Ensure excellent communication, collaboration and connectivity while working remotely with these tips and tricks.
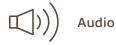
Meetings

Video

When using Teams to join/host video meetings from your home, use the Blur feature. This helps reduce distractions and spares others from critiquing your remote working environment.

- To start a meeting with background blur, move the blur slider (the one to the right of the video slider) to the right on the "**Choose your audio and video settings**" screen when you're joining the meeting. Note: This only works for scheduled meetings.

- To turn on background blur during a meeting, click **More options** > **Blur my background**.

Audio

Use a wired or wireless headset if you have one. This is preferred over your built-in computer speakers and microphone, as a headset can reduce background noise and personal distractions.

Test connection/Quality

Join your meeting a few minutes early to check your voice and video settings. With all the different tools we are using, it's not uncommon for default audio and video devices to be altered. You can test this in your profile settings under **Devices**.

Managing time

Schedule a meeting for the least amount of time possible to accomplish your tasks. As an example, think about shortening 60-minute meetings to 45 minutes. This way you can ensure a reasonable amount of time between meetings that are back to back so you don't run over.

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Managing activity, channels or files

- A team is a collection of people, conversations, files and tools — all in one place.
- A channel is a discussion in a team, dedicated to a department, project or topic.
- Click **Files** on the left to see all files shared across all of your teams.
- Click **Files** at the top of a channel to see all files shared in that channel.
- Click **More options …** next to a file to see what you can do with it.
- Click **Activity** on the left. This feed will show your notifications and details related to the channels you follow.
- Click **Teams** and select a team. Pick a channel to explore the **Conversations**, **Files** and other tabs.

Connection/Bandwidth

Avoid using Wi-Fi when/if possible by connecting directly to your router with an Ethernet cable.

When connected to Wi-Fi and sharing the connection with family members, **segregate non-critical devices** to utilize a single network. Home routers support 2.4G and 5G.

Reboot your router and access points weekly. Many internet providers are scrambling to keep up with the new demands of a larger remote workforce and have been making changes on the fly. A reboot of your network can force some of those changes.

If your router supports Quality of Service (QoS) settings, you may be able to **give your device or application a priority**. Review the router manual for guidance — many manufacturers provide step-by-step illustrated instructions.

Speaking of home routers… typically, people set them up and forget about them. Most modern devices accept updates that can affect the performance and operations as well as security. Now is a good time to **ensure your router is up to date** with the latest critical security updates as well as improvements in overall stability.

Reduce resolution on Netflix, Spotify, Prime Video® and other video services. You'll be surprised at how much of a difference it can make.

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