

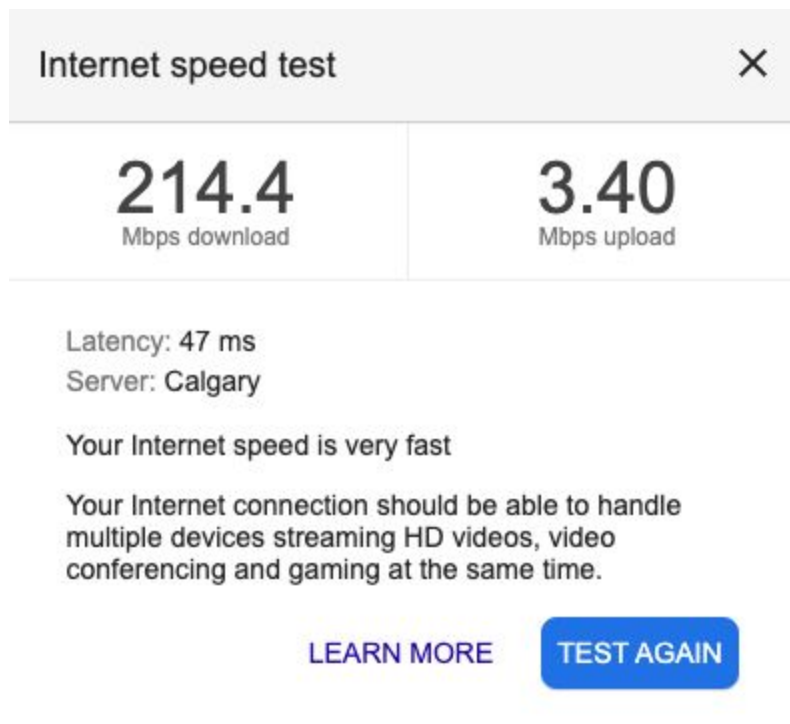
# Preparing for a Zoom Performance

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## Device and Network Preparation

- Connect your device to power. Any kind of video work drains batteries very quickly.
- Quit all applications that you are not actively using on your computer.
- Use a wired internet connection if possible. This will always be faster and more stable.
- Test your network speed. There are a number of websites or applications that will allow you to do this. If you do a web search for “speed test”, Google has a very simple built-in tool that you can run. A speed test should only take about a minute to evaluate your download and upload speeds. In addition to providing numbers, you’ll usually be offered a brief description of the test findings in common language.
- If the speed test results are not very good, change to a wired connection or move to a different part of your home and test again.



## Staging

- Find a space that looks nice/cool/vibey. At the least, it should be tidy.
- Which of these spaces is more “show-worthy” (ignoring lighting for the moment)?



## Room Sound

- Consider how reflective your space sounds. Less reflection/reverberation/echo is better for this context.
- Which of these rooms do you think is more appropriate for clean sound?





## Framing the Shot

- Consider how your camera shot is framed. Is everything that matters in the shot? Make sure that it works for both talking and playing (i.e. if you lean in to read your screen, does your head get cut off).
- How many chins do you have? Consider the camera angle and elevate if necessary.
- Which of these shots will look better for the audience?



## Lighting

- Get lots of light on yourself. Cameras are generally happier when things are brighter.
- If you don't own video lighting, move some lamps around until things look good.
- Avoid having a lot of light from behind you. If you're in front of a window or other bright light, your camera may compensate by making the whole image (including you) darker.



## Audio Capture

- If all you have is the built-in microphone on your phone, tablet, or computer, do your best to place it in a decent location. Avoid obstructing the microphone.
- If you have an audio interface and some decent microphones and/or DIs at home, make use of that.
- One condenser mic placed appropriately between a voice and an instrument can sound great.
- You can connect each source into your interface independently for more control but be aware that most video conferencing software can only receive signal from the first two channels. If you want to get really fancy, you can run all of your audio sources through a DAW for processing/mixing, then use a piece of software for internal audio routing to send that mix to Zoom.
- Laptop fans can start to get very loud when your computer is working hard. Elevate the laptop with a couple of books to increase airflow so the fan doesn't run as fast.
- Remove all pings, hums, buzzes, and vibrations from your environment. Put all of your devices (including a computer) on "do not disturb" mode or the next best option. If you're using a built-in microphone and an alert goes off on the same device, it will be extremely loud for your audience.

