

Google Meet Is for Video Calls Big or Small

Until April 2020, to use Google Meet, you had to buy a G Suite plan. Now, though, Google has released a free version, and it's available to anyone with a Google or Gmail account.

You can create or join a Google Meet, and add up to 100 participants on a video call. At this writing, there isn't a time limit on calls, but starting September 30, calls will be limited to 60 minutes. This is in stark contrast to Zoom, though, which limits free video conferences to only 40 minutes.

[Google Hangouts](#) still exists, and you can use it to chat or conduct video calls with up to 25 participants. [Google Duo](#) is the company's mobile-focused video-chat app. It's also still alive and thriving, and you can now add up to 12 participants.

Google Meet was designed specifically for large-scale [video conferences](#) that can be joined with a link or a code. Like Zoom, businesses and organizations are its target demographic.



Google

You can start a video call, and then share the link or code or invite people via email. Then, just chat away. You can share your screen, switch to a tiled view, turn on live captions, or send text messages, as well. But that's pretty much it.

[Google Meet](#) works in most browsers, but, as it's a Google product, it works best in Chrome. Unlike Zoom, there isn't a desktop app, but there are apps for [iPhone](#), [iPad](#), and [Android](#). The apps offer the same functionality as the website.

Google Meet Is a Bare-Bones Zoom Competitor

You can think of Google Meet as a bare-bones version of Zoom. Unlike Zoom, though, Google Meet offers end-to-end encryption on all calls.

With the unlimited free calls feature available until Sept. 30, 2020, Google Meet is a way better deal than Zoom if you don't need any advanced features.

When it comes to the sheer number of features, however, Google Meet can't match Zoom. For example, Google Meet's free plan doesn't offer recording. You also have to have a Google account to use Google Meet, but Zoom allows anyone with the link to join a video call. That's a plus for Google Meet when it comes to security, though.



Zoom

You also won't find virtual backgrounds, reactions, or advanced participants control features in Google Meet.

The paid version gives you the ability to record meetings. It also increases the participant count to 250 and includes a live-streaming feature for up to 100,000 viewers. However, all of this requires a G Suite subscription, and those start at \$6 per month.

It's not really a fair comparison as G Suite also gives you access to many enterprise-level Google tools, but compared to Zoom Pro's \$15 per month plan, that's quite expensive.


But if you've been using Zoom Pro for meetings to avoid the 40-minute time limit, you should at least try Google Meet. If all you need is a simple video-conferencing service that works for all your team members, Google Meet's free plan might be enough for you.

How to Use Google Meet

Once you're [prepared for your video conference](#), just head over to [Google Meet](#) and click "Start a Meeting."

Premium video meetings. Now free for everyone.

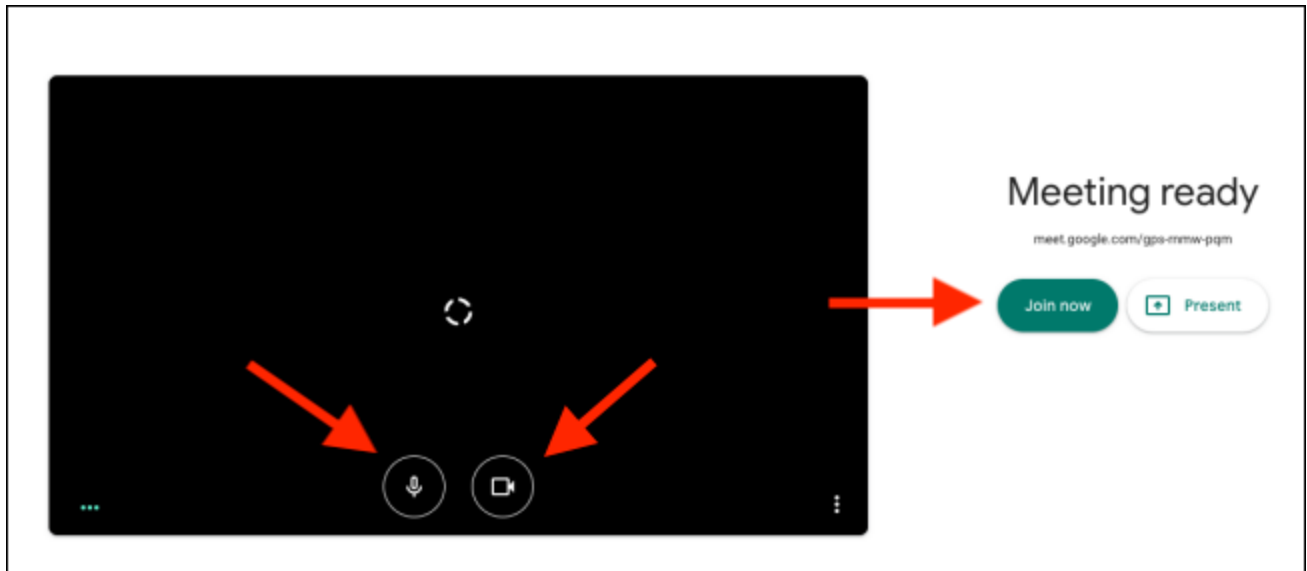
We re-engineered the service that we built for secure business meetings, Google Meet, to make it free and available for all.



