# Hot tips for new hosts of group video calls

Are you hosting or chairing group video calls for the first time? Here are a few useful tips.

- **Be on the call before before the start time.**
  You can greet people, do sound checks, and they have time to familiarise themselves with the software functions. (Plan 15-30 minutes depending on the number of participants).

- **Invite participants to join a bit earlier if needed.**
  Tell people what time they can come online from, to check their setup if they need to. This enables everyone to be ready on time.

- **Set all participants to mute/video off when they join.**
  Make it a default in your account settings or the event settings. People may not expect to be live and on camera immediately.

- **Be aware of people joining the session by phone (audio) only.**
  People can be restricted by bandwidth, device type, or permissions. Including "audio only" means they can participate, but make sure you adjust your chairing to explicitly include them even though they don't have visuals. This might mean circulating slides beforehand.

- **Agree a protocol for "hands up" at the start.**
  Participants will need to indicate when they have a question or contribution: it could be a physical show of hands in the video screen, using the "raise hand" button, &/or using the chat. (Check in by name with the "audio only" participants to check for input at intervals.)

- **Have a co-host who speaks and a co-host who does tech things.**
  If you're chairing or presenting, and also using additional functions like sharing slide presentations, or managing breakout rooms, have a co-host who can manage the button-pressing so you can concentrate on speaking and holding your audience.

- **Create some connection time.**
  Optional, recommended for teams and participants who have ongoing interactions. Do a round of check-ins at the start and check-outs at the end. Hear where everyone is at. (The small talk you can get in a physical meeting room doesn't happen online.)

- **Roll with it!**
  Sometimes all sorts of things can go wrong, and that's ok. It will turn out alright in the end. We're all learning this.

**@copronetwales**     *Making sure everyone has a voice!* 👌