

## Maximizing Connectivity for Remote Work

Working remotely presents challenges, especially if other family members need internet access or if your internet access is limited or inadequate. These tips may help you manage the technology-side of remote work, and keep you connected while calling, conducting meetings, or working collaboratively.

### Make Simple Changes



#### Use a headset

A microphone and speakers can create an echo which may be distracting to you (and your colleagues), and inadvertently creates extra “data traffic” on the network. Using a headset eliminates echo and prevents distractions that may occur during your call.



#### Consider where you position yourself or your router

To get the best quality internet connection, position yourself close to your wireless router and minimize obstructions between your device and the router. Simple, smart positioning increases the strength and the quality of your internet connection which affects your ability to access files, work collaboratively, and call, chat, or meet without interruption.



#### Stay in one place

Moving about while participating in a call or meeting may reduce the quality of your connection. Pacing, exercising, or changing location during a call or meeting may be your style, but it may also decrease your audio and video quality and/or the reliability of your internet connection.



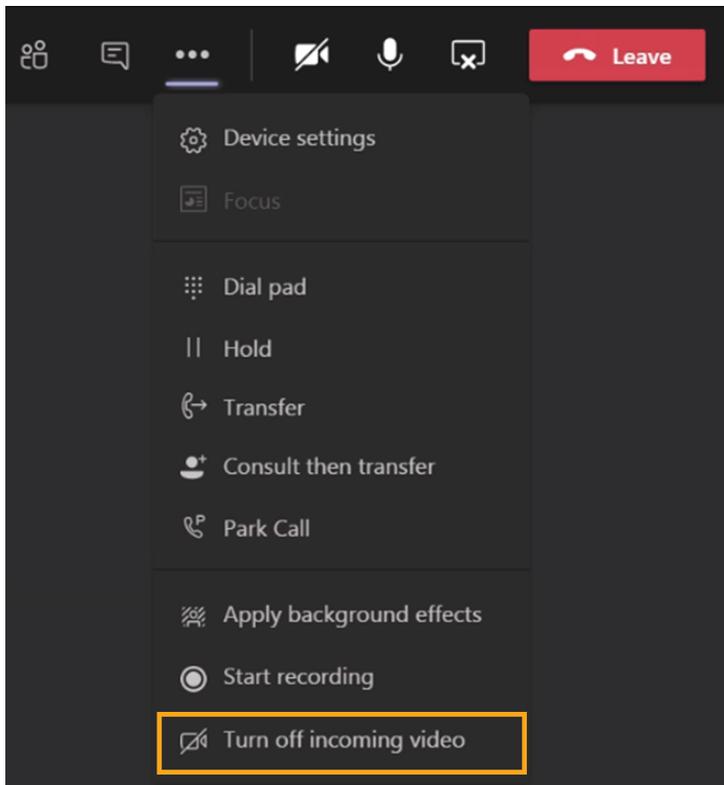
#### Coordinate your household's internet use

Prioritize internet use and schedule according to the most urgent need. Working at home, while others are working, attending classes, or enjoying technology resources, puts stress on your internet bandwidth. Having to share limited bandwidth may mean scheduling time among family members according to “need,” planning ahead for work calls and meetings, or increasing your household data plan.

## Change your Teams settings

### Turn off video to reduce bandwidth consumption

If you are having problems on a video call, one option is having everyone on the call turn off their video. Audio-only calls consume less bandwidth. During calls or meetings, select the Turn Off Incoming Video option.



### Use Teams' Together Mode for large meetings

The Together Mode option in Teams uses less bandwidth than other video modes. This may allow you to keep your video on and maintain the audio and video quality during the meeting.



### Unmute only when you need to speak.

When your microphone picks up (and inadvertently transmits) extraneous sounds, it consumes more data. Mute your mic until you intend to speak to save bandwidth and improve the quality of your call or meeting.

## Maximize Your Internet Connection

### Check your home internet connection speed/bandwidth

You may not know this, but you can check your internet speed using tools such as speedtest.net or speedtest.org. The OIT recommends a minimum of “2 Mbps bi-directional” for continuous and reliable connectivity during calls and meetings. Teams calling and meeting tools will work with slower connections, but may be less reliable. Reliability is also a potential issue with satellite connections, which can have transmission delays.

If your home internet connection is less than 2 Mbps bi-directional, the solution lies with your service provider. Contact them about bandwidth options or explore other providers that can provide more bandwidth to your home.

### Turn VPN off during calls and meetings

SIU’s virtual private network (VPN) provides you with a secure connection to campus, but increases bandwidth consumption on your home internet. VPN is important when you need server access to retrieve and store important files or access to tools such as library portals and systems such as Banner, Argos, and HRSS. Teams and Teams calling tools do not require use of VPN; turning VPN off can increase the quality and reliability of calls and meetings.

### Plug in for Network Access

Today, most users connect to their home network wirelessly. However, if you can, plug a cable directly to your router’s ethernet port. This prevents competition on the “wireless network” with other family members or devices and improves the reliability of your connection.



### Evaluate computer issues and limits

Laptops and other devices only have so much processing power. If you ask too much of your device, it may perform poorly. Managing simultaneous activities on your device can improve performance during Teams calls or meetings. Upload/download any content that you need prior to the meeting. Shut down applications that are not needed for the call or meeting; for example Excel/spreadsheets, Adobe/graphics or Word/large documents. Do not stream audio (YouTube Music) or video (Hulu) while on the call. Do not update the operating system (Windows, Apple) or programs (Adobe) shortly before starting or during a meeting.