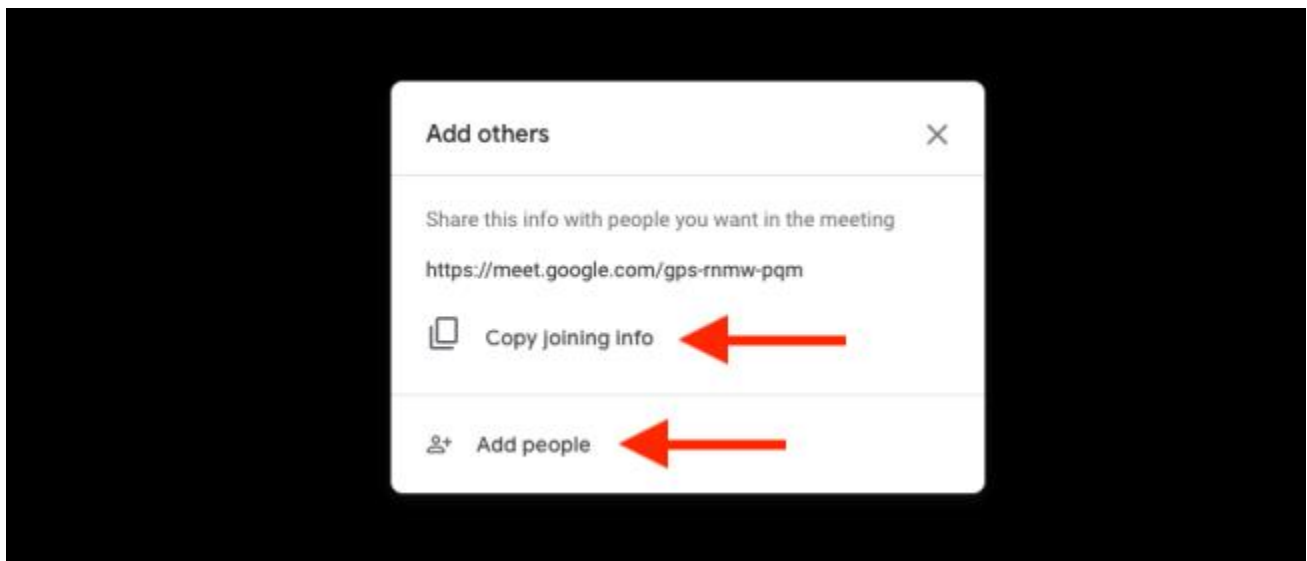
or

[Learn more](#) about Google Meet

Take a look at your microphone and camera settings, and then click “Join Now.”

