Tips for setting up your video calls for success

When putting these tips into practice, consider and adopt whatever is relevant and possible, with the resources that are available to you.

Adjusting your camera

- Get the camera lens as close to your eyeline as possible by raising or lowering your chair, raising or lowering the camera, or a combination of both.
- Frame yourself in the centre of the image, with equal space to the left and to the right.
- Try to keep your entire face in the "middle third" of the frame.
- Move closer or farther away from the camera until you optimize your position on screen.

Improving your lighting

- Try to keep the brightest light in front of you.
- Be wary of windows behind you – make sure you have a plan for sunny or cloudy days.
- Don't be afraid to reposition yourself, or the lights in the room, as best you can.
- Light can be bounced off any light-coloured surface.
- Do your best to avoid glare if you wear glasses.

Clearing your background

- Learn how to turn the "blur background" feature on and off on the video app you are using.
- Clean up clutter when possible.
- Consider using "secondary framing" to draw attention to you as the presenter.

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Checking your audio

- Always run a test of your mic and speakers before any important call.

- Don't move too far away from your microphone.

- Consider closing doors or changing locations if the room is too noisy.

- Using headsets or earbuds is perfectly acceptable.

- When in doubt, acknowledge your challenges to participants on the call and carry on.

Sources:

Castelli, F., & Sarvary, M. (2021). *Why students do not turn on their video cameras during online classes and an equitable and inclusive plan to encourage them to do so*. Ecology and Evolution, 11, 3565–3576. https://doi.org/10.1002/ece3.7123

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