



# Video or No Video on Calls — Ever Tried Video Optional?

Pre-pandemic, having your video camera on for meetings wasn't the norm. Then, as we slowly progressed through the next two years, it became something of a requirement!

But is it always the best approach?

In the past, when you needed to quickly connect with a colleague, you'd pick up the phone. Nowadays, the Zoom meeting link comes through and you meet virtually face-to-face to chat through a 15-minute question.

For a lot of us, video can be a distracting and unnecessary hassle — especially when it comes to quick catch-up calls. Looking ahead, should 'video optional' become the new norm?

## Pros and Cons of 'Video Optional' Calls

### 3 Pros to 'Video Optional' Calls

1. Introverts can feel comfortable
2. You can take the call from anywhere
3. Reduce 'Zoom fatigue'

### 3 Cons to 'Video Optional' Calls

1. You won't always get to put a face to a name
2. You risk people not fully paying attention
3. You feel unsure if you should put your camera on or leave it off

## **When To Use 'Video Optional' on Calls**

### **1. Informal Brainstorming Meetings.**

For those moments when you need to let your mind wander creatively, and you don't want to be stressed about keeping up appearances on camera, use 'video optional' calls. Bonus, you can pop in your earbuds and take the call while strolling in nature to really let the creative juices flow

### **2. When your internet connection isn't stable**

There's nothing worse than sitting through a video meeting with someone with a horrible internet connection. Lagging video, frozen screens, and poor audio can be extremely frustrating, and worst of all, unproductive. Your colleagues will appreciate when you make the decision to turn off video to preserve the experience and effectiveness of the call.

### **3. You're not feeling the best**

Fighting a cold and suffering from a red, runny nose? This is definitely a time to say yes to 'video optional' calls. When you're feeling sick, you're not at your best. Relieve some of the burden by taking the call from bed with your tissue box nearby.

### **4. You and others on the call might be in distracting settings.**

One of the best perks of remote work is the opportunity to do it from almost anywhere. That being said, if you're sitting at your mechanic's shop logging on to a meeting while you get an oil change, you might be more distracting than compelling. Or, if you know a bunch of people on the call are travelling and checking in from airports, it's nice to have the option to leave your camera off. Let your colleagues know ahead of time that you'll be turning your video off to keep the focus on the tasks at hand.

## 5. When you're hosting a webinar

With webinars becoming an increasingly common way to educate, inform, and reach large groups of people, the question persists — Camera on, or camera off? Make your attendees feel comfortable and supported by making video optional. This will allow more people to tune in on their terms and will limit distractions from the message you're trying to get across.

While video calls certainly help us feel connected and put us in touch with people all around the world, it's important to consider the fatigue that comes along with them. By considering the context and objectives of your call, you can give your meeting attendees the ultimate gift, the option of video on or video off without the guilt.

**Hosting effective meetings is part of having strong project management and communication skills. If you're looking for tailored learning pathways to help your team sharpen those skills.**

[Connect with Us](#)

---

<sup>1</sup> Research: Cameras On or Off?, Harvard Business Review, (Oct. 2021)