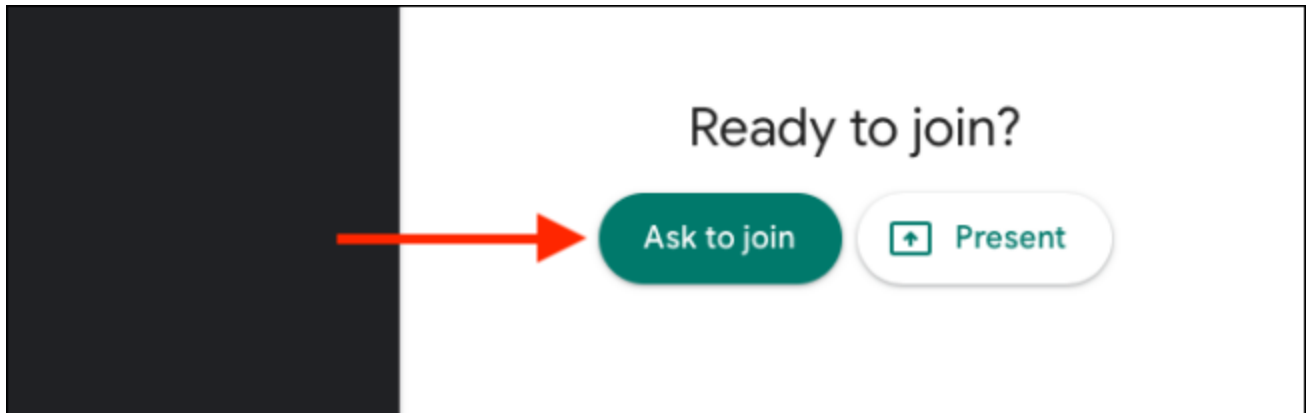


Instantly, Google Meet will start the video call for you. A popup will give you the sharing information. From there, you can copy the link or invite people via email. Share the link with the participants you want to add.



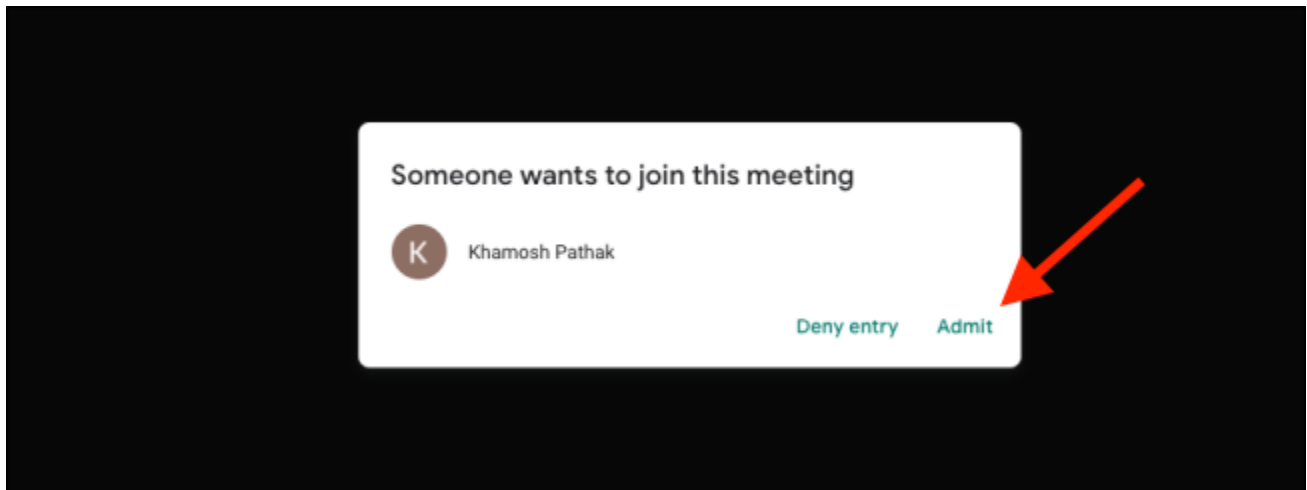
After they receive and open the link, they'll be able to configure their video and microphone settings. They can also choose to disable both if they want.

They can also switch to a different Google account before they join the call. Once they're ready, they just click "Ask to Join."



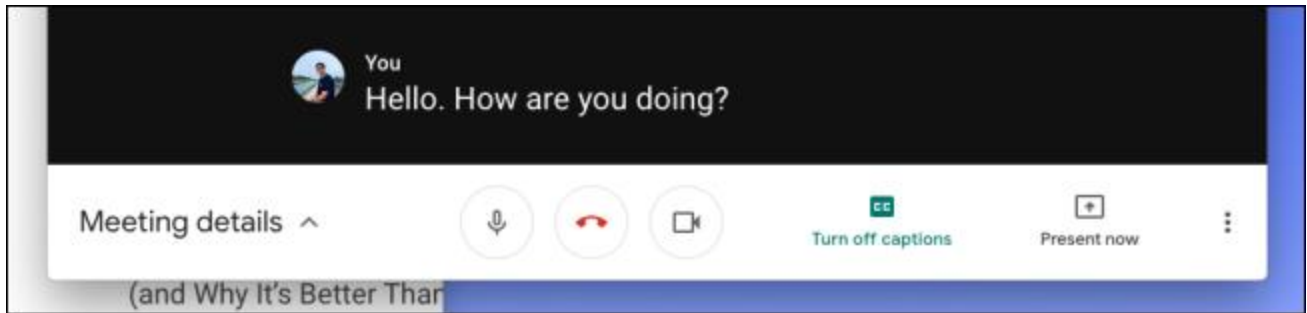
The host (you) will be notified that someone wants to join the meeting.

