

[Academic Technology Help Center](#) > [Teaching & Learning with Technology / Instructional Design](#) > [Zoom](#)

 Search

Articles in this section



Using breakout rooms

5 days ago · Updated

Requires **Teacher** role

Breakout rooms allow teachers to split Zoom meeting into small group rooms. Teachers can choose to split students into breakout rooms automatically or manually. Teachers may enter any breakout room at any time and switch between them.

Select the best option for your class

- Zoom can assign students to breakout rooms randomly by number of rooms.

- **Note:** This is the quickest, easiest option.
- Teachers can assign students to breakout rooms manually.
 - Manual assignments have to be recreated each time; Zoom cannot save them.
 - If a teacher is going to create breakout rooms manually, it is recommended to give students an individual thinking task (e.g. a one-minute reflection prompt) to complete while rooms are being created.
- Teachers may join any room at any time. Students may also request that the teacher joins their room.

Prepare students and provide instructions before you place them into breakout rooms

When students are placed into breakout rooms, they will no longer have access to anything that is happening in the main Zoom room, including the main room chat, your screenshare, your video, or your audio.

Instead, students now have all these tools inside their respective breakout rooms, accessible only to the students in that room. As a result, if your students need access to group work instructions while in their breakout rooms, then you'll want to give students a link to those instructions (e.g. in iLearn or a Google or Box doc) beforehand. See below.

Prepare students before they go

1. Prime students to go from passive to active mode. If they've been watching the teacher talk or present, they may have slipped into a passive observer role. Alert them that it's time for them to take an active role!
2. Instruct students to unmute their microphones and introduce themselves to their group when they arrive in their breakout rooms.

Provide instructions before they go

1. Review the group activity instructions before placing students into breakout rooms.
2. Give students access to a copy of the instructions to use while they are in breakout rooms. Recommended steps are as follows:
 1. Create a breakout room group activity instruction slide deck.
 2. Post the breakout group slide deck to the cloud (e.g. Box).
 3. Create a tinyurl for the slide deck so it's easy for students to key into their browser.
 1. Create tinyurl at <https://tinyurl.com/>
 4. Share the tinyurl in the main slide deck before students leave the main room.

Prepare students to come back to the main room

1. Broadcast a two-minute warning to all groups letting students know it's time to wrap up.
2. Then, one minute later, close the groups; Zoom provides one minute to leave breakout rooms and come back to the main room.

Consider your asynchronous viewers

- If you are recording Zoom sessions for later viewing by students who could not attend the synchronous session, consider your asynchronous viewers.
- Zoom only records activity in the main room, not in the breakout rooms, so teachers may want to consider ending the recording before moving students into breakout rooms.
 - At this time, it may be appropriate to mention to asynchronous viewers how they can complete a version of the breakout room

activity on their own, if applicable.

For additional help, view:

Zoom Help Center guide on managing video breakout rooms

- <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/206476313>

Zoom Help Center guide on participating in breakout rooms

- <https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/115005769646-Participating-in-Breakout-Rooms>

For additional assistance, contact the Teaching and Learning with Technology team: (415) 405-5550, iteach@sfsu.edu, LIB 240



Was this article helpful?

✓ Yes

✗ No

4 out of 4 found this helpful

Return to top 

Related articles

Engaging students with Zoom

Using polling

Getting started with Zoom

Add a Zoom meeting to an iLearn course

How to install the Desktop Recorder

Comments

0 comments

Article is closed for comments.

Contact or Visit Us

AT Services

(415) 405-5555

at@sfsu.edu

LIB 80

Teaching & Learning

(415) 405-5550

iteach@sfsu.edu

LIB 240

Academic Technology supports and advances effective learning, teaching, scholarship, and community service with technology.

iLearn
Labspace
CourseStream

at@sfsu.edu
Visit us at LIB
80



San Francisco State
University

A California State University Campus

Academic Technology