button, or it's grayed out

Many hosts let only themselves share, to keep big meetings orderly. If you can't share, the host has probably set it that way. Ask them to allow it, or send them the photo another way.

SCAM ALERT

Never share your screen with a stranger

Screen sharing is for people you know. A "support agent," "bank investigator" or "Zoom technician" who contacts you out of the blue and asks you to join a Zoom and share your screen is running a scam — they want to watch you log in to your bank. Leave the meeting and call your bank or Bill on a number you already know.

CHAPTER 15

Looking and Sounding Your Best

You don't need any special equipment to look and sound good on Zoom. A few small changes make a big difference — for you and for the people trying to see you.

Light

- **Face the light.** Sit facing a window or lamp, not with one behind you. A bright window behind you turns you into a dark shadow.
- **Try Zoom's low-light setting.** On a computer, open Zoom's **Settings**, then **Video & effects**, and turn on **Adjust for low light**. Leave it on Auto, or choose Manual and slide it brighter.

Camera angle

- **Raise the camera to eye level.** A phone or tablet flat on your lap shows everyone your chin and ceiling. Prop it on a stand or a stack of books.
- **Sit an arm's length back** so your head and shoulders fit in the picture.
- **Steady beats close.** A propped-up device is far kinder on viewers than one held in a shaky hand.

Touch up and backgrounds

Zoom's **Touch up my appearance** gently softens your picture, a bit like a flattering lamp. On a computer it's in **Settings > Video & effects**. On an iPhone or iPad, tap **More**, then look under the video settings. (Zoom's Android app doesn't have it.) In the same Video & effects settings, you can also choose a **background** — blur your room so a messy kitchen doesn't show, or put a picture behind you.

Sound

- **Headphones or earbuds** help more than anything else. You hear better, and they stop the echo that happens when your speaker feeds back into your microphone. Wired or Bluetooth both work.
- **Turn off the TV and radio** in the room. Zoom's noise removal is good, but it isn't magic.
- **Don't sit too far away.** The microphone in a laptop or tablet works best within a few feet.

GOOD TO KNOW

Zoom's noise removal, and music

On a computer, Zoom's **Settings > Audio** has microphone modes. **Noise removal** is the usual choice and filters out barking dogs and typing. If you play piano or sing for family, Zoom offers **Original sound for musicians**, which turns the filtering off so music sounds natural.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Why this matters

When the person on the other end can see your face and hear your voice clearly, a Zoom stops feeling like a technology chore and starts feeling like a real visit. Five minutes on light, angle and earbuds pays you back every call.

PART 5

Hosting Your Own Meeting

Want to gather the family, run the club's monthly meeting, or set up a weekly call with a friend? What the free plan does, what the paid plans cost, and how to start, schedule and run a meeting.

CHAPTER 16

The Free Plan, the Paid Plans, and What They Cost

Remember: only the **host** ever pays. Everyone who joins is free. So this chapter only matters if you want to run meetings yourself.

The free Basic plan

Anyone can sign up for a free **Basic** account and host meetings. Zoom's pricing page lists these limits for it:

Free Basic plan	What you get
How long	Up to **40 minutes** per meeting. This applies to every meeting the free account hosts — even a one-on-one call with a single friend.
How many people	Up to **100** participants.
Recording	You can record to your own computer. There's no Zoom cloud storage on the free plan.
Captions	Automatic captions are available.

GOOD TO KNOW

What happens at 40 minutes

When the time is up, the meeting ends for everybody (Zoom usually shows a heads-up first). It's the *host's* plan that counts: if the host is on the free plan, the meeting stops at 40 minutes even if some guests pay for Zoom. The host can start a new meeting and send a new link, or keep the gathering under 40 minutes. For most family calls, that's plenty.

The paid plans

If 40 minutes is too short — a club meeting, a long family reunion, a class — the host can upgrade. Zoom sells its paid plans under the **Zoom Workplace** name. The one most families and small clubs need is **Pro**.

Plan	What it adds
Zoom Workplace Pro	Meetings up to **30 hours**, up to **100** participants, and **10 GB** of cloud recording storage. Zoom's pricing page showed **$16.99 a month** paid monthly, or the equal of **$14.16 a month** if you pay for a year at once (per person who hosts).

