Focus Mode

Focus mode

Overview

Focus mode is designed with the digital learning environment in mind, allowing students to stay attentive or work on their tasks while under supervision, without being distracted by others and their tasks. This feature gives the host and co-hosts view of all participants’ videos without other participants seeing each other. This extends into screen sharing, as the host and co-host can view and switch between each participant’s shared screen, while the participants can only view their own content. If the host finds a participant’s content should be shared with others, they can easily begin sharing the participant’s screen with others.

Besides the host, co-hosts, and participants spotlighted by the host, participants in focus mode can still see their own video but only see other participants’ names, their nonverbal feedback or reactions, and hear them when unmuted.

The article covers:

- Enabling Focus mode
  - Account
  - Group
  - User
- Using Focus mode in a meeting
- Focus mode examples

Prerequisites

- Start a meeting as the host
- Zoom desktop client
  - Windows: 5.7.3 or higher
  - macOS: 5.7.3 or higher

Note: Participants on older client versions are still affected by Focus mode (their videos blanked to others, video and shared content only visible to host), but will not see any notifications regarding Focus mode. Only the host must be on the required desktop client version to initiate Focus mode.

Enabling Focus mode

Account

To enable Focus mode for all users in the account:

1. Sign in to the Zoom web portal as an admin with the privilege to edit account settings.
2. In the navigation panel, click Account Management then Account Settings.
3. Click the Meeting tab.
4. Under In Meeting (Advanced), click the Focus Mode toggle to enable or disable it.
5. If a verification dialog displays, click Enable or Disable to verify the change.
   Note: If the option is grayed out, it has been locked at the account level and needs to be changed at that level.

6. (Optional) If you want to make this setting mandatory for all users in your account, click the lock icon , and then click Lock to confirm the setting.

Group

To enable or disable Focus mode for a group of users:

1. Sign in to the Zoom web portal as an admin with the privilege to edit groups.
2. In the navigation menu, click User Management then Group Management.
3. Click the applicable group name from the list.
4. Click the Meeting tab.
5. Under In Meeting (Advanced), click the Focus Mode toggle to enable or disable it.
6. If a verification dialog displays, click Enable or Disable to verify the change.
   Note: If the option is grayed out, it has been locked at the account level and needs to be changed at that level.

7. (Optional) If you want to make this setting mandatory for all users in the group, click the lock icon , and then click Lock to confirm the setting.

User

To enable or disable Focus mode for your own use:

1. Sign in to the Zoom web portal.
2. In the navigation panel, click Settings.
3. Click the **Meeting** tab.
4. Under **In Meeting (Advanced)**, click the **Focus Mode** toggle to enable or disable it.
5. If a verification dialog displays, click **Enable** or **Disable** to verify the change.
   **Note:** If the option is grayed out, it has been locked at the account level and needs to be changed at that level.

Using Focus mode in a meeting

To engage Focus mode as the host or co-host of a meeting:

1. Start a meeting as the host or co-host.
2. Click **More** on the meeting toolbar.
3. Click **Start Focus Mode**.
4. Click **Start** to confirm, or select the **Don’t ask me again** check box to skip this confirmation going forward.
5. When Focus mode begins, you and the participants are notified with a banner along the top of the video window. Additionally, the focus mode icon is always visible in the top-left corner of the video window, next to the encryption icon, while focus mode is active.

Once Focus mode has been started, participants in focus mode will only see the video of the host, co-hosts, any participants spotlighted by the host, and their own video. They will only see other participants’ names, their nonverbal feedback or reactions, and hear them when unmuted.

Participants’ shared screens are only visible to the host and co-hosts, but the host can allow all other participants to view as well:

1. Click the up arrow to the right of **Share Screen**.
2. In the **Shared screens can be seen by** section, click **All participants**.
3. (Optional) To return to just host and co-hosts viewing shared content, select **Host only**.
   **Note:** These options are only available when in Focus mode.

To end Focus mode:

1. Click **More** on the meeting toolbar.
2. Click **Stop Focus Mode**.

Focus mode examples

Below are examples of Focus mode in a meeting. First, what the host or co-hosts see during Focus mode, followed by what a participant would see.
Host view:

Participant view when one participant is spotlighted: