

How to prepare for a video interview

Lately we're turning to digital tools even more to help us connect and get things done. There's no doubt facing a job interview via video can be nerve racking – especially if it's something you haven't experienced before.

But there are ways to set yourself up as best you can and boost your confidence for your time on screen.

Here's how you can prepare for a video interview, step by step.

Step 1: Do your research

As soon as you've been selected for an interview – or even before – it's a good idea to jump right into your [interview research](#). Think of this the same way you would for any job interview. Here are the basics to cover:

- **Read up on the company** and how it operates, plus any recent achievements.
- **Familiarise yourself with the role** and its requirements by reviewing the job description again.
- **Think about your own skills and experience** and what you can bring to the company. Look back to your resume or cover letter and think about how you can expand on what you wrote and provide examples in the interview.
- **Start compiling a list of questions** that you might be asked in the interview and plan how you could answer them. This [practice interview builder](#) is a good place to start.

Step 2: Sort your technology

Once your video interview is scheduled, focus on preparing the tech you need to use while there's still time to sort any issues that pop up.

- **Find out which program or app you'll be using.** There's a range of video options out there so check with the employer if they haven't told you. If you need to, download the app or program. You may need to set up a profile – remember to opt for a professional username or email. Video calls can be done on most devices – for example a laptop, tablet or smart phone – so if you can, choose whichever you feel most comfortable with. If you're using your phone or a tablet, try to position it in front of you rather than holding it as your hands could be shaky in the interview.
- **Set up your camera**, whether it's a webcam or a camera built into your device. Check out how it works and clean the lens. For your interview you'll want to be roughly in the middle of the screen, facing front on and not too close to it – far enough for at least your

head and shoulders to be in view.

- **Set up the microphone**, whether it's built into your device or separate, and test it to see that it's sounding clear.
- **Do a trial run** by calling a friend or family member. Can they hear you easily? Does your internet connection hold up? Identify any issues now while you can fix them.

Step 3: Set up your location

Next, find a suitable spot for your interview and get it ready.

- **Pick a quiet space** where you're unlikely to be interrupted by loud noises or other people. If you can, arrange to have the space to yourself during your interview.
- **Look at lighting** and make sure there's enough light for the interviewer to see you clearly. Try to avoid harsh shadows or sun in your eyes.
- **Check your background** to make sure there'll be nothing distracting behind you during the interview, or anything you wouldn't want an employer to see.

Step 4: Practice presenting yourself

At this point it's a good idea to get as familiar with video calling as you can, and to think about how you can present yourself confidently.

- **Prepare your outfit** for the interview. Choose something professional that you'd wear to an in-person interview.
- **Do some practice video interviewing.** Ideally, you'll have been going over your list of practice questions and answers – now try putting them to the test. You could record yourself answering questions then watch it back. This will give you an idea of how you look on screen, what it's like to speak to camera and whether you can be heard properly. Even better, get a friend or family member to "interview" you through a video call then give you feedback on how it went.

Step 5: Focus on the conversation

On the day of your interview, do one final check of your technology and make sure your battery is charged. Sit down in your chosen location with at least 15 minutes to spare before you start the interview. Have a glass of water at hand, and a notepad and pen. It can be handy to have your resume or other documents there too but it's not a good idea to read from notes. Close any programs that could affect your internet connection or distract you and disable pop-up notifications. Put your phone on silent mode if you're not using it.

Now turn your focus to the interview. Even though you'll be answering questions through a screen, it's important to think of your video interview as a conversation with another person. It can help to:

- **Slow down and take your time to answer.** It might feel strange to hear gaps in the conversation. But pausing a second longer before you answer will help to ensure you don't speak over of the interviewer if there's a delay in the video. Taking deep breaths can help you to stay calm as well.
- **Look at the camera when you can.** Unlike a face-to-face conversation it can be hard to know where to look. If you direct your gaze at the camera, rather than the interviewer's face on screen, it's more likely to appear that you're making eye contact. Try to do this when you're listening.
- **Think about your body language** like you would normally – sit up straight, and nod to show that you're listening and engaged.

If things go wrong, don't panic – you can get back on track.

- **If your technology fails** you may have to close the program, reopen it and start again. If you can't get the program to work, you may have to get in touch with the interviewer via phone.
- **If you're interrupted** by someone or something in your space, apologise, deal with the interruption quickly and quietly, then continue. If there's a loud noise like a siren outside, you may have to mute your microphone for a moment then continue.

Finally, end the interview by thanking your interviewer – and make sure you've closed the program or app before you breathe a sigh of relief! As with any interview, you can send a follow up email later that day or the day after.

It's totally normal to feel anxious or nervous before any job interview – and video interviewing can feel strange if you haven't done it before. But by practicing, preparing and getting familiar with the format, you'll be ready to make a great impression on screen.