



How to Appear Professional on a Video Conference

Video conferencing services like Skype, Webex, and Zoom have surged to the fore of our meeting environment. What steps should you take to exude a professional persona when participating in a virtual session from home?

1. Familiarize yourself ahead of time with such logistics as how to sign on, mute your audio, ask questions, and use the chat box.
2. Sign on five minutes before the start time to give yourself a few moments to sort out any technical snafus.
3. Dress and groom like a grownup. Mussed hair and ratty t-shirts are no-nos. Business attire will make you look and feel more professional.
4. Keep kids, dogs, etc. at bay throughout.
5. Understand that you may be on camera for the entire meeting, so avoid any embarrassing actions.
6. Position your camera so that it is level with your eyes. Set your monitor, laptop, or tablet on a stack of books if need be. No one wants a view up your nose.
7. Aim for an attractive, professional looking background.
8. When you have something to say, raise your hand, either on camera or using the video's "raise hand" button.
9. Avoid the temptation to switch task (often erroneously called multi-tasking). Remember, you are likely to be on camera.
10. Mute your microphone when you are not actively participating. That way, no background noise from ringing phones, doorbells, or lawn mowers disturbs the proceedings.

*[Contact Ed Barks](#) for help guiding your communications strategy. He works with communications and government relations executives who counsel their C-suite leaders, and with businesses and associations that need their communications strategy and messaging to deliver bottom line results. They gain an enhanced reputation, added opportunities for career advancement, and realization of long-term business and public policy goals. He is the author of [A+ Strategies for C-Suite Communications: Turning Today's Leaders into Tomorrow's Influencers](#) and [The Truth About Public Speaking: The Three Keys to Great Presentations](#). Contact Ed at **(540) 955-0600** or ebarks@barkscomm.com. Learn more at www.barkscomm.com.*