Plan	What it adds
Zoom Workplace Business	Up to **300** participants and more management tools. Priced for businesses and larger organizations, and more than most households need.
Business Plus and Enterprise	Extras like translated captions and phone service, for companies. Not something a family needs.

HEADS UP

Prices change — check before you buy

These are the prices I found on Zoom's own pages in November 2026, and Zoom's pages didn't all agree (one showed $15.99 for monthly billing). Zoom also runs first-year discounts now and then. Before you upgrade, look at the current price at **zoom.com** (type it in yourself), and note whether you're signing up for monthly or yearly billing. Sales tax may be added.

Do you really need to pay?

- **Family calls under 40 minutes** — no. The free plan is fine.
- **A longer call now and then** — start a second meeting when the first one ends, or let a family member who already has a paid account host.
- **A club or church that meets weekly for an hour or more** — usually yes. Often the organization pays for one Pro account that the leaders share.
- **A one-time long event** — you can sign up for Pro monthly and cancel afterward. Set a reminder so you remember to cancel.

FROM BILL

I'll tell you honestly whether you need it

Plenty of folks pay for Zoom Pro year after year without needing it, and others keep getting cut off at 40 minutes when a few dollars would fix it. If you're not sure which camp you're in, I'm glad to look at how you actually use it.

CHAPTER 17

Starting and Scheduling a Meeting

Hosting sounds intimidating, but it's really just two jobs: **making** the meeting and **sending** the link. You'll need to be signed in to your (free) Zoom account.

Start a meeting right now

1. Open the Zoom Workplace app and sign in.
2. On the Home screen, tap or click **New Meeting** (on a phone, it may say **New Meeting** then **Start a Meeting**).
3. Your meeting starts with just you in it. Join the audio as usual.
4. Now invite people: tap **Participants**, then **Invite**. Choose to copy the invitation or send it by email or text.

Schedule a meeting for later

1. On the Home screen, tap or click **Schedule**.
2. Give the meeting a name people will recognize — "Sunday Family Call" is better than "Meeting."
3. Pick the date, time and time zone. Pick how long it should last (this is just for calendars; on the free plan it still stops at 40 minutes).
4. Leave the **passcode** and **waiting room** settings as Zoom suggests. They keep strangers out.
5. Tap or click **Save** (or **Done**).

Sending the invitation

After you schedule a meeting, Zoom shows its details. Look for **Copy Invitation** (on a phone, **Add Invitees** or **Send Invitation**). Copy it, then paste it into an email or text to everyone you want there. The invitation includes the link, the Meeting ID, the passcode, and the phone numbers for anyone who'd rather dial in. You can also find every scheduled meeting later under **Meetings** in the app, or by signing in at zoom.us and choosing **Meetings**.

TIP

A standing weekly meeting

When you schedule, tick **Recurring meeting** and choose weekly. Then the link stays the same every week — send it once and everyone saves it. Perfect for a Sunday family call.

HEADS UP

Don't post your meeting link in public

Put your meeting link in private emails or texts, not on a public Facebook page. Public links invite uninvited guests. If you need to publicize a meeting — a library talk, say — keep the waiting room on so you can admit people one by one.

CHAPTER 18

Running the Meeting as Host

When you're the host, you have a few extra buttons. Here are the ones that matter for a friendly family or club meeting.

Letting people in from the waiting room

1. When someone arrives, Zoom shows a notice that they've entered the waiting room.
2. Click **Admit** right on that notice, or open **Participants** and click **Admit** next to their name.
3. If several are waiting, use **Admit all**.

Muting everyone

In a bigger meeting, a few open microphones can fill the room with noise. Open **Participants** and click **Mute All** at the bottom of the list (on a phone, it's in the Participants panel's three-dot menu). Zoom asks whether people may unmute themselves — usually say yes. When you want everyone to chat again, **Ask All to Unmute** sends them a polite request.

> GOOD TO KNOW
>
> **You can't turn on someone else's microphone**
>
> For privacy, a host can mute anyone but can't force someone's microphone or camera *on*. You can only ask, and they choose. That's by design and a good thing.

