

Virtual Interview Tips

Logistics:

- Double-check the time zone of your interview.
- Select your device in advance and practice on it consistently. People often find that a computer is better than phone/tablet.
- Use headphones.
- Test the device, connection, sound quality, and virtual meeting platform in advance.
- Keep your device plugged in for duration of interview.
- Block pop-ups, turn off all other programs, silence all notifications.
- Screen name should be first (preferred) name and last name. You can also include your pronouns.
- Pro Tip: Upload a professional-looking headshot to Zoom so that your photo is displayed when you turn your video off.

Control Your Environment:

- Find a location for your interview that is quiet and private (no family, no pets, roommates, etc.) Be sure to choose a place that has reliable internet connection.
- Set yourself up so that your background is non-distracting but gently personalized (no white walls!). Do not use virtual or “blurred” backgrounds.
- If circumstances force you to use a less-than-ideal location, send an email to the admissions office in advance to explain that you do not have other options, and assure them that you are taking the interview seriously and will make the best of the option you do have.
- Turn off your phone entirely.
- Sit in front of a window or place a soft light behind your screen for ideal lighting. Make sure you’re not backlit!
- Raise your screen so that it is angled very slightly down toward you. Be sure your face is centered.
- Arrange video boxes so that the interviewer is directly below your camera lens, which gives the appearance of maintaining eye contact.
- Resist temptation to look at your own face. (In Zoom, you can click on the three dots in the corner of your box to “Hide Self View.” Otherwise, you can put a post-it over the part of screen where your face is showing.)
- Shut off fluorescent overhead lights. Close curtains/blinds to avoid harsh light that may wash out your face.

Clothing:

- Wear a professional outfit, just as you would for a high-stakes in-person interview. (Wear the entire outfit, not just from the waist up. Although the interviewer likely won’t see most of your outfit, what you wear during the interview can impact how you present yourself.)
- Opt for solid neutral colors, no distracting patterns.
- No jewelry – it can be distracting on screen.

Body Language on Screen:

- Record yourself on your own and/or schedule a mock interview to assess body language:
 - Eyes directed at your camera.
 - Avoid swiveling in chair or jiggling leg/foot.
 - No playing with hair, beard, pencils, or other items in your vicinity.
 - It’s okay to “talk with hands” at times, but it’s generally best to keep them together in your lap if you can speak naturally while keeping them there.
 - Don’t forget to smile.

Other Thoughts:

- Preparing for the logistics of a virtual interview needs to be done in addition to preparing to answer the interview questions themselves. Be sure to practice in a virtual format!
- Interviewers may be disoriented using a virtual format. Be understanding and patient; you may feel more comfortable than they do.