You'll see the name associated with their Google account. After you verify that it's the right person, click "Admit" to add that person to the meeting. You'll then need to do this for each of the invitees.

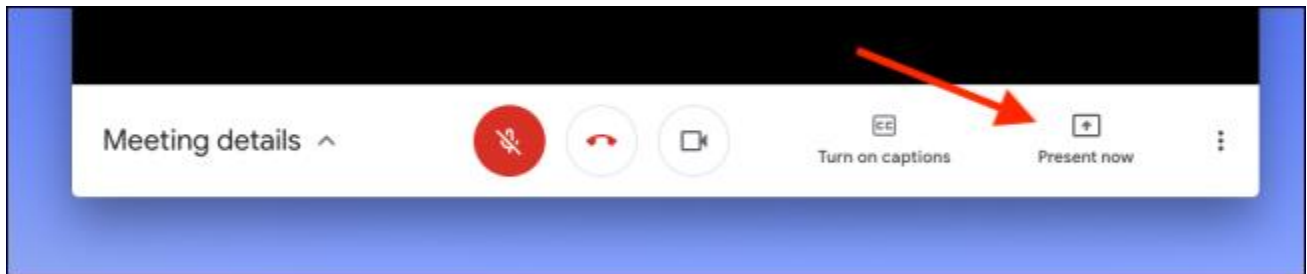


Once the call has started, you can use the Microphone and Video buttons to enable or disable [your microphone](#) and camera, respectively.

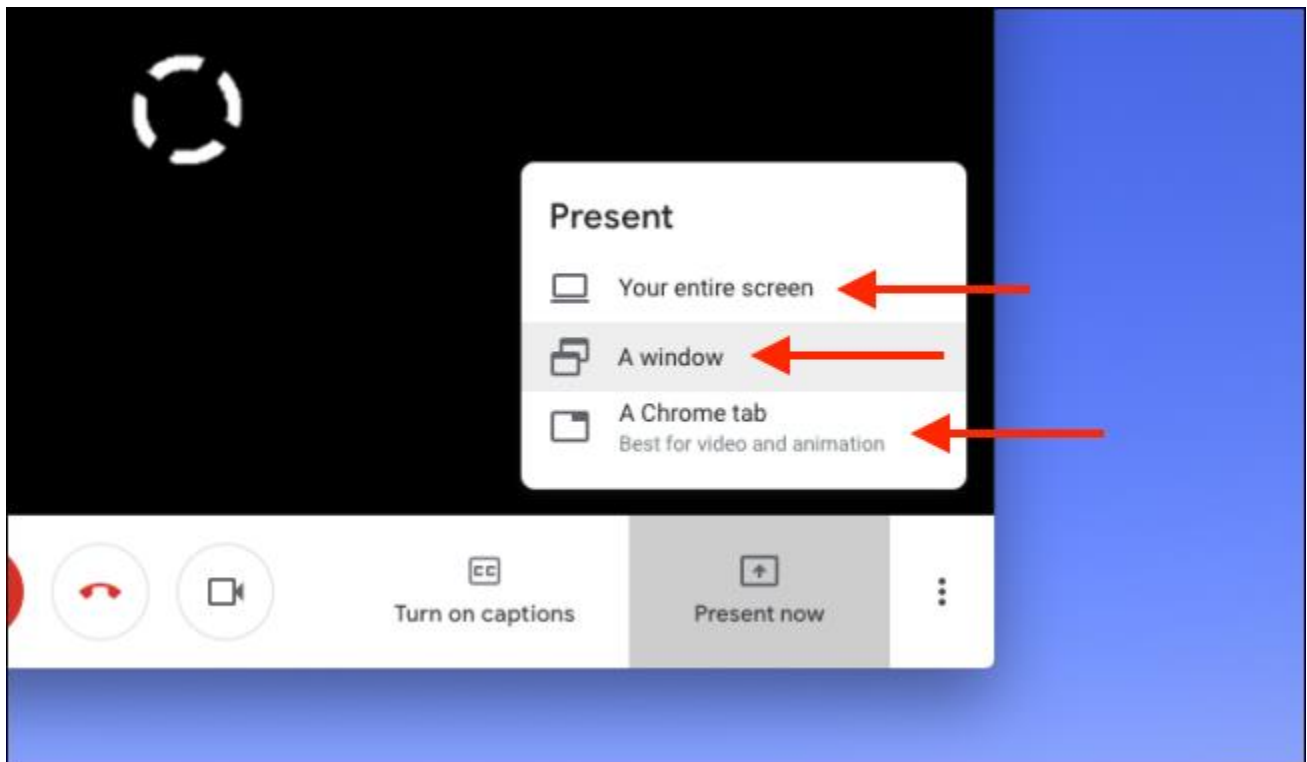
You can click "Turn On Captions" to enable live audio transcription. As this is a Google service, Meet is really good at transcribing live voice (including censoring curse words).



