BEST PRACTICES FOR A GREAT ZOOM EXPERIENCE

DavidsonLearns is using a video conference platform called **Zoom** for all online courses and spotlight events. It is similar to Facetime or Skype. **Zoom is FREE**. It's a simple, stable platform, and easy to use.

Before joining your first DavidsonLearns online course or spotlight event, you will need to download Zoom on your device. Zoom can be downloaded to your computer, iPad, tablet, or phone. We do not recommend using a cellphone due to the small screen and the difficulty seeing shared documents/videos, etc. The FREE version of Zoom is all you need for the course or spotlight event.

If you've not yet downloaded the Zoom app, please see the "How to Download and Test Zoom" document on the Online Resources page under the Membership/Registration tab on the DavidsonLearns website. This document gives you step-by-step instructions on how to download Zoom and test this app on your device.

What's next? I've downloaded Zoom and tested my audio and video.

Prior to each class session, you will receive an email from the Facilitator; the Facilitator is assisting the instructor/presenter. In this email will be a Zoom link for the class session. Clicking on the link puts you in the Zoom Room and on the screen. The instructor and other students will be able to see you.

Connection to the internet is essential. For a good online experience, remember these basic tips.

- A computer *generally* makes for a better experience than a tablet (we do not recommend using a phone).
- Move closer to your Wi-Fi router so you'll have the strongest signal possible.
- Log off from other devices that are using your internet connection.
- On the device you're using, close other programs that might be using bandwidth.

If you are still having difficulty connecting to the class, look at the email sent to you with the Zoom link. The Facilitator will be listed there with a phone number. Call the Facilitator and he/she will help you get connected.

Okay, I'm in the Zoom Room. Now what do I do?

When you enter the Zoom Room check your **audio, video,** and **explore the buttons on the toolbar**. *NOTE: depending on your device, the toolbar could be on the bottom of your screen or the top of your screen. Move the mouse over the boundaries of the screen to find the toolbar on your device.*

Give yourself 10-15 minutes before class to make sure everything is working. Zoom support has a one minute YouTube video on how to join a meeting/Zoom Room. Please view this video for more detailed instruction: https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-Joining-a-meeting

AUDIO: The instructor or facilitator may mute you when you enter the room. You can unmute yourself by clicking on the red microphone on your toolbar. Best practice is to stay muted unless you're talking. When you connect to a Zoom session, you'll normally be asked to test your audio – both the speakers and the microphone. Do this every session if you turn down your audio for other programs. Otherwise, test it for the first session or two. If you have an external mic (like the white iPhone headphones with the little mic in the cable, or the over-ear headphones with a boom mic that sometimes come with Windows hardware), be sure to test how those microphones sound – not too loud, not too far away, etc.

VIDEO: You will join the Zoom Room with your video on. It's good to see everyone. You can turn your video off using the video zoom image (looks like a movie camera) on your toolbar. If you need to step away for a minute or if your cat is prancing across your desk, it might be good to turn your video feed off. However, best practice is to keep your video on. You can see yourself and adjust the angle of your camera so everyone is seeing your smiling face and not the ceiling or your shoulder or whatever.

The screen will often look like this during your class: Everyone on the screen with the chat option – where you can type to ask questions – on the right.

If the teacher is lecturing with slides, it may look like this instead: Teacher top right, slides on screen.
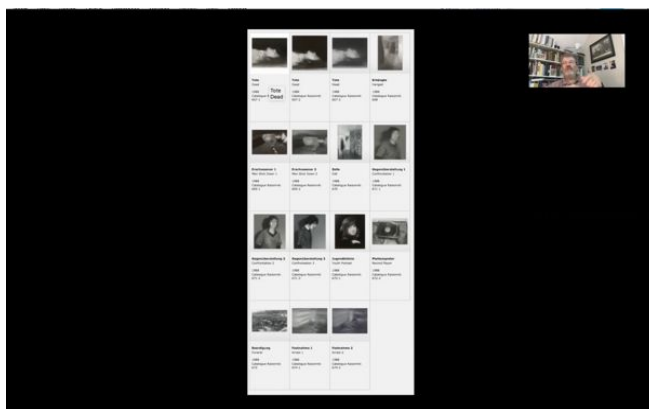
or this (speaker full screen)

Okay I'm ready! Any other tips?

SCREEN PRESENCE: Look at yourself on the screen. Can you be seen clearly from your chest to the top of your head? Adjust the screen accordingly to make sure you can be seen clearly. You might have to move back from your device or put your device on top of a stack of books to get just the right angle. What's behind you? Choose a place for your screen presence where you don't mind what others see behind you.

LIGHTING: If possible, sit in front of a window. If that's not possible, move a lamp so it casts light onto your face. Try not to sit in a room where the light is behind you; you will appear in a shadow and it will be difficult for people to make out your face.