Other handy host tools

Tool	How and why
Make a co-host	In Participants, choose a name and look for **Make Co-Host** (it may be under **More**). A co-host can admit and mute people, which helps if you'll be busy talking.
Remove someone	If an uninvited guest gets in, in Participants choose their name, then **Remove**. Normally they can't get back into that meeting.
Rename someone	If a grandchild joined as "iPad 2," you can rename them so everyone knows who it is.
End the meeting	Click **End**, then **End Meeting for All**. Or choose **Leave** and hand the host job to someone else.

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

Hosting the family call

Being the family's Zoom host means you pick the time, send the link once, and everyone just shows up. Grandparents who host often find the whole family calls more often — because you've made it easy. With the free plan and a 40-minute visit, it costs nothing.

PART 6

Zoom on the TV and at the Doctor's

Seeing the whole family on the big screen, and getting through a video appointment with your doctor calmly and safely.

CHAPTER 19

Zoom on Your TV

Squinting at a dozen faces on a phone is no fun. Putting the meeting on your television makes everyone life-size. There are a few ways to do it, and I'll be honest about which ones work best.

The most dependable way: a laptop and an HDMI cable

If you have a laptop, connecting it to the TV with an **HDMI cable** is the surest way. The TV simply becomes a big screen for the laptop, and Zoom runs on the laptop as usual.

1. Plug one end of an HDMI cable into the laptop and the other into an **HDMI** socket on the TV. (Some newer laptops have only small USB-C sockets and need an inexpensive USB-C-to-HDMI adapter.)
2. On the TV remote, press **Input** or **Source** and pick the HDMI number you used.
3. The laptop's screen appears on the TV. Join the Zoom on the laptop as normal.
4. Sit facing the laptop, since its camera and microphone are still the ones in use. Put the laptop in front of or just below the TV so you're looking toward the camera.

> TIP
> **Sound through the TV**
>
> With HDMI, the meeting's sound usually comes out of the TV speakers too — much louder and clearer. If it still comes from the laptop, open the laptop's sound settings (or Zoom's **Settings > Audio**) and choose the TV as the speaker. Keep the microphone set to the laptop's.

Mirroring a phone or tablet to the TV

Many TVs and streaming boxes can show a copy of your phone's or tablet's screen — Apple calls it **Screen Mirroring** (AirPlay, to an Apple TV or AirPlay-compatible TV), and many Android phones call it **Cast** or **Smart View**. During a Zoom, this puts the faces on the TV while your phone's camera and microphone do the work. It depends on your particular TV and phone, and it can lag a little, so try it before an important call. Bill's *Video Calling* manual has more on making calls bigger.

Zoom right on the TV: Amazon Fire TV

Zoom has made an app for a few Amazon Fire TV devices. According to Zoom's help page, it works on the **Fire TV Cube (2nd generation)** and **Fire TV Omni Series** televisions, and it needs:

- a **USB webcam** plugged into the Fire TV (the Cube may need a USB adapter), because the TV has no camera of its own;
- a U.S. Amazon account set to U.S. English, and the Alexa app;
- meetings with ordinary number-only Meeting IDs.

If you have one of those devices, search the Fire TV's Appstore for **Zoom**. If it isn't there for your model, the laptop-and-HDMI way is the reliable choice. I couldn't confirm a Zoom app for Roku, ordinary Fire TV Sticks, or most smart TVs in November 2026, so I won't promise one.

HEADS UP

Beware "Zoom for TV" look-alikes

TV app stores sometimes list unofficial apps with Zoom-like names. If an app isn't from Zoom Communications, or asks you to pay to "unlock" Zoom, skip it. Zoom never charges guests to join a meeting.

FROM BILL

Setting up the big screen together

Getting a laptop, cable, TV input and sound all lined up is exactly the sort of job I do in a short home visit, and then you're set for every family call. $49 remote · $99 in your home.

CHAPTER 20

Seeing Your Doctor by Zoom (Telehealth)

A video visit — often called **telehealth** — lets you see your doctor, nurse or counselor from your own armchair. Many clinics use Zoom (often a special healthcare version of it) to do this. The skills are exactly the ones you've already learned in Part 2.