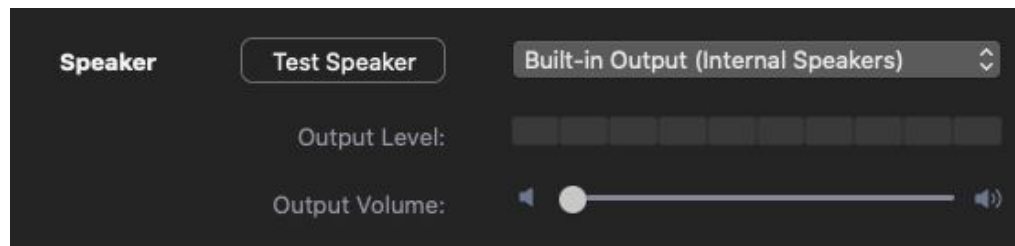
## Audio Monitoring

- You need to use earphones or headphones.
- If you do not use earphones, your device has to process your audio to prevent sound played through a speaker from feeding back into a microphone. This processing has a massively detrimental effect on your sound.
- The audio improvement of using earphones versus speakers is far greater even than the difference of using a nice microphone versus your device's built-in mic.
- Zoom will not play your own sound back through your earphones. If you need to hear yourself better, the simplest thing to do is remove one earphone. Alternatively, you can use the direct monitoring capabilities of an audio interface or DAW.

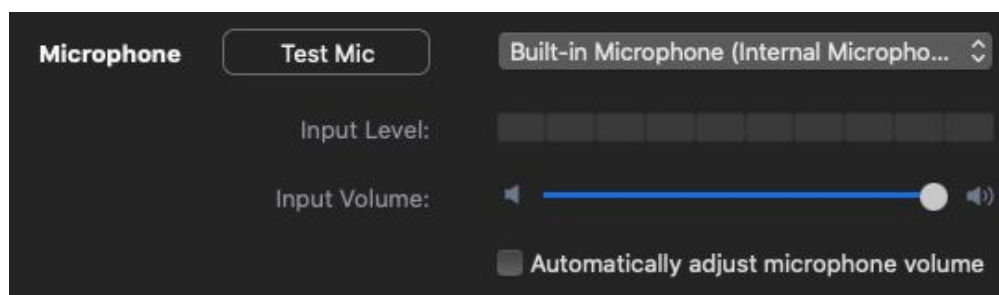


## Settings for Zoom on a Computer - Audio

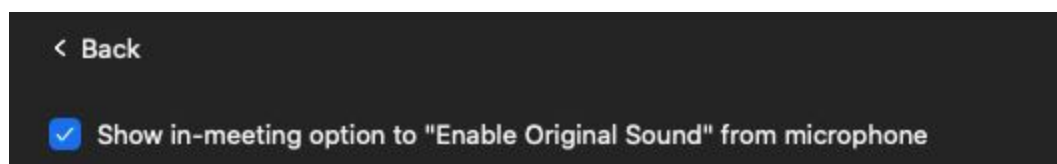
- In Zoom, open *Preferences* or *Settings*. Select Audio.
- Use the *Test Speaker* function to verify that you will be able to hear other people speak. Change your output device and output volume if necessary.