CHOOSE A QUIET PLACE: If at all possible, choose a room or area where you will not be interrupted by people walking about or talking to you. Be sure to mute your microphone when you are not talking to avoid any background noise that might suddenly arise (i.e. music, lawn mowers outside, vacuum cleaner, dog barking, etc.) and disturb the class.

PRACTICE USING TOOLS COMMONLY USED IN CLASSES:

- **CHAT** is a common tool used by instructors. Find the toolbar on your device. Look for "Chat" with a talk bubble above the words. Click on "Chat." You will be given the option of sending a "Chat" or a message to everyone in the class or – through the dropdown menu – a specific person, like the instructor. Instructors/presenters often ask you to use the "Chat" tool when you want to ask a question. The facilitator assisting the instructor/presenter will share your question at the appropriate time.

- **LEAVE CLASS**: When the session is over, you can hover over your toolbar until you see the red LEAVE button. You can click on this button and you will be removed from the Zoom Room. Only the instructor/presenter can end the session and remove all participants from the Zoom Room.

- **ORIENTATION SESSION:** Before every DavidsonLearns course, students will be invited to attend an orientation session. In this session, the Facilitator assisting the instructor will go over any other Zoom tools the instructor might use during a class session. If you'd like, print out this document and add your own notes below for the steps necessary to access instructor-specific tools.

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We encourage new Zoom users to go to the Zoom website (www.zoom.us) and access the support programs. There are many helpful tutorials available on the website. Scroll to bottom of website page and click on **Support**.
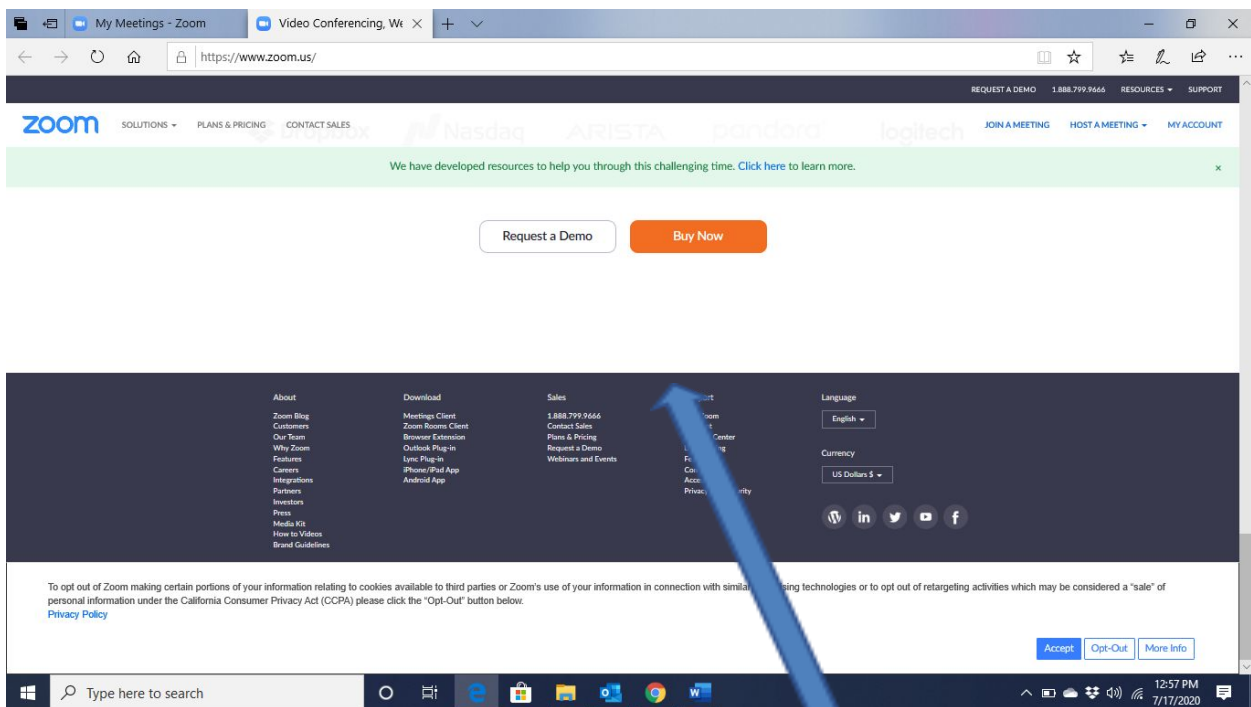
Go to **zoom** home page and at bottom is a support list, click to access videos

Here's another link you may find helpful:

How to use Zoom on your computer or mobile device — a quick guide for video meeting basics by Marissa Perino, Mar 24, 2020, 9:24 AM, *Business Insider*
https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/360034967471-Quick-start-guide-for-new-users

Congratulations!
You are on your way to another exciting learning experience with DavidsonLearns.