How the link reaches you

- **By email or text** from the clinic, often a day before and again shortly before your visit.
- **Inside your patient portal** — the clinic's website or app (for example, MyChart) — as a "Begin video visit" or "Join" button next to your appointment.
- In many cases **no Zoom account is needed**, and some clinics let you join right in your web browser without installing the app.

On the day

1. About 15 minutes early, charge or plug in your device and find a quiet, well-lit spot.
2. Open the clinic's link or the portal, and tap to join. Allow the camera and microphone.
3. Join the audio (Chapter 4). Check you aren't muted.
4. You'll likely land in a **waiting room**. That's normal — it's the video version of the clinic's waiting room. Stay put; the doctor admits you when they're ready, which may be a little after your appointment time.
5. Talk just as you would in the office. If they want to see something, move the device or turn the camera around.

Getting ready for a good visit

- Have your **medication list**, your questions, and your glasses beside you.
- If you have a blood pressure cuff, thermometer or scale, have recent readings ready.
- Use **earbuds or headphones** if hearing is hard, and turn on **captions** if the clinic's Zoom allows them (Chapter 12).
- Keep your **phone nearby**. If the video drops, the office usually calls you to finish.
- If a family member is helping, ask the clinic whether they can join from another house too.

STAY SAFE

Make sure it's really your clinic

Only join a video visit from a link your clinic sent for an appointment you booked, or from inside your patient portal. A real doctor's office won't surprise you with a video call asking for your Medicare number, a payment over Zoom, or for you to share your screen. If anything feels off, leave and call the clinic on the number on your appointment card.

GOOD TO KNOW

Your privacy

Clinics that use Zoom for telehealth use a healthcare setup designed for medical privacy. For your part, take the call somewhere private, and don't post the visit link anywhere. Bill's *Patient Portals & Telehealth* manual covers portals and video visits in more detail.

FROM BILL

A practice run before the real visit

A doctor's appointment isn't the moment to discover your microphone is off. I'm glad to do a calm practice run with you a day or two before — $49 remote · $99 in your home — so on the day you just tap the link and talk to your doctor.

PART 7

Staying Safe

Zoom itself is safe to use. But scammers love to borrow its name. Here are the fake invitations, fake updates and fake "support" calls going around, and the simple habits that defeat them.

CHAPTER 21

Zoom Scams: Fake Invites and Fake Updates

Because so many people use Zoom, a message that says "Zoom" doesn't make anyone suspicious. Scammers count on that. Security researchers and government cyber-security agencies reported several waves of these tricks through 2026. Here's what they look like.

SCAM ALERT

The fake meeting invitation

An email arrives saying you've been invited to a Zoom meeting — about your account, an invoice, a legal matter, or from someone whose name you half-recognize. The "Join" button doesn't go to Zoom at all. It goes to a look-alike page made to steal your email password, or to push a harmful download. **If you weren't expecting the meeting, don't click.** Ask the person who supposedly sent it, using a phone number or email you already have.

SCAM ALERT

"Your Zoom is out of date — update to join"

This is the big one in 2026. You click a meeting link and land on a page that looks like Zoom, sometimes even showing a fake meeting in progress. Then it says your Zoom is out of date and you must download an update to join — sometimes with a countdown. The "update" is really remote-control or spying software that lets criminals into your computer. Security researchers found some of these files were even digitally signed so they'd look legitimate. **Never install a Zoom update from a web page or an email.** Close the page.

SCAM ALERT

The "support" person who wants a Zoom with you

A caller, pop-up or email says there's a problem with your computer, your bank account or your Amazon order, and asks you to join a Zoom meeting and share your screen "so we can help." Once you share, they watch you type your passwords, or talk you into installing remote-control software. Real companies don't do this out of the blue. Hang up or leave the meeting.

SCAM ALERT

"Your Zoom account is suspended"

An email says your Zoom account has a billing problem or will be closed, with a link to "verify" or pay. If you have a free account, there's nothing to pay at all. If you do pay for Zoom, open the Zoom app or type **zoom.us** into your browser yourself and check your account there — never through the email's link.

How to tell a real Zoom link

- **You were expecting it,** from a person or office you know, for a meeting you know about.
- **The web address ends in zoom.us** just before the first single slash — for example **zoom.us/j/** followed by numbers, or **yourclinic.zoom.us/j/** followed by numbers. Look-alikes use addresses like *zoom-meet* or *zoom* plus extra words before a different ending.
- **Joining never requires you to download anything** except the official app from an app store or zoom.us — and you only need that once.
- **Zoom never asks guests to pay** to join a meeting.

TIP

The safest way to join any meeting

If you're unsure about a link, don't click it. Instead, open the **Zoom Workplace** app you already installed, tap **Join**, and type the Meeting ID from the invitation. If it's a real meeting, you'll get in. If it's a fake, there's nothing for the scammer to catch.

If you already clicked or installed something

1. Don't panic, and don't call any number shown on the screen.
2. If you typed a password into the page, change that password right away — from the real website or app — and on any other account that uses the same password.
3. If you downloaded and opened a file, or let someone control your computer, disconnect it from the internet (turn off Wi-Fi) and don't log in to your bank on it.
4. If money or bank details were involved, call your bank using the number on the back of your card.
5. Get help checking the computer — call Bill at (330) 200-8042. Bill's *Spotting & Avoiding Scams* manual walks through what to do next.

FROM BILL

Ask before you click

If a Zoom message gives you that uneasy feeling, stop and call me *before* you click anything. It's a lot easier to check a link than to clean up a computer afterward.

CHAPTER 22

Keeping Zoom Updated — the Safe Way

Zoom does release real updates, and keeping the app current fixes bugs and closes security holes. The trick is to update only from places scammers can't fake.

On a computer

1. Open the **Zoom Workplace** app you already have (from the Start menu on Windows, or the Applications folder or Dock on a Mac).
2. Sign in, then click your **profile picture** in the top-right corner.
3. Click **Check for Updates**. If there's a newer version, Zoom downloads and installs it.

Better still, turn on automatic updates: in Zoom's **Settings**, on the **General** tab, turn on automatic updating. Standard home installs of Zoom usually have it on already. (If your Zoom came from an employer, their IT department may handle updates instead, and the Check for Updates choice may be missing.)

On a phone or tablet

Phone and tablet updates come only through the **App Store** (iPhone and iPad) or the **Play Store** (Android). Zoom may show a notice in the app when there's a new version; tapping it takes you to the store. Or open the store yourself, search for Zoom Workplace, and tap **Update** if it appears. If your phone updates apps automatically, there's nothing to do.

HEADS UP

The golden rule of updates

Real Zoom updates come from **inside the Zoom app** or from the **app store**. A web page, pop-up or email that says "Download the Zoom update" is fake — every time. That one rule defeats the most common Zoom scam of 2026.

A few privacy habits

- **Check what's behind you** before turning on your camera — mail with your address, a calendar, or a family photo you'd rather not share with a big meeting. Background blur helps (Chapter 15).
- **Mind recordings.** Hosts can record meetings. Zoom shows a recording notice when that happens. If you don't want to be recorded, turn your video off or ask the host.
- **Don't share passcodes publicly,** and use the waiting room when you host (Chapter 17).

- **Leave anything that feels wrong.** You can always tap Leave. No real meeting will hold it against you.

PART 8

Fixing Problems

Can't hear, can't be heard, no picture, frozen faces, or a link that won't work — the common Zoom troubles, each with calm steps you can take yourself.

CHAPTER 23

Sound Problems: Can't Hear, Can't Be Heard, Echo

Sound is the number-one Zoom headache. Work down these lists in order — the first few steps fix most problems.

Nobody can hear you

1. **Did you join the audio?** If the bottom-left button says **Join Audio**, tap it and choose internet or computer audio.
2. **Are you muted?** A red slash on the microphone means yes. Tap **Unmute**.
3. **Did the host mute you?** Raise your hand or send a chat message.
4. **Is Zoom allowed to use the microphone?** On an iPhone or iPad, open the Settings app, go to **Privacy & Security**, then **Microphone**, and make sure Zoom is switched on. On Android, open Settings, then **Apps**, then **Zoom**, then **Permissions**, and allow the microphone.
5. **Is another app using the microphone?** Close FaceTime, a phone call, or another video app.
6. **On a computer,** click the small arrow (^) next to the microphone button and check the right microphone is ticked. If you have a headset plugged in, choose it.
7. **Still stuck?** Leave the meeting and rejoin. Or dial in by phone for the sound (Chapter 7).

