



How to Setup Online Conferencing Tool for Virtual Meetings

There are a lot of great Scout Tech options out there for hosting virtual meetings, but before you just plop a Scout in front of their PC and use that hour to take a breather, it's important that your Scout has an updated [Cyber Chip](#).



Facebook Live

Most units have a social media presence, and this is where **Facebook Live** could be the perfect option for your online meetings. Host a meeting live like you would in person... flag ceremony, Oath, Law, Outdoor Code, and activities. The perks of this free technology are that you can broadcast your meeting on your Pack Facebook group or page for up to four hours! You can also see comments as they come in, allowing for question and answer time. The best part is that the Live broadcast will save as a regular post that can be viewed and commented on later! The downside is that you can't share resources like files or presentations.

How Do I Use Facebook Live?

1. Go to your Facebook group on your smartphone and tap the red "Live" icon under the "write something" box, as if you were about to type a new post.
2. Give Facebook access to your camera and microphone.
3. Switch to "Live" on the bottom of your camera screen.
4. Choose your privacy and posting settings.
5. Write a subject or description.
6. Set your camera's orientation.
7. Click "Start Live Video" and you're broadcasting!

Skype

[Skype](#) is a very popular video conferencing tool used to connect families, classrooms, and businesses online. There is a free version that allows up to 10 guests on a video call, but there are interactive chats and you can record the video and share it later on social media. There are [apps](#) for both iOS and Android devices, and can be used on your Windows OS desktop computer. As the leader of the meeting, you'll want to create a **Skype Group meeting** that you'll invite people to via email, social media link, or text. You can record your meeting and share it later, and even click the paperclip icon at the bottom of your screen to attach images, files, or more.

I just sat in on a Skype den meeting tonight and was absolutely floored by how cool it was! The Scouts were sharing their desktops to give presentations, used manners and showed courtesy by muting their own microphones, and the leader had a tremendous amount of flexibility and control over how the meeting was run.

How Do I Set-Up a Skype Group Meeting?

1. Launch your Skype app or desktop program and sign-in.
2. You can change your online status by clicking on the colored circle next to your profile picture.
3. Using the left-hand menu, click the "New Group Chat" icon.

4. Add an image and chat name. Click Done.
5. **Add up to 10 attendees** to your meeting OR **create and share a link** to your group meeting by clicking the icon at the top left that looks like a person with a plus sign.

Zoom

If you need something similar to Skype but have more than 10 attendees, consider [Zoom](#), which allows you to host up to **100 attendees**. This would be great for a virtual Pack Meeting! Zoom also allows screen sharing, so you could have more than one leader in different locations running the meeting. Like Facebook Live and Skype, it's free to use and allows for you to quickly and easily share a virtual meeting with your Scouts. You can record and share your video later, and even attach files for your attendees to view.

How Do I Use Zoom?

1. Visit zoom.us and sign-in.
2. Click the "Host a Meeting" button at the top of your screen, choosing to have video on or off.
3. It will prompt you to join with computer audio, or you can click the check box to automatically join audio by computer when joining a meeting. You can also test your speaker and microphone.
4. Click the "Invite" button at the bottom of your screen and send an email OR copy the URL using the buttons on the "Invite people to join" pop-up window. Make note of the meeting password.
5. Share your invitation and get started!

Google Hangouts

Most of us have a Google account, so [Hangouts](#) is a great option for hosting a virtual meeting. Like Zoom, Hangouts allows you to connect to up to 100 people (in chat) and 10 in a video conference. There are fewer bells and whistles, but the trade-off is that it's extremely easy to use and connects directly to your Google account, so there's no need to upload a contacts list.

How Do I Use Google Hangouts?

1. Visit hangouts.google.com and sign-in.
2. Click "Video Call" on your home page.
3. **Invite specific people** OR **create and share a link** to your group video.
4. You can chat with your meeting members by clicking the chat icon.

If you've planned out something clever that other families can benefit from, share your work! Go to your Facebook page, find online groups that share your interests, and put it out there for others to use. We have an opportunity to be helpers in a difficult time, and we can use it to start a community of giving. How cool is that?

(Updated 3/19/2020. From Cub Scout Rebekah. Visit her blog [Looking Wider Still](#) for more online resources.)