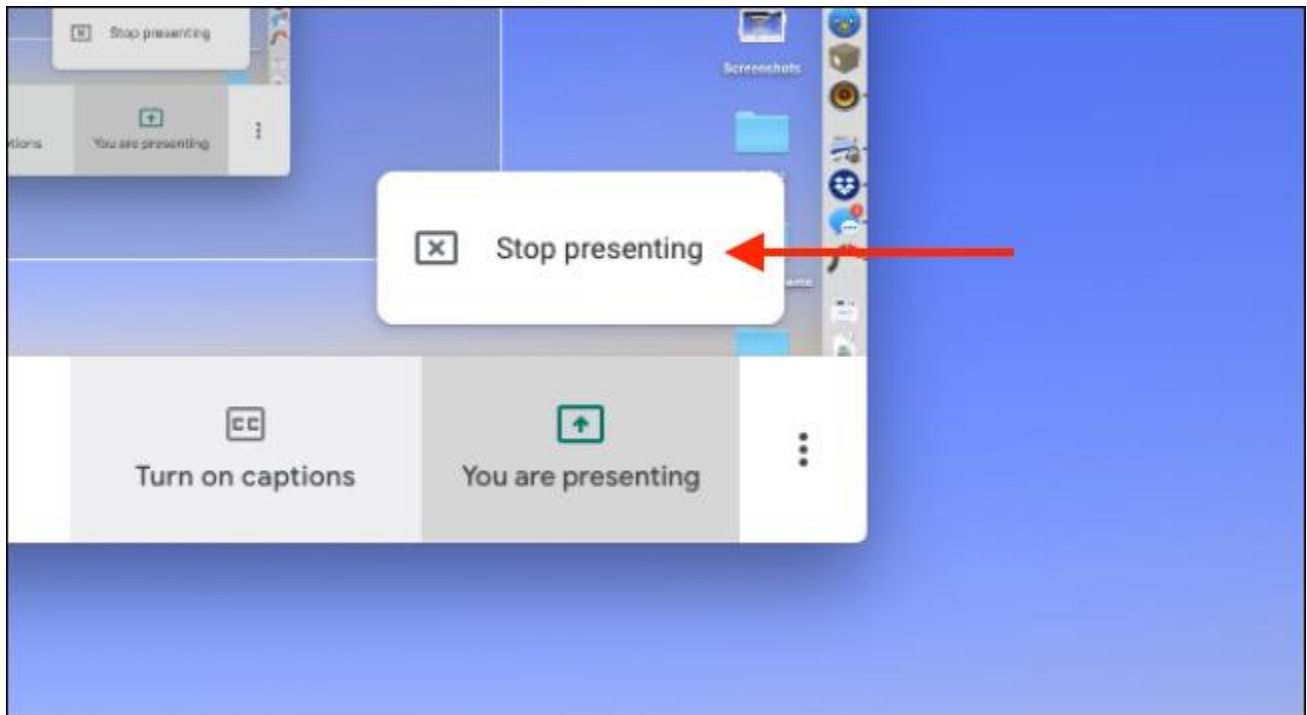
You can click “Present Now” if you want to share your screen.



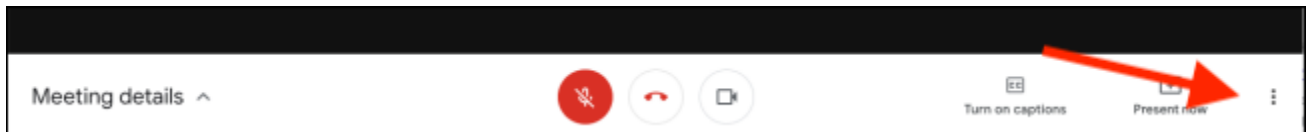
From there, you can choose to share your entire screen, a window, or just a Chrome tab.