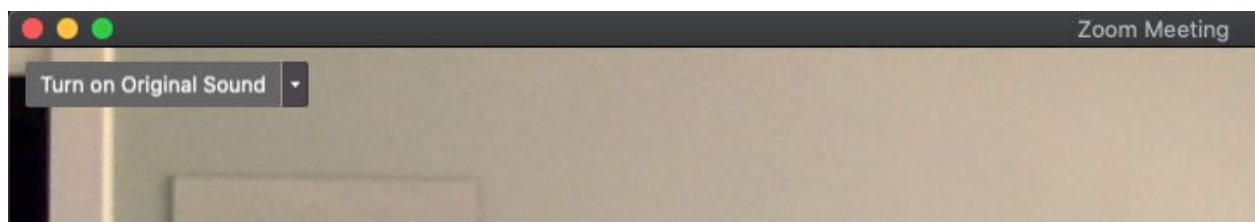
- Use the *Test Mic* function to verify that other people will be able to hear you. Click *Test Mic*, play/sing a brief passage at a realistic volume, then click the *Recording* button to stop. Your test audio will be played back to you. Change your input device and input volume if necessary.



- Click *Advanced* to see more controls. Check the box that says "Show in-meeting option to 'Enable Original Sound' from microphone".

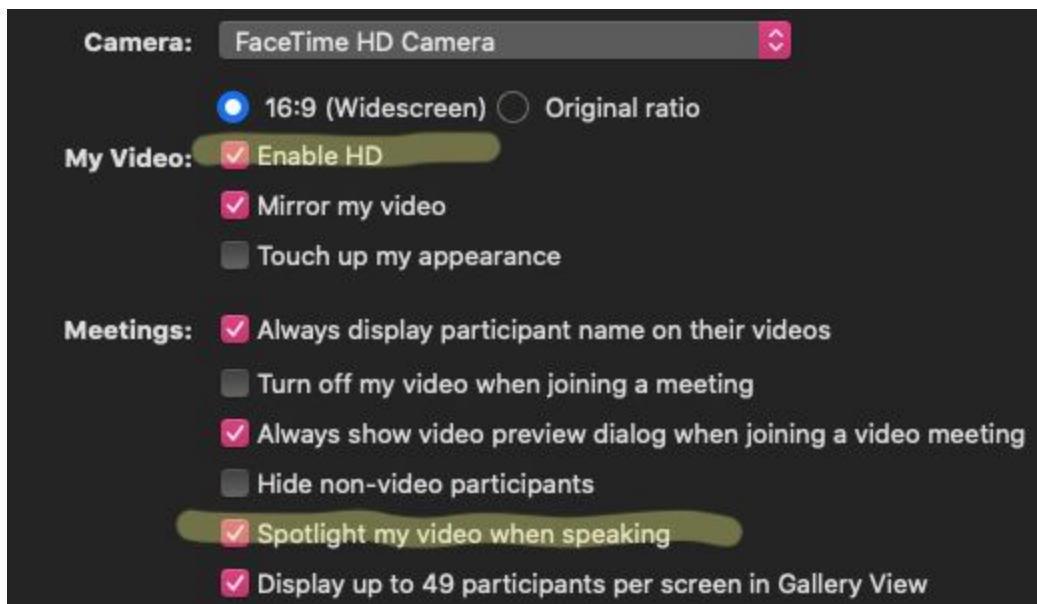


- Once you have joined a meeting you will need to click the button labeled *Turn On Original Sound*. This bypasses all of the functions that would suppress background noise and prevent audio feedback but would also make your audio sound awful. Don't do this until you have connected your earphones.



## Settings for Zoom on a Computer - Video

- In Zoom, open *Preferences* or *Settings*. Select *Video*.
- Check the box labeled “Enable HD”. If your internet connection can handle this increased bandwidth requirement, it can make your camera look better.
- Check the box labeled “Spotlight my video when speaking”. This will allow you to see yourself on screen when you are speaking or performing



## Settings for Zoom on a Mobile Device

- In Zoom, select *Settings* at the bottom of the screen. Select *Meetings*. Scroll all the way down to find the setting labeled “Use Original Sound”. Turn this function on.
- Join a meeting. You may be prompted about “joining audio”. If so, select “Call using Internet Audio”.
- Press the three dots or More button in the corner of the screen. Select “Enable Original Sound”. This bypasses all of the functions that would suppress background noise and prevent audio feedback but would also make your audio sound awful. Don't do this until you have connected your earphones.