You can't hear anyone

1. Check you've joined the audio, as above.
2. Turn up your device's volume with its side buttons or keyboard. Make sure an iPhone's silent switch or Action button isn't muting things, and that you haven't left Bluetooth earbuds connected in another room.
3. On a computer, click the arrow next to the microphone button and check the right **speaker** is ticked. Try **Test speaker and microphone** from that menu.
4. Maybe it's them: if you can hear some people but not one person, that person is probably muted or has the problem on their end.

Echo or squealing

Echo usually means two devices in the same room are both in the meeting — say, your tablet and your spouse's phone — and they're hearing each other. Use one device per room,

or mute and turn the speaker down on the second one. Echo can also come from a speaker that's too loud near the microphone; earbuds or headphones cure it.

TIP

Practice in the test meeting

Zoom's free test meeting at **zoom.us/test** (Chapter 8) is the place to sort out sound without an audience. On a computer, you can also check anytime in Zoom's **Settings > Audio**, which has Test Speaker and Test Mic buttons.

CHAPTER 24

Camera Problems: No Picture, Wrong Camera, Dark Video

People can't see you

1. **Is your video turned on?** A red slash on the camera button means it's off. Tap **Start Video**.
2. **Is Zoom allowed to use the camera?** On an iPhone or iPad, open the Settings app, scroll down and tap **Zoom**, and turn on **Camera**. On Android, open Settings, then **Apps**, then **Zoom**, then **Permissions**, and allow the camera.
3. **Is another app using the camera?** Close the Camera app, FaceTime or another video app, then try again.
4. **Did you switch away from Zoom?** On a phone or tablet, Zoom turns your video off when you go to the home screen or another app. Go back into Zoom and start your video again.
5. **On a laptop,** check for a tiny sliding privacy cover over the camera, or a camera key on the keyboard that turns it off.
6. **Restart the device** if nothing else works. Zoom's own advice, if it still fails, is to delete the app and reinstall it from the app store.

The picture is upside-down, sideways or the wrong camera

On a phone or tablet, tap the **switch camera** button (a camera with arrows) to flip between the front camera (facing you) and the back camera. On a computer, click the small arrow next to the video button and choose the camera you want.

The picture is dark or grainy

- Face a window or lamp (Chapter 15).
- Turn on **Adjust for low light** in Zoom's **Settings > Video & effects** on a computer.
- Wipe the camera lens with a soft cloth — fingerprints blur everything.

GOOD TO KNOW

"Your camera is being used by another app"

Only one app can use a camera at a time. If Zoom says this, another program — often another meeting app or the Camera app left open — still has it. Close that app completely, or restart the device.

CHAPTER 25

Frozen Faces, Dropped Calls and Links That Won't Work

Choppy, frozen or robotic video

This is nearly always the internet connection — yours or someone else's. If only one person is frozen, it's their connection. If everyone freezes for you, it's yours.

1. **Move closer to your Wi-Fi router,** or into the same room as it.
2. **Ask others in the house to pause** big downloads or streaming movies during the call.
3. **Turn off your own video** for a minute. Sound needs far less internet than pictures.
4. **Leave and rejoin.** It often reconnects more cleanly.
5. **Restart your router** if your internet is slow in other apps too. Bill's *Home Wi-Fi* manual shows how.
6. **Join by phone for the sound** (Chapter 7) if the internet just can't cope. You'll still hear everyone clearly.

"The meeting has ended" or you got kicked out

- **At 40 minutes on the dot?** The host is on the free plan (Chapter 16). Wait for a new link.
- **The host ended it,** or left without handing over the host job.
- **Your internet dropped.** Zoom often tries to reconnect on its own. If not, tap the same link again.

The link or Meeting ID won't work

What you see	What it means and what to do
"Invalid meeting ID"	Check the number digit by digit, and that you're using this week's link if the meeting changes each time.
"Waiting for the host to start"	You're connected. The host hasn't opened the meeting yet.
Stuck in the waiting room	The host hasn't admitted you yet. Wait a few minutes, then send a text or call the organizer to say you're there.
Wrong passcode	Passcodes care about capital letters. Copy and paste it, or ask for the full link.
"This meeting is for authorized attendees only"	The host requires you to sign in with a particular account, often a work or school one. Ask the host.