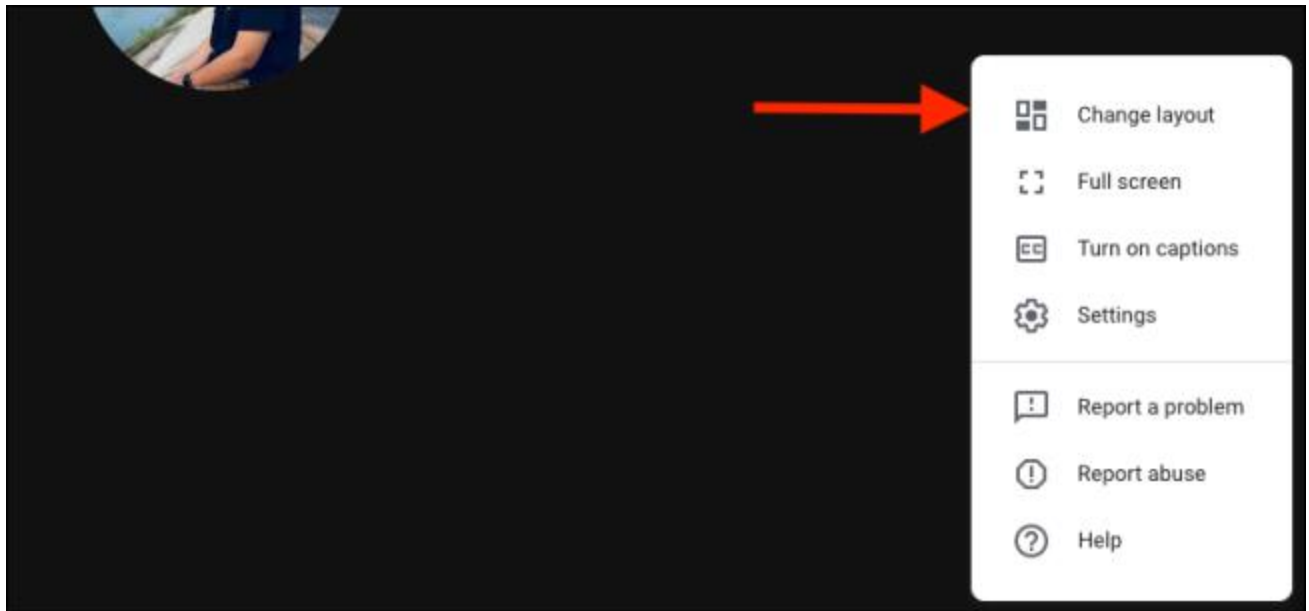
Once you're done, click "You are Presenting." Just click "Stop Presenting" whenever you want to stop sharing.



To change your settings, click the Menu button in the bottom toolbar.



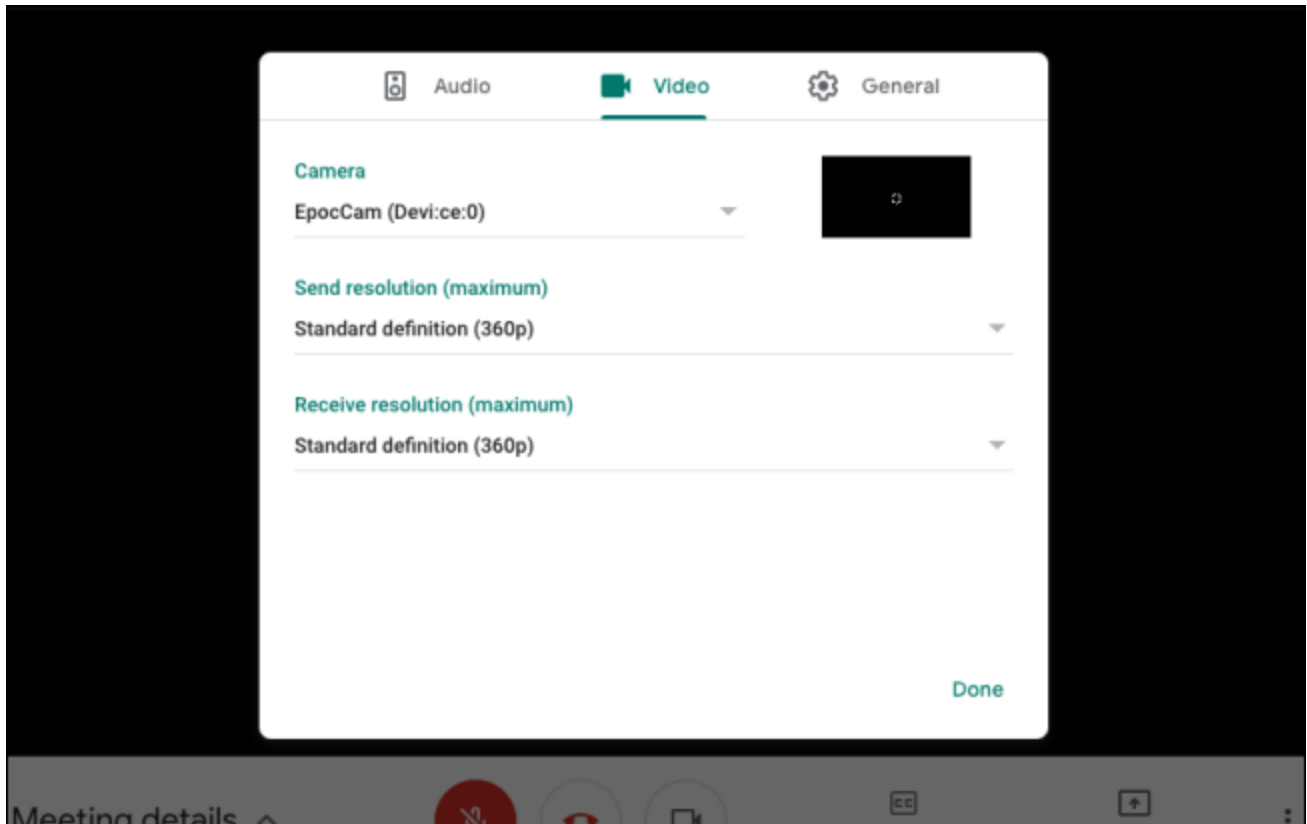
Click "Full Screen" if you want to enlarge the window to fill your entire screen. You can also click "Change Layout" to switch to a different format.



