

Why Zoom?

- It's possible to join in Zoom meetings without installing software or creating account, although it's better to do both
- Zoom works on any device – Windows, Mac, smartphone, tablet etc. Installation has proved relatively pain free so far
- It's always free to join a meeting. It's also free to create and host meetings of up to 100 participants. The free version allows meetings up to 40 minutes, but meetings can be re-started straight away. A paid version at £12/month + VAT removes the limit altogether
- It has lots of functionality beyond just video calls

Will it continue to be useful after the lockdown?

Once people are connected, it's possible for groups to provide remote access to meetings for those who can't be there on the day. The same goes for monthly General Meetings. It also increases the potential to reach out to groups elsewhere, such as collaboration with other U3A groups – e.g. language groups in other countries.

Is it essential to install Zoom software?

No, but it's a lot better if you do. Zoom say that if you can't install the software you can join a meeting through the Zoom Web Client, which runs in a browser. However, it's only really practical with one browser, Chrome, and the functionality is limited. And you do have to create an account.

Is it essential to create an account?

Not to join a meeting, only if you are going to host a meeting. When you join a meeting, you may see a login screen, but you don't have to log in. And as in the previous point, you **do** have to create an account to use the Web Client

Does it cost?

No, the client software is free, and you don't have to give any payment details to register your account. With a free account you can join any meeting (including those set up from paid accounts), and you can host meetings up to 100 participants. Meetings you host are limited to 40 minutes duration, but you can start another 40-minute session straight away. Zoom have recently relaxed the 40-minute limit on some accounts, but it seems not all. A paid account with no time limit costs £11.99 / month +VAT. For more details from the Zoom website, see: zoom.us/pricing

Can I join a Zoom meeting from Skype, Facetime etc.?

Not as far as we are aware. Zoom and Skype can communicate between businesses, but not the free versions
