

# Choosing between a Zoom Meeting or a Zoom Webinar

as of September 2023

*“Meetings are designed to be a collaborative event with all participants being able to screen share, turn on their video and audio, and see who else is in attendance. Webinars are designed so that the host and any designated panelists can share their video, audio and screen. The host can also unmute attendees” – Zoom*

## Key differences

	Meetings	Webinars
<b>Designed for</b>	Collaborations	Presentations
<b>Roles</b>	Everyone is “in the room” (presenters and attendees)	Presenters are on the stage and lit up – attendees are mostly just an audience
<b>Exclusive Features</b>	Breakout Rooms	Q&A feature
<b>Tech checks</b> (see more below)	Can be before or during a meeting	Only easy before a webinar
<b>Cost</b>	Free or Pro version	Pro version + extra £78 per month
<b>Standard capacity</b> (can be upgraded)	100 people	500 people

### Also consider ...

Webinars can be easier to manage than a Meeting – especially with large numbers of people.

A webinar with multiple sessions with different sets of speakers/panellists will require more work (promoting and demoting the sets of panellists) and will be harder to do tech checks (see below).

## Further detail

	Meetings	Webinars
<b>General use</b>	Ideal for more interactive sessions - lots of audience participation or break your session into smaller groups	Like a virtual lecture hall. Ideal for large audiences or events open to the public. Typically, webinar attendees do not interact with one another. Most have a few people speaking to an audience.
<b>Participant roles</b>	Host/co-hosts Participants	Host/co-hosts Panellist Attendees
<b>Who do most people see?</b>	Everyone	Only Panellists
<b>Who sees the Participant list?</b>	Everyone	Just Hosts and panellists
<b>Who can talk?</b>	Everyone  The host can mute everyone and can stop people unmuting	Attendees are auto muted (so listen-only mode) and can never unmute themselves  The host can unmute an attendee  The host and panellists can mute/unmute freely
<b>Chat</b>	Usually available to everyone	You control who attendees can chat with: No-one / Hosts and panellists only / Everyone
<b>Polls</b>	YES	YES
<b>Breakout Rooms</b>	YES	-
<b>Q&amp;A feature</b>	-	YES
<b>Before event</b>	Waiting Room	Practise session
<b>PayPal integration</b>	-	YES
<b>Requires / Cost</b>	Free or Pro version	Pro version + extra £78 per month
<b>Capacity</b>	100	500
<b>Upgrades (monthly)</b>	500 / £48	
	1000 / £86	1000 / £326
<b>Maximum</b>	1000	10,000 / £5,000+

See also Zoom's article on the differences between Zoom Meetings and Webinars  
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005474943>

## Times to use a Meeting or a Webinar (remember the extra cost)

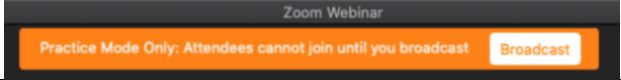
What you want ...	Lean towards
You are on a tight budget (free version)	Meeting
One to one meeting	Meeting
Small informal group	Meeting
Everyone to be able to contribute equally Generate ideas and hold discussions Lots of interactions amongst the audience (e.g. Breakout Rooms)	Meeting
Attendee to attendee interaction is not required/important	Webinar
Professional panel discussion event	Webinar
Multiple sessions with different sets of speakers/panellists	Meeting
Team meetings	Meeting
Online learnings or trainings	Meeting
Announcing, marketing or selling an idea or product	Webinar
Concerts	Webinar
Larger audiences (500 - 1,000 +)	Webinar
Council meetings	Webinar

Also see Zoom's article <https://blog.zoom.us/when-to-use-meetings-vs-webinars/>

## What participation IS available in a Webinar?

Q&A, Raise Hand and Chat - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zlrbcyDhOk>

## MEETING “Waiting Rooms” vs WEBINAR “Practice sessions”

Meeting Waiting Room	Webinar Practise Session
For participants BEFORE you let them in	For panellists BEFORE you “start” the webinar proper
You can ‘admit’ selected people from the Waiting Room.	Panellists have a special link that lets them into the Webinar before it has been properly started or “Broadcast” (into the Practise Session)
When ready you ‘admit all’ and/or disable the Waiting Room	When ready you start or “broadcast” the Webinar 
You can optionally keep the Waiting room open during the Meeting	

## Managing Tech check sessions (for speakers/panellists)

In Meetings	In Webinars
Can be done before a meeting (with the Waiting room on and allowing speakers in early)	Can only be done before the webinar using the Practise session
Can be done during a Meeting (ideally in a break and using Breakout Rooms)	

## Moving from Meeting to a Webinar

You can convert a Meeting to a Webinar or vice versa, and keep the same meeting URL and registrants. But you can only convert once for each Meeting or Webinar.

## NEW: Breakout Rooms in Webinars (but)

As of June 2023 – Webinars DO have Breakout Rooms.

BUT it’s very expensive. You require an annual “Zoom Events” or “Zoom Sessions” license.

Session license = £74 for a max 50 attendees over the whole year / or £133 for 100 / or £744 for 600

OR £730 for unlimited attendees up to a maximum of 100 or £2,580 up to 500

AND, to participate people need a very up to date version of Zoom