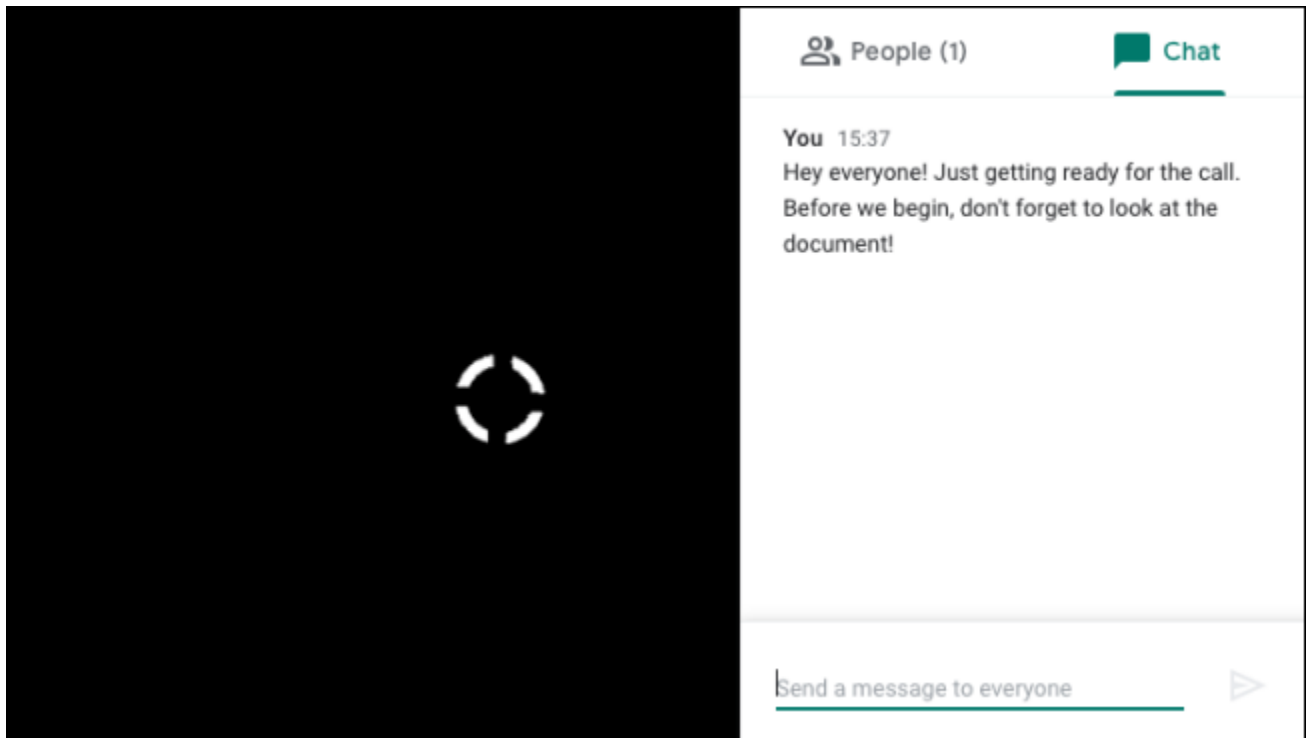
You can choose “Tiled” for a Zoom-style gallery view that allows you to [see all the participants](#) (only 16 will fit on one screen, though).



