

Engaging Virtual Meetings

Good, Better, Best Guide
to Computers, Equipment,
& Gear



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Your computer is the base of your engaging virtual meetings. The computing landscape changes constantly so my picks were valid only on the day I made them. Use the basic guidelines to get the most for the money you are looking to spend. Note: I am not compensated for any of these products or selections.

For virtual meetings, you are looking for maximum RAM so you can run multiple programs, fast SSD to access your data, and fast GPU to process the video you are using. Next, you will be looking for multiple or very large high-quality monitors. New(er) laptops can help you prevent having to buy a separate accessory such as a webcam or mic.

<https://www.pcmag.com/lists/best-desktop-computers>

| | Good | Better | Best |
|------------------|---|---|---|
| Desktop Computer | Estimated pricing: \$500 | Estimated pricing: \$1000 | Estimated pricing: Unlimited |
| | <p>Acer Aspire TC-1780-UA92 Desktop (est. \$479.99)</p> <p>13th Gen Intel Core i5-13400 Processor 8GB 3200MHz DDR4 512GB M.2 SSD SD Card Reader Intel Wi-Fi 6E AX211 Windows 11 Home, Black</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> | <p>MSI Codex R2 Gaming Desktop (est. \$1,239.99)</p> <p>Intel Core i5-14400F, Geforce RTX 4060 Ti, 16GB DDR5, 1TB m.2 NVMe SSD, 80+ Gold PSU, WiFi, Keyboard & Mouse, DIY Friendly, Windows 11 Home: A14NUD5-213US</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> | <p>Corsair ONE i500 Gaming PC (est. \$3,599.00)</p> <p>Liquid Cooled Intel® Core™ i9 14900K CPU - Liquid Cooled NVIDIA® GeForce RTX™ 4080 Super GPU - 32GB Vengeance DDR5 Memory - 2TB M.2 SSD - Wood Dark</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> |
| | <p>Mac Mini (est. \$599)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple M1 chip with 8-core CPU, 8-core GPU, and 16-core Neural Engine • 8GB unified memory • 256GB SSD storage¹ • Gigabit Ethernet <p>Link for Reference</p> | <p>Mac Mini M2 Pro (est. \$1299)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple M2 Pro chip • 16GB unified memory • 512GB SSD storage¹ • Gigabit Ethernet <p>Link for Reference</p> | <p>Mac Studio M2 Ultra (est. \$3,999.00)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20-Core CPU • 48-Core GPU • 32-Core Neural Engine • 64GB unified memory • 1TB SSD storage <p>Link for Reference</p> |

| Laptop Computer | Estimated pricing: \$500 | Estimated pricing: \$1000 | Estimated pricing: Unlimited |
|-----------------|--|---|---|
| | <p>Acer Aspire 3 (est. \$299.00)</p> <p>Acer Aspire 3 A315-24P-R7VH Slim Laptop 15.6" Full HD IPS Display AMD Ryzen 3 7320U Quad-Core Processor AMD Radeon Graphics 8GB LPDDR5 128GB NVMe SSD Wi-Fi 6 Windows 11 Home in S Mode</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> <p>Delta (What could be better): Δ In the small towers, there is little to no space to upgrade your computer. Δ Upgrade to 16 GB of RAM, recommended. Δ For business computers, I suggest getting the upgraded service where they fix at your house.</p> | <p>ASUS - ROG Zephyrus G14 (est. \$999.99)</p> <p>Acer Aspire 3 A315-24P-R7VH Slim Laptop 15.6" Full HD IPS Display AMD Ryzen 3 7320U Quad-Core Processor AMD Radeon Graphics 8GB LPDDR5 128GB NVMe SSD Wi-Fi 6 Windows 11 Home in S Mode</p> <p>I own 2 of these laptops and I swear by them for virtual and hybrid work, especially out of town.</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> | <p>Legion 7i Gen 9 Intel (16") with RTX™ 4070 - Eclipse Black (est. \$1,999.00)</p> <p>14th Generation Intel® Core™ i9-14900HX Processor, 16 GB DDR5-4800MHz (SODIMM) - (2 x 16 GB), 1 TB SSD M.2 2280 PCIe Gen4 TLC, 16" WQXGA (2560 x 1600), IPS, Anti-Glare, Non-Touch, HDR400, 100% sRGB, 500 nits, 165Hz, Narrow Bezel, NVIDIA® GeForce® RTX™ 4070 16GB GDDR6, 4 Cell Li-Polymer 99.9Wh</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> |
| | | <p>MacBook Air 8GB Unified Memory 256GB SSD Storage</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> <p>+ This Mac is one of the lightest and well-designed computers.</p> | <p>Macbook Pro 16-Inch (est. \$3,999)</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apple M3 Max • 48GB unified memory • 1TB SSD storage • 16-inch Liquid Retina display • MagSafe 3 charging port • Three Thunderbolt / USB 4 ports • 140W USB-C Power Adapter • Backlit Magic Keyboard with Touch ID - US English |

And now for the equipment and gear!

| | Good | Better | Best |
|-------------------------|---|---|---|
| Cameras and Camera Gear | | | |
| | <p>Logitech Brio 500</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>The Logitech C930e became a “Work From Home” standard for many and the Brio is the next generation. With best resolution for virtual meetings and auto light correction, this is one of the top-rated USB cameras.</p> | <p>iPhone 7 (est. \$90)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>+Using an older smartphone can give you a \$1,000 camera for a fraction of the cost. +This camera allowed me to use OBS full green screen capability and give a picture quality that was noticeably different. +Auto focus works quickly so you can hold items closer to the lens and see it.</p> | <p>Canon Rebel SL3 (est. \$699)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>Best price camera in the next highest range.</p> |
| | <p>Center Cam (est. \$119.99)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>+ If eye contact is one of your top goals, this innovative camera can put the camera at your attendee’s eye level with minimal distraction. +Video quality is good but not good enough to use with OBS green screen, so I can only recommend with a natural background or using Zoom’s green screen feature.</p> | | <p>El Gato Camlink 4K (est. \$107.85)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>Required to connect a DSLR camera like the Canon SL3 to a computer.</p> |
| | | | <p>Mini HDMI to HDMI cable to connect camera to Camlink to computer (est. \$12.99)</p> <p>LINK to Reference</p> |

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| | | | <p>OBS Camera (est. \$10.99/month, \$18.99/year or \$69.99 lifetime and unlimited cameras)</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> |
| Microphones | | | |
| | <p>Blue Snowball Ice (est. \$39.99)</p> <p>Link for Reference</p> <p>PC Mag Editor’s Choice for best affordable mic.</p> | <p>iRig Mic HD 2 (est. \$99)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ I have been personally using this mic for over 8 years. ▪ One of the best sounding mics. ▪ Can also connect to a smartphone to record videos. | <p>Countryman E6OW5T2SL Springy E6 (est. \$319)</p> <p>Omnidirectional ear set with 2-mm Cable for Shure/Carvin/JTS/Trantec Transmitters (Tan)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> |
| | | <p>Blue Yeti X (est. \$159.99)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>PC Mag Most Flexible Recording Options, many of my friends have this mic.</p> | <p>Sennheiser Pro Audio EW 100-ME2 Wireless Omni Lavalier Microphone System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A1 Band (470-516Mhz) ▪ 100 G4-ME2-A1 (est. \$699) <p>LINK for Reference</p> |
| Green Screens | | | |
| | <p>Webaround Big Shot 56” (est. \$47.99)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>+ZDNET rated this one of the best portable green screens. +It straps to your chair and folds up to take anywhere.</p> | <p>LimoStudio 10 x 9.6 ft. Heavy Duty Backdrop Stand (est. \$151.90)</p> <p>10 x 20 ft. Green Background Screen 700W Continuous Output Umbrella Lighting Kit, AGG408</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>+Tested and approved. +Best tip, wash green screen in cold water with no soap, then hang and stretch green screen and let dry to get rid of all wrinkles.</p> | <p>Fancierstudio Chromakey Green Screen Kit (est. \$129.99)</p> <p>800-watt 10x20 Ft Chroma Key Green Screen Photo Video Lighting Kit Backdrop Support System Included UI15 10x20 Green by Fancierstudio U15 10x20 Green</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> |

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| | | | <p>DropKey World's First Inflatable Green Screen (est. \$1,795)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>I haven't tested this, but I'm intrigued by the simplicity such as 10-minute setup and complete package that includes lights, 2-mics, mixing board and software.</p> |
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ACCESSORY: Amazon Basics 14-Piece Nylon Spring Clamp Set - 6 Pieces 3-3/8-Inch, 4 Pieces 4-1/2-Inch, 4 Pieces 6-1/2-Inch

[LINK](#) for Reference

Mixing Board

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| | <p>Pyle 8-Channel USB Mixing Board (est. \$99.99)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>Allow multiple microphones without echo. Play music in less steps.</p> | <p>I upgraded to Pyle 8-Channel Pro (est. \$159.20)</p> <p>LINK for Reference</p> <p>This is now my default mixing board as it has sliders which gives me greater control on audio such as mixing music into a meeting.</p> | |
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| | | <p>Sennheiser Pro Audio Sennheiser EW 100-ME2 Wireless Omni Lavalier Microphone System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A1 Band (470-516Mhz) ▪ 100 G4-ME2-A1 (est. \$699) <p>LINK for Reference</p> | |
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Powerpoint as Virtual Background Example [LINK](#) for Reference

Accessories

OBS (Open Broadcast Software) FREE

[LINK](#) for Reference

The Powerpoint of live video, this powerful tool is used by almost every live streamer.

Elgato Prompter (est. \$279.99)

I now use this every day.

I put the active speaker window in Zoom in this window

I often put OneNote in this window so while I'm taking notes, it looks like I'm looking right at you

I record many of my videos using the teleprompter

When I emcee, I put my notes in this teleprompter and the audience thinks I'm looking right at them

This is a powerful engagement tool

[LINK](#) for Reference

Elgato Stream Deck XL (est. \$239.23)

Advanced Stream Control with 32 Customizable LCD Keys, for Windows 10 and macOS 10.13 or Later (10GAT9901)

[LINK](#) for Reference

This box streamlines many actions into a single button push, speeding up most used actions.

Stream Deck Mobile

[LINK](#) for Reference

30-day free trial, \$2.99/month or \$24.99/year

5.6 years of buying a 15-key Stream Deck (\$139.99) plus hands-free Siri commands.
