

Zoom Lighting Setup Guide

Fast, flattering lighting for video calls in apartments and home offices.

Core setup

- › Key light 30-45 degrees off-center, slightly above eye level.
- › Start at 4200-4800K; match remaining room light.
- › Dim screens to avoid face glare; warm bias light adds depth.
- › Close blinds or bounce forward if you face a window.

Apartment-friendly placement

- › Clamp/monitor light saves desk depth and angles easily.
- › Bounce off a wall or ceiling for soft fill when space is tight.
- › Glossy walls? Angle the key to avoid hot spots in glasses.
- › Low ceilings: keep key lower, angled down to reduce spill.

Quick checklist

- › Key light with dimmer; eye height; off-center.
- › Bounce/fill opposite the key (wall, card, or small lamp).
- › Background light low and warm to separate you from the wall.
- › Camera tilt: eyes in top third; slight downward angle.
- › 30-second test call; adjust brightness and tilt.

Troubleshooting

- › Harsh shadows: add small bounce; lower key intensity.
- › Washed out: warm the key (lower K) and dim screens.
- › Glasses glare: raise key and angle 10-15 degrees off lens plane.
- › Dark background: add a tiny lamp behind you, set low.
- › Uneven color: keep all lights in one color-temp range.

One-minute setup flow

- › Turn off overheads; turn on key and background lights.
- › Set key angle (30-45 deg) and height (eye level).
- › Warm to 4200-4800K; match any remaining room light.
- › Dim screens; tilt webcam down slightly; frame eyes top third.
- › Open a test call; tweak brightness until face is even.

Starter gear (budget-friendly)

- › Clamp/monitor key light with adjustable temp.
- › Letter-size white card for bounce; free and effective.
- › Small lamp or LED strip for background separation.
- › Webcam tilt or arm to keep eyes in the top third.

Remember: test before you join. 30 seconds now beats 30 minutes looking washed out.