If you want to change the audio or video device or switch the video resolution between 360p and 720p, click the Settings option.



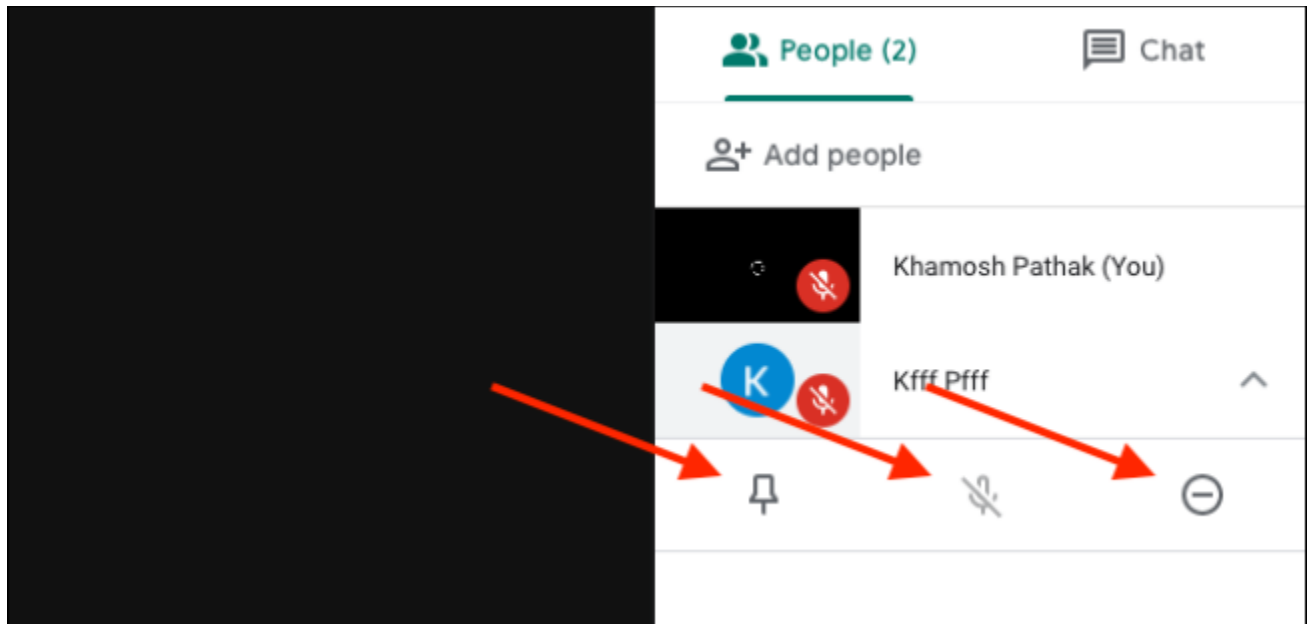
You can click “Chat” at the top if you want to send a message to everyone on the call.



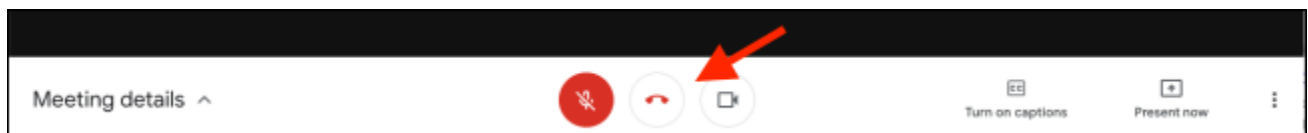
You can also click “People” at the top to see all the participants. You can then select a participant to view more options. Click the Pin icon to pin that person to the chat screen.

The Mute button will [mute that participant](#) for everyone on the call, and only the participant can unmute himself. If you want to boot someone off the call, just click the Remove button.

RELATED: [How to Mute Other People in Google Meet](#)



When you're done with the call, just click the red End Call button.



If you don't like Google Meet or Zoom, take a look at some of the [alternatives out there](#).