

Lighting Recommendations

Proper lighting is essential if you want to make your videoconference look professional (and also make yourself look good on camera). Without the right lighting, you can appear on video as a shadow, an outline, or a dark or blurry face. Using only the radiant light coming from your computer's monitor is not good enough for a videoconference.

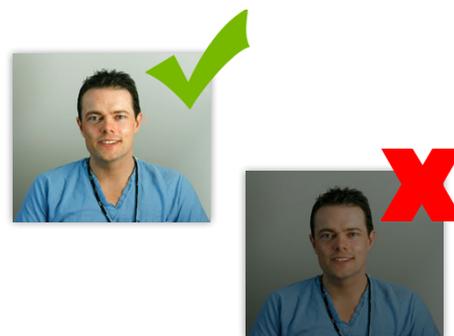
This guide explains how to set up the lighting in your room so that others will see you clearly throughout a videoconference and therefore improve the perceived quality of the video.

Make sure there's enough light

Most webcams can't pick up images properly when the room is not well lit. This might seem obvious, but many people who haven't video broadcast before don't realize that their desk is in a darkish corner without much light.

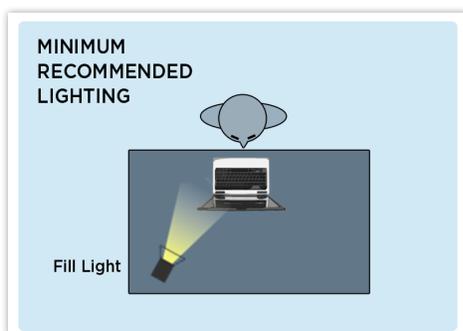
Cameras love light; the more, the better. **More light equals better details** and improved depth-of-field (the distance range of the scene that appears in focus).

If your area looks a little dark, either turn on more lights or set up a lamp that can add some light to your workstation.



Make sure the direction of the light is right

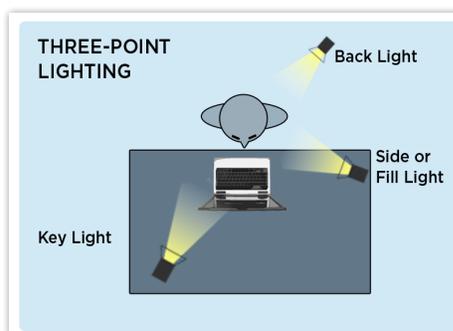
Minimum Recommended Setup



Fill Light: A desk lamp placed to shine on your face that will augment the ambient light in the room, filling in shadows created by overhead or back light.

Place the lamp behind the webcam (to illuminate your face) but not blocked by your monitor or laptop and not shining directly into your eyes.

Ideal Setup



Key Light: The primary source of light should be in front of you and behind the webcam.

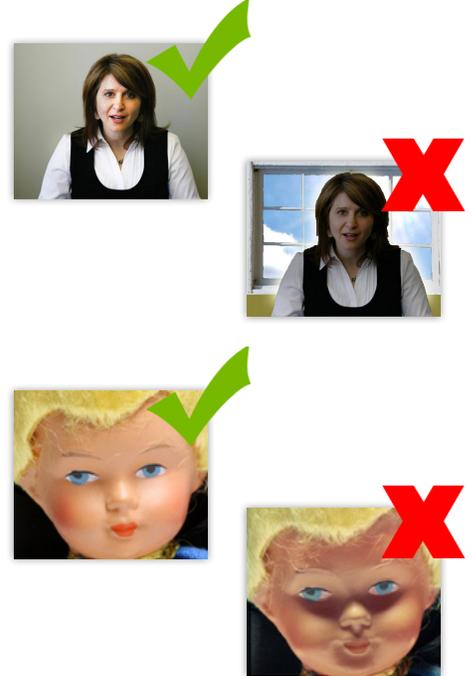
Side/Fill Light: A desk lamp placed to the side helps create an evenly toned image. For example, filling in shadows created by overhead or back light.

Back Light: Some back light is good. When properly done, a little back light helps separate you from the background and creates a more dimensional effect.



Avoid other lighting irregularities

- **Do not sit in front of a window.** A strong light coming from behind can cause your video image to appear as a shadow or with glowing edges. To get rid of the bright back light, either close the blinds or move to a desk that doesn't have a window behind it. If this isn't possible, try to counter-balance the light coming from behind with a desk lamp aiming light softly at you (side/fill light).
- **Do not use only overhead light.** A strong light coming from overhead casts shadows, which can be unflattering or distracting. For example, shadows can make your video image appear tired, inattentive or even slightly evil (in a theatrical sense). Try to counter-balance the light coming from above with a desk lamp aiming light softly at you (side/fill light).
- Try to **minimize glare**, which can create distracting hot spots in a video image. Glare can come from shiny table-tops, eyeglasses or glossy hair products.
- Try to **avoid mixing different types of light** because the different light colors produced may cause problems with the webcam's color balance. For example, mixing indoor and outdoor lighting can cause one side of your face to appear blue (sunlight) while the other side appears red (incandescent light).



Check your lighting with a self-test

The final step to ensuring you have the best possible lighting for your video conference is to check the results on camera. You can do this using the 'self-view' feature of the videoconferencing window.

1. Log in to the Videoconference service and perform a [mirror test](#).
2. When the video window appears, check that your self-view image is well lit. Sit still for a minute, notice if you can be clearly seen or if there are any shadows, and adjust the lighting as necessary.

While this might seem like a lot of work for a video conference, you will quickly get used to adjusting the lighting for your video conferences, and soon it will become second nature. With proper lighting, your meetings will not only be much more pleasant for your attendees, but you will also look your best on camera.