What you see	What it means and what to do
The app says it needs updating	If the message is *inside the Zoom app*, update it as in Chapter 22. If it's on a web page, treat it as a scam (Chapter 21).

TIP

Plan B for important meetings

Before a doctor visit or anything important, write down the meeting's **dial-in number**, **Meeting ID** and **passcode** on paper. If the tablet won't cooperate, you can still join on the phone in under a minute.

PART 9

Your Cheat-Sheet and Getting Help

The whole manual on one page, and an honest word about when a hand is worth it.

CHAPTER 26

Your Zoom Cheat-Sheet

Print this page and keep it beside your computer or tablet. Everything important, boiled down.

Joining

To join	Do this
From a link	Tap the link > Open in Zoom > allow camera and microphone > join audio.
With a number	Zoom app > **Join** > Meeting ID > your name > passcode.
No app	Link > cancel the pop-up > **Join from your browser**.
By telephone	Dial a number from the invite > Meeting ID + # > # > passcode + #.
Practice	Type **zoom.us/test** in your browser.

In the meeting

To do this	Do this
Mute / unmute	Microphone button. On the phone: ***6**.
See everyone	**View** > **Gallery**.
Keep one person big	Press and hold (or three dots) on their picture > **Pin**.
Words on screen	**Show captions** (may be under More).
Ask to speak	Reactions > **Raise Hand**. On the phone: ***9**.
Show your screen	**Share** > pick a window or Screen > Share.
Leave	Red **Leave** > Leave Meeting.

Keep it safe

- Only click Zoom links you were expecting, from people you know.
- Real Zoom links end in **zoom.us** before the first single slash.
- Never install a "Zoom update" from a web page or email — update inside the app or app store.
- Never share your screen with someone who contacted you out of the blue.
- Joining is always free. Only hosts pay.

Write it down

Keep handy	
My weekly meeting's ID and passcode	_____
Its dial-in phone number	_____
My Zoom account email (if I have one)	_____
My clinic's phone number for video visits	_____

WHAT THIS DOES FOR YOU

You've got this

You can now join any Zoom four different ways, be seen and heard, follow along with captions, show a photo, host the family call, put it on the TV, see your doctor, and spot a fake. That's everything most people ever need.

CHAPTER 27

Getting Help, and When to Call Bill

I've written this manual so you can handle Zoom on your own. But part of being helpful is being honest about when a hand will save you time and worry.

Free help from Zoom itself

- **Zoom's help center** at **support.zoom.com** has articles on every button. Type the address yourself.
- **The free test meeting** at **zoom.us/test**.
- **Your meeting's host.** The person who invited you usually knows their meeting's settings — whether captions, sharing or phone dial-in are allowed.
- **Your clinic's front desk** for telehealth trouble. Many have staff who can walk you through it.

HEADS UP

Don't search for a "Zoom support phone number"

Scammers buy ads and post fake "Zoom support" numbers that show up when you search. Real help starts from support.zoom.com typed in yourself — not from a number on a search page or a pop-up.

Times it's worth calling me

- **Before an important meeting** — a doctor's video visit, a family celebration, a memorial service — for a calm practice run.
- **Setting up Zoom on the TV** with a laptop and HDMI cable, sound and camera all lined up.
- **Hosting** — setting up a recurring family or club meeting and sending the invitations.
- **Sound or camera trouble** you can't shake after working through Part 8.
- **A suspicious Zoom message**, or if you clicked or installed something you're now worried about.
- **You'd simply rather have a patient person show you.** Always a good enough reason.

What working with me is like

I work at your pace — no rushing, no jargon, no talking down. I can help over the phone and a remote connection you control, or come to your home here in Portage County. Bill's help is

$49 remote · $99 in your home. The guides, like this one, are free to read.

FROM BILL

How to reach me

Call **(330) 200-8042** or book at **billshometech.com/book**. If I'm with another client, Sophie, my AI receptionist, will answer, take your question and book a time for you.

Thank you for letting me help. Take your time, tap without fear, and enjoy seeing the faces you love — wherever